



# Ask Again, Yes

Written by Mary Beth Keane

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Published by biointhebowl

# Table of Contents

Ask Again Yes .....	1
Ask Again Yes Goodreads .....	2
Ask Again Yes Book .....	3
Ask Again Yes Review .....	4
Ask Again Yes A Novel .....	5
Ask Again Yes Book Review .....	6
Ask Again Yes Excerpt .....	7
Ask Again Yes Plot .....	8
Ask Again Yes Synopsis .....	9
Ask Again Yes Amazon .....	10

Ask Again, Yes

# Ask Again, Yes

By Mary Beth Keane

## Ask Again Yes

A profoundly moving novel about two neighboring families in a suburban town, the friendship between their children, a tragedy that reverberates over four decades, and the power of forgiveness.

## Ask Again Yes Goodreads

Francis Gleeson and Brian Stanhope are two NYPD rookies assigned to the same Bronx precinct in 1973. They aren't close friends on the job, but end up living next door to each other outside the city. What goes on behind closed doors in both houses—the loneliness of Francis's wife, Lena, and the instability of Brian's wife, Anne, sets the stage for the stunning events to come.

## Ask Again Yes Book

Ask Again, Yes by award-winning author Mary Beth Keane, is a beautifully moving exploration of the friendship and love that blossoms between Francis's youngest daughter, Kate, and Brian's son, Peter, who are born six months apart. In the spring of Kate and Peter's eighth grade year a violent event divides the neighbors, the Stanhopes are forced to move away, and the children are forbidden to have any further contact.

## Ask Again Yes Review

But Kate and Peter find a way back to each other, and their relationship is tested by the echoes from their past. *Ask Again, Yes* reveals how the events of childhood look different when reexamined from the distance of adulthood—villains lose their menace, and those who appeared innocent seem less so. Kate and Peter’s love story is marked by tenderness, generosity, and grace.

“The thing is, Peter, grown-ups don’t know what they’re doing any better than kids do. That’s the truth.”  
Oh, I love a good family drama.

*Ask Again, Yes* is a book about the members of two families-- the Gleesons and the Stanhopes. They are first brought together through the New York City police academy when young rookies Francis Gleeson and Brian Stanhope work together. Later, they become neighbours and start families next to one another. Except any chance of cordiality between them is destroyed — “The thing is, Peter, grown-ups don’t know what they’re doing any better than kids do. That’s the truth.”  
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*Ask Again, Yes* is a book about the members of two families-- the Gleesons and the Stanhopes. They are first brought together through the New York City police academy when young rookies Francis Gleeson and Brian Stanhope work together. Later, they become neighbours and start families next to one another. Except any chance of cordiality between them is destroyed on one fateful night.

This is one of those intimate character portraits that explores the interactions between the characters in depth and with an unusual level of insight into human nature. There are some perfectly-crafted scenes where as the reader I felt like, yes, that is exactly how someone would behave in that situation. While the book is busy focusing on the characters, many issues emerge over the course of the novel, integrated so seamlessly that it wasn't until I looked back at the end that I fully appreciated what Keane had done.

I don't want to make the book seem sentimental, because it is not at all. But it is very empathetic, and the author writes each character with love and sensitivity. Anne's mental illness causes ruptures in her marriage with Brian, amongst other things, while the Gleesons seem determined to honor commitment no matter what troubles befall them.

I love the understanding that consequences can be far-reaching, both over time and to other people. The book follows the Gleeson daughter, Kate, and the Stanhope son, Peter, over many years, and yet they can never fully escape their beginnings.

You probably know by now if this is a YOU book. It's one of those for readers who like to explore the nuances of human behaviour and relationships. An obvious choice if you loved Ng's *Little Fires*

Ask Again, Yes

Everywhere.

[Blog](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#) | [Youtube](#) ...more

## Ask Again Yes A Novel

4.5 stars

I have always enjoyed reading family stories that take me on their journey across time. This is a story of two families over several decades and how their lives intersect in a tragic way as well as one that is filled of love and ultimately forgiveness. Two NYC police officers, living next door to each other in the suburbs, connected mainly by the friendship of their two young children. Abruptly the things going on in one of the families impact the other in a way that changes everyone's

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This was a monthly buddy read with Diane and Esil.

