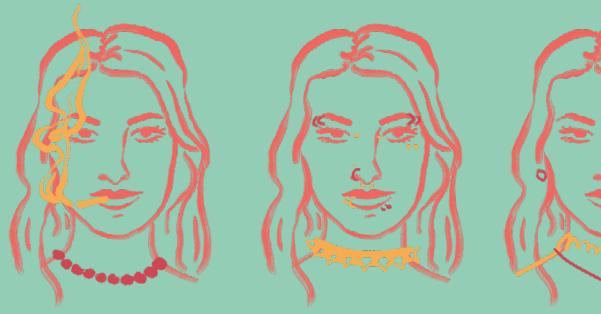


THE FAKE

Discussion Questions



1. Do you think Cammie is a sociopath? Is she a benign and comic figure, or a disturbing one? Why does she enjoy telling stories (or lies) about herself and her life?
2. Discuss the relationship between truth, fiction, and lies in the novel.
3. Gibson missed many red flags that Cammie was not the woman she claimed to be. Did the same thing ever happen to you? Did you ever believe someone and then, after learning of lies, wonder why you believed him or her? Why do you think we fall for exaggerations and lies?
4. How does Whittall humanize Cammie and move beyond a stereotyped portrait of sociopath to present a character who engages the reader's interest, and perhaps even elicits sympathy?
5. In what ways does *The Fake* unfold concepts of love, grief, and connection?
6. How does this book convey the ways in which human beings are shaped and altered by their encounters and relationships with one another?
7. Discuss the title, *The Fake*. How do you think it relates to the overall story? How does it apply to each of the characters in the book?
8. What do you think lies at the core of Shelby and Cammie's relationship? What aspects of it do you think are good and bad? What do you think they find appealing in one another? How does this book compare to others you've read in portraying the realities of female friendship?
9. Central to the story is the idea of truth. What is your reaction to what each of these characters has to say about truth?
Shelby: "We can never know what was true or not." (Ch. 13)
Cammie: "There are worse things than telling a lie." (Epilogue)
10. What did you think about the ending—were you satisfied or disappointed? How do you picture Shelby's, Gibson's, and Cammie's lives after the story closes?