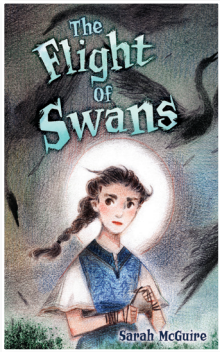


About the Author



Sarah McGuire is a nomadic math teacher who sailed around the world aboard a floating college campus. She writes fairy tale retellings and still hopes that one day she'll open a wardrobe and stumble into another world. Coffee and chocolate are her rocket fuel. She wishes Florida had mountains, but she lives there anyway with her husband (who wrote this bio in less than three minutes!) and their family.



The Flight of Swans

Sarah McGuire

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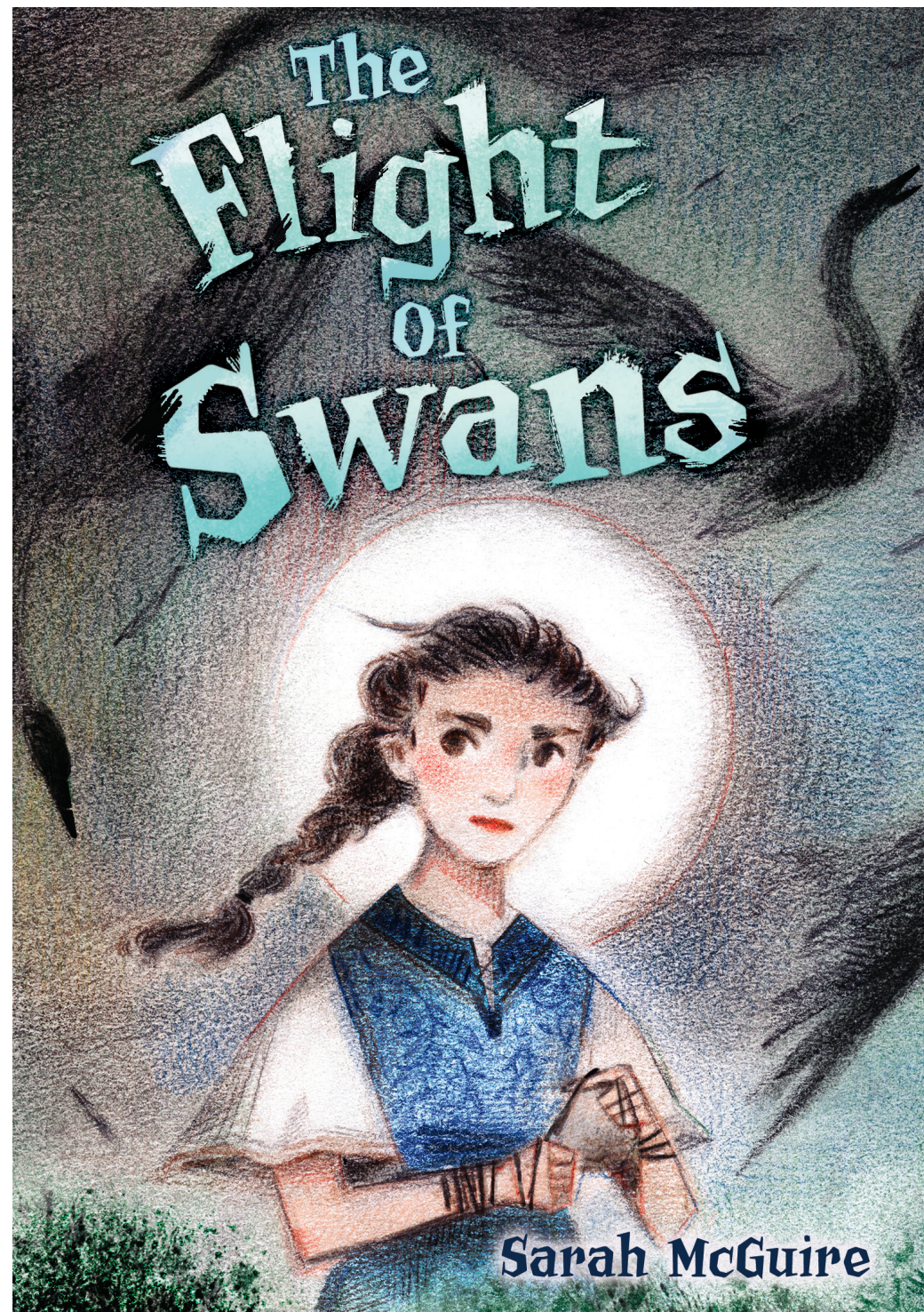
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DISCUSSION GUIDE



Based on the Brothers Grimm's fairy tale *Six Swans*, *The Flight of Swans* follows Ryn's journey to save her family and their kingdom.

Princess Andaryn's six older brothers have always been her protectors—until her father takes a new Queen, a frightening, mysterious woman who enchants the men in the royal family. When Ryn's attempt to break the enchantment fails, she makes a bargain: the Queen will spare her brothers' lives if Ryn remains silent for six years.

Ryn thinks she freed her brothers, but she never thought the Queen would turn her brothers into swans. And she never thought she'd have to undo the Queen's spell alone, without speaking.



TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. How does Ryn's connection to the House of Cynwrig affect her actions? Why is the difference between "game of swans" and "flight of swans" so important?
2. Why do you think the Kingstone was so important to Ryn and the Queen? Do you think Ryn did the right thing when her father demanded she give part of it to the Queen?
3. List some of the things Ryn fears throughout the book. Which of those do you think she fears most, and why?
4. Ryn demonstrates her bravery many times throughout the book. What is her first brave decision? What is her hardest decision?
5. Where do you think Ryn's bravery comes from? Where does your bravery come from?
6. Does Ryn have a favorite brother? How does she recognize her brothers even when they are swans?
7. What are different ways that Ryn communicates? How would you communicate if you couldn't speak or write?
8. How does Ryn try to protect her brothers, and how do they try to protect her? Do you agree with how they try to help each other?
9. Why do you think Ryn's brothers don't always believe her? Do you think you would have believed her? Have there been times when you weren't believed?
10. Ionwyn says a person can be the "turning point" in a story and cause everything to change. List characters that you think influenced Ryn during the six years of enchantment. Explain why you chose them.
11. How does Ryn change throughout her six years of silence? How does she stay the same?
12. What was Ryn's original opinion of the kingdoms of Eyre? How does her opinion change when she lives in the kingdom of Fianna?
13. What do the Ri, Tanwen, Finn, and the people of Fianna think of Ryn and Carrick when they first arrive at Castle Hill? How do their attitudes change, and what do you think causes that change?
14. Why doesn't Ryn want to face the Queen alone after her brothers are enchanted? Does she ever change her mind? Why or why not?
15. Now that the enchantment has ended and the queen has returned to the Otherworld, what do you think the future holds for Lacharra and Fianna?
16. Compare and contrast *The Flight of Swans* with the original story, *Six Swans* (or Anderson's *Wild Swans*). What would you change or keep the same if you were retelling the story?