I received an advanced copy of this book from Scribner through Edelweiss and NetGalley. ...more

"The thing is, Peter, grown-ups don't know what they're doing any better than kids do. That's the truth."

You've seen this book around before. You know the one I'm talking about; it's got an aesthetically pleasing blue-green cover, boasts of domestic drama and in-depth character study of the darker side of families, while promising the reader that they will experience a grand range of emotion by the time the final page is turned. These books are one thing, pure and simple: book club bait. While I

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Ask Again, Yes

predictable, but for some reason these characters were quite enticing, and the author did leave an impression that kept me thinking about these characters well after finishing their story.

I can't help but loosely compare this book to the likes of Liane Moriarty, because I had a similar reading experience while working through Ask Again, Yes as I did when I picked up Big Little Lies. Years ago, I joined an online bookclub with my sister and the first month we participated, we were discussing BLL. It was long, and I was intimidated, and the beginning portions were incredibly slow, so much so that I almost tossed the book and told Irina she was on her own. ;) I'm really glad she encouraged me to stick with it, because once I was fully invested in the characters, I began to breeze through and consider it one of the first books to help me embrace the lighter side of the mystery genre. AAY has a very similar setup-slow burning intro while we get acquainted with the characters, and then we steadily speed up once a few "things" begin to happen.

There are many, many emotional aspects to this story, and for the most part it's very sad and mildly heavy, but the ending was done so well that it kept my final verdict as hopeful, while teaching me where to be grateful. The characters of both families suffer tremendously in various ways over the years, and some of the reasons are based on their choices, but most of the outcomes are results of unexpected circumstances, which gave a tense, straining sensation as the story unfolds. If you enjoy family sagas that feature coming-of-age in less than ideal circumstances, you may want to give this one a try for yourself. Some of the buzz-worthy topics included are mental health, addiction, cancer, and how tragedy affects all sorts of relationships, such as married couples and parents/children. Those are some tough issues to cover, but this book does so in very mild ways, with little to no graphic content, and mainly just in being referred to prior to an event or as a memory. The possible discussions that will spur from reading this book are endless, and I cannot wait to see how the general public reacts to Ask Again, Yes once it's released.

\*Many thanks to the publisher for providing my review copy. ...more

## Ask Again Yes Book Review

The cover of this book is remarkable and behind the cover is a remarkable book. At first glance, the cover appears to be an example of a painting technique known as impasto (I think). Closer scrutiny reveals a typical suburban neighborhood that could be Anywhere, USA. And so it is with this novel. At first glance, Ask Again, Yes seems to be an American dream or coming of age novel and in some ways it is but beneath these obvious themes lie much more. A violent act leaves two families forever cha The cover of this book is remarkable and behind the cover is a remarkable book. At first glance, the cover appears to be an example of a painting technique known as impasto (I think). Closer scrutiny reveals a typical suburban neighborhood that could be Anywhere, USA. And so it is with this novel. At first glance, Ask Again, Yes seems to be an American dream or coming of age novel and in some ways it is but beneath these obvious themes lie much more. A violent act leaves two families forever changed and another event leaves them forever linked. You will live the decades of these charactersâ€™ lives right along with them. Mental illness, stoicism, alcoholism, achievement, love and forgiveness mark this marvelous novel and the author treats her characters with great tenderness. You wonâ€™t forget them.

...more

4.25 Stars.

â€œAsk Again, Yesâ€ is Literary Fiction at its best!

This novel is an exploration of life, love, family, mistakes and the tragedies of everyday life. The Stanhopes and the Gleasons are at odds. Will they ever heal the rift that tore their families apart?

Alcoholism, friendship, forgiveness, mental illness, love and tragedy. These are the themes of â€œAsk Again, Yes.â€

This is one heck of an engrossing novel. I truly felt for the characters of Peter and Kate. The trials and tribulations of tw 4.25 Stars.

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This is one heck of an engrossing novel. I truly felt for the characters of Peter and Kate. The trials and tribulations of two families - your heart will literally be pulled in two, feeling bad for each, at certain points in time, almost feeling as if you are betraying the other. Admittedly, parts of this novel totally

Ask Again, Yes

shocked me. I felt as though I should have understood certain things from the get go and didn't and when things came to light I was like 'oh!'. Then there is the ending! yes, tears sprung to my eyes, (some of you are like, yeah 'big surprise, you old sap!'). Seriously though, I simply couldn't help myself!

