

***If Anything Happens to Me***

by Luanne Rice

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## The Story

It's been eight months since the body of Eloise Parrish was found in the woods.

Eloise's surviving sister, Oli, is numb with grief and shock. But Oli's also angry. Her sister's killer was never identified or caught. There are no leads, no clues. The case is growing cold, and only Oli seems to care.

Until Oli finds another girl left for dead, in the exact spot Eloise's body was found. Except this girl is alive. She can't remember how she got there, but Oli knows that she's the key to solving Eloise's murder.

The two girls join forces to unravel a mystery that is all too real—and all too dangerous. As their search leads them around Oli's seemingly idyllic hometown and into the paths of people Oli knows well, Oli begins to wonder who she can trust . . . and how much she'll risk to learn the terrifying truth.

## Reading Group Questions

1. This story has a lot of twists and turns. What plot twist did you not see coming? Was there something you predicted correctly?
2. Oli and her friends are passionate about their hobby: birdwatching. Can you find one example where Oli's passion for birdwatching played a role in her story? Do you have any hobbies that you're passionate about? How do they help you in your everyday life?
3. Fitch claims that his actions are for the sake of his sister and her health—do you believe him? Can you explain why or why not?
4. If you were in Oli's situation, what would you do differently from her? What would you do the same?

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## About the Author



**Luanne Rice** is the *New York Times* and *Amazon Charts* bestselling author of thirty-eight novels that have been translated into thirty languages. Her YA novels include *The Secret Language of Sisters*, *The Beautiful Lost*, and *Pretend She's Here*. She is a recipient of the Connecticut Governor's Arts Award for Literary Excellence. She lives on the Connecticut shoreline. Learn more at [luannerice.com](http://luannerice.com).

## Author Q&A

### How did you become a writer?

I grew up in the world of books. My mother was an English teacher and writer; she would write at the dining room table after she put my sisters and me to bed, and the sound of her typewriter was our lullaby. She took us to the library every Saturday, and I spent hours getting lost in stories. I can still picture the warm oak library tables, the cozy window seats, and Mrs. Smith, the librarian, smiling from behind the desk. I dreamed of a time when my books would be on those library shelves. I started off by writing poems and short stories about nature and my family, things I loved. My first poem was published in our local newspaper when I was eleven. It was called "A Lighted Fairyland", about a December night with my family, when we went to see holiday decorations at Constitution Plaza in Hartford, Connecticut.

### A central theme in *If Anything Happens to Me* is the bond between siblings. What is it about siblings that is so compelling to write and read about?

I am the oldest of three sisters. My mother always used to say, "You'll have many friends in life, but only two sisters." She was right. I have lots of close friends, but there is nothing like the love and emotion between sisters. We have a secret language—I even wrote a novel about it—where a single glance can say it all. All my sister has to do is raise an eyebrow a quarter inch, and I'll lose it, laughing—or crying, depending on the situation. We hold each other's histories in our hearts.

### The locations in the story are so vivid. Are there any particular places that inspired the story?

The Connecticut shoreline, where I live. Oli and Eloise grew up at a beach very similar to the one my sisters and I spent summers at. I call it Hubbard's Point in my books. Minerva's jewelry store is in New London, the city where I went to college. Miramar, the old hotel, is set in Silver Bay, based on a real-life town on Long Island Sound, right next to Hubbard's Point. The library where Daphne sent her historic papers is also in Silver Bay. Iris's family lives in Newport, Rhode Island, a seaside haven where my grandparents met and where my sisters and I lived for a while.

### Do you plot the story out ahead of time or do you discover the story as you're writing it? Was there anything in this book that really surprised you?

I've never plotted. A character comes to me and tells me her name. Then she whispers a sentence in my ear. Almost always, in all my novels, that first sentence goes into the first chapter and never changes. I sit very still and listen to my character tell her story. She introduces me to her family and friends, tells me some of her secrets (but not all) and shows me where she lives, the places she loves. I write everything she says and does and dreams, and along the way I learn more of her secrets, and that's what makes the story. Many things in this book surprised me. One of the biggest surprises was the meaning of the gold dust. I didn't see that coming!