If you love literary fiction, fiction or are just looking for a great read, grab this and read it. You will not be disappointed.

This was a buddy read with Kacey. I loved reading this one with you Kacey and was so glad that you ended up liking this one too!

Thank you to NetGalley, Scribner and Mary Beth Keane for an ARC of this novel in exchange for an honest review.

Published on NetGalley and Goodreads on 4.7.19.

Will be published on Amazon and Twitter on 5.28.19. ...more

## Ask Again Yes Excerpt

A beautifully crafted family drama that explores love, forgiveness and the ability to move on.

Do you have the strength to move past a tragedy? Come out the other side stronger? Or will the crushing weight of it all define you, re-shaping your life?

Francis and Lena Gleeson are raising their 3 daughters in a quiet neighborhood. Francis is a police officer well respected by all. A rising star in his department, he has truly found his calling.

Brian Stanhope lives next door with his wife Anne and th A beautifully crafted family drama that explores love, forgiveness and the ability to move on.

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Francis and Lena Gleeson are raising their 3 daughters in a quiet neighborhood. Francis is a police officer well respected by all. A rising star in his department, he has truly found his calling.

Brian Stanhope lives next door with his wife Anne and their son. Brian too is a police officer, and though he was once partnered with Francis, his career path has fallen well behind.

When a tragedy rocks the lives of both families no one is left unscathed. Not the parents, not the children. All are left in the aftermath, trying to stitch their lives back together and move forward.

This book left me at a loss for words. It touched me profoundly. Not to tears, but somewhere perhaps even deeper, causing me to look back at my own family...my life. How a singular event in your past can shape your life. Taking you down a road you may have otherwise never ventured.

Even now...I find myself still reflecting upon this book.

An emotional buddy read with Susanne!

Thank you to NetGalley, Scribner and Mary Beth Keane for an ARC to read and review. ...more

This is one of those books that, as I pondered writing this review, I have changed my rating from a 4 to a 5. The more I thought about it, the more I realized how incredibly strong the characters in this book are, I finished it last week and I'm still thinking about them., all of them. If you love strong character driven books, you will love this one! I had a bit of believability issues with one of the main characters but it doesn't take away from the entire body of work.

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Ask Again, Yes

them. If you love strong character driven books, you will love this one! I had a bit of believability issues with one of the main characters but it doesn't take away from the entire body of work.

From the blurb you know that this novel is about two neighboring families, both husbands are policemen who started out as rookies on the NYPD force. The book is told from several points of view which I think greatly improved my understanding of how the individuals felt and acted.

Francis Gleeson has had a great career, he is strong willed, intelligent, diligent and yet with his family he has an incredible soft touch. He is the first to move to this new suburb, he, his wife and two daughters are doing well individually and as a family, although Lena is at times lonely and would like a larger life outside the home.

Within months Brian and Anne move in next door to the Gleesons. Brian and Francis are not close friends at this point, but they are friendly. Anne is quite a different matter, she does not go out of her way to befriend the Gleesons and keeps to her house much of the time. Later, both Anne and Lena have children only six months apart, Peter and Kate, who are immediately bonded to each other even as little friends. Their story will play a huge part in the novel.

A terrible incident occurs which changes the lives of everyone in both families, it is tragic, horrific and probably could have been avoided. The Stanhopes are forced to move away. I would not spoil this novel for anyone by giving away anything more.

This is a book that I couldn't wait to get back to and finished in two days. This story hits all the emotional buttons, happiness, extreme sadness, frustration, hope, love and forgiveness. We are taken through the lives of these families who handle the tragedy in very different ways. The plot flows very well and is extremely well thought out. We really get to know these people, this is the first book this year that has touched me in this way.

Buy the book, read it, ponder what you would do in this situation and you won't be disappointed.

As an afterthought, I did read *The Walking People*, by this author many years ago and it was excellent, so if you enjoy this one, go back and read the other.

I received an ARC of this novel from the publisher through Edelweiss. This novel will be available for purchase on May 28, 2019. ...more

Ask Again, Yes

## Ask Again Yes Plot

heads up to whom it may concern: this book is primo book club bait. in general, the best book club choices are ones with juicy conflicts at their centers which inspire strong, differing, politely expressed opinions from your assembled booknerds. and the best of these have an extra component—they allow the reader a sort of peripheral empathy; taking recognizable, relatable issues like illness, marital/job stress, disputes with the neighbors, etc, and then dramatically inflating them into situations one hopes never to have to live through, providing that “there but for the” shiver.

the publisher's synopsis seems to want to keep its secrets, so i'll play along and summarize in the broadest terms: it's about two families and one very bad night that changes the course of their lives for decades to come. and the specifics of this dramatically inflated situation, and all of its ripple effects, are sure to inspire some wide-ranging booknerd opinions.

it has all of the things that breed discussion—nuanced characters with complicated relationships given years to develop and adjust, and to confront life's myriad challenges: infidelity, addiction, mental illness, abandonment, loneliness, regret—all of the meaty woes of life. but it's also a first love story, with a bit of a romeo and juliet edge, although in this case, the capulet's disapproval of their kid's romantic choice is totally legit. awkward thanksgivings for sure.

it's an engrossing and insightful story of human relationships and growth and forgiveness, but it's not schmaltzy and sentimental like so many books of its kind. i liked it. maybe your book club will like it.

but don't take my word for it—there's actually a literary litmus test for IS THIS A BOOK CLUB BOOK?

IS THIS A BOOK CLUB BOOK?

does it look like this?

it does!

Ask Again, Yes

does it look like this?

it does!

does it look like this?

it does!

I THINK IT IS A BOOK CLUB BOOK!!!

come to my blog! ...more

Oh my... this book...these characters.

I loved this story. The story starts out in the 1970s, with two young New York police officers (partners, for awhile) who end up living next door to each other in a suburban neighborhood.

As their families are growing, a tragedy occurs that changes all their lives, and keeps them entwined forever.

Mental illness, alcoholism, estrangements, and most of all love and forgiveness are at the center of this novel that takes the reader with them to present day.

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As their families are growing, a tragedy occurs that changes all their lives, and keeps them entwined forever.

Mental illness, alcoholism, estrangements, and most of all love and forgiveness are at the center of this novel that takes the reader with them to present day.

This novel touched my heart!

Thank you to Netgalley and Simon & Schuster for this ARC! ...more

## Ask Again Yes Synopsis

For a short time they were partners, Francis and Brian, two cops from the same precinct. Then they moved their families to the same neighborhood, across the street from each other. Brian's only son and Francis's youngest daughter grow up best friends. Then something terrible happens that will divide these two family's for decades.

Domestic fiction can be tricky to write, to find the right tone. This novel got it pretty neat to right. Although many dramatic occurrences happen, the tone is not over For a short time they were partners, Francis and Brian, two cops from the same precinct. Then they moved their families to the same neighborhood, across the street from each other. Brian's only son and Francis's youngest daughter grow up best friends. Then something terrible happens that will divide these two family's for decades.

Domestic fiction can be tricky to write, to find the right tone. This novel got it pretty neat to right. Although many dramatic occurrences happen, the tone is not overly dramatic, in fact at times I felt it was rather cool. I prefer it that way. When I read a book that is overly dramatic in it's telling, I always compare it to a soap opera. I don't watch them and I certainly don't want to read them. The way this was told, the story itself seemed very realistic. This could happen and may have, somewhere.

It deals with some important issues as well. Alcoholism and it's effect on a family, mental illness and the lack of options in the seventies. A time when what happened in a family was supposed to stay in the family. Forgiveness and regret, and what we will do for those we love. Abandonment and responsibility, how the lingering effects sometimes takes years but unresolved issues will eventually read it ugly head.

I enjoyed the changing faces of these characters, their growth as people, people who can at last acknowledge their own parts in the events that occur. Things don't happen in a vacuum as this book so adequately displays.

ARC from Edelweiss. ...more

I didn't want to put this book down from the moment I started it...too bad I needed sleep and had other things I needed to do. Still I read it within a few short days and it hurt my heart but also, filled me with hope. Mary Beth Keane did a great job of putting her words down on paper.

Kate and Peter, born to neighbors, 6 months apart, had a connection from the beginning of their time. They were best friends but more than best friends, they knew each other and loved each other before they were e I didn't want to put this book down from the moment I started it...too bad I needed sleep and had other things I needed to do. Still I read it within a few short days and it hurt my heart but also, filled me with hope. Mary Beth Keane did a great job of putting her words down on paper.



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Ask Again, Yes

Kate and Peter, born to neighbors, 6 months apart, had a connection from the beginning of their time. They were best friends but more than best friends, they knew each other and loved each other before they were even aware of that fact. Kate had a blessed life and a loving family but Peter had a harsh, troubled life, both a troubled dad and a troubled mom. Peter carried the weight of the world on his young shoulders, weight that a child should not have to carry.

When Kate is 13, Peter 14, something happens that shatters their lives and the lives of their families. Peter and his family have to leave immediately and Kate is left with a hole in her heart, Peter too is left with a hole, holes that only the other can fill. Eventually Kate and Peter make contact again and all of the past is still with them and their families, past that is part of their present too. I won't say more about the book except that it was so heart-wrenching, so real, but also so full of family and love, that I finished the book wanting to continue being a part of Kate and Peter's lives.

Thank you to Scribner and NetGalley for this ARC. ...more

## Ask Again Yes Amazon

This is a really cleverly written book. A pure family saga type drama with plenty to keep you interested in.

We have two families who end up living next door to each other.

Each character has its flaws or talent.

But something bad happens and one family move.

The two eldest from each family had grown fond of each other now only to be told to stay clear from one another.

I'll be perfectly straight, I struggled at the beginning due to the style of the writing plus it was very slow moving.

I eventually This is a really cleverly written book. A pure family saga type drama with plenty to keep you interested in.

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The two eldest from each family had grown fond of each other now only to be told to stay clear from one another.

I'll be perfectly straight, I struggled at the beginning due to the style of the writing plus it was very slow moving.

I eventually understand one of the moms and her over reaction to things.

But there were several characters in this book which I tried to like. In the end I just gave up trying.

I tossed between three stars and four.

Let me tell you that the ending isn't jaw dropping or amazing either, but, there was plenty in here that helped to redeem and overcome my negatives.

It was the emotions, the sincerity and the way that the author led me. I somehow became trapped within its pages. I had to read it. I had to finish it. There were life lessons within these pages that made my mind tick over.

Love and forgiveness and moving on is one of life's hard lessons.

We tend to reflect on the past. And by doing so we ignore where we are right now.

Ask Again, Yes

Two families. Can they heal the rift?

The mental health in this book was written well.

I'll be seeking out more from this author as she had my thoughts tossed all over the place. Now that's making an impact!

...more

This one was really hard to rate until I thought things through as I wrote my review. There are some very strong positives about this book, but the disappointments are, well, really disappointing.

First, the positives. Ask Again, Yes is extremely well written. This author can really tell a tale in a most accomplished manner. The story involves the relationships between two families and amongst the individual members of both from the early 1970s to the present. The depth and complexity of the writing is impressive. I thought for the most part these people were characterized in a deep and realistic fashion. Moreover, my interest, though it waxed and waned a bit, did not falter though the novel is fairly long.

Then there are the negatives. I found the first 20% of the book to be on the slow side; it was hard to grasp where the story was going. The pace picks up after that, though I wasn't flipping the pages like mad until the last 20%. In addition, I had a hard time really connecting with the main characters despite the fact they were likeable. Overall, I did enjoy the story, but it just did not draw out any major emotion in me, not even in the end. The ending is actually very well done, but it was like, "oh, that was good" as opposed to "oh, man, I'm going to cry now, and I just don't want to leave these characters who I will be thinking about for the next couple of months." I need those feelings to fully enjoy a book. Plus, there was just so much sadness in this novel. Too much for my current mood, I guess. Not really the book's fault.

Despite the negatives taking up more space than the positives in this review, in the end the latter actually outweighs the former, allowing me to rate this a solid 4 stars. This is indeed a quality work that I can recommend to all looking for a meaty read. Ms. Keane has made an impression on me, and I will definitely be interested in seeing what she comes up with next. I just hope it will have a more profound effect on me.

Thank you Net Galley, Scribner, and Ms. Mary Beth Keane for gifting me an advanced review copy.

Ask Again, Yes

Opinions are mine alone and are not biased in any way. ...more