

The Friends We Keep

Reader's Discussion Guide

Please note: these questions contain spoilers. You should wait to read them until after you've finished the book.

1. *The Friends We Keep* has three intertwining storylines—one each for Gabby, Nicole, and Hayley. What are the common themes that tie together these three plots?
2. What does the title mean to you?
3. How did the events of the story change Gabby, Hayley, and Nicole? What lessons did they learn? Do any of those lessons make you think differently about something that's happening in your own life?
4. Susan Mallery is noted for her keen insight into our inner lives, and her ability to elicit deep emotions from her readers. Which scenes were the most emotional for you? Which parts made you laugh?
5. Susan makes a promise to her readers that they can relax into the reading experience knowing that the characters will pull through, even after facing the hardest of circumstances. Did you find the ending satisfying for each character?
6. Which of the three stories was your favorite, and why? Which of the three women is most like you? Did your opinion of any of the characters (including secondary characters) change as you read the book?
7. Did you feel that Gabby was being selfish by refusing to raise Makayla's baby as her own? What would you have done in her situation? Have you or has anyone close to you had a baby at such a young age?
8. Did Hayley's husband do the right thing when he left her? Why or why not? What else could he have done to get through to her?
9. Did you expect Hayley to adopt Makayla's baby? Do you think that ending would have been better or worse than what happened in the book? Explain.
10. What did you think of Jairus? Why do you think Nicole was so reluctant to meet him, and then to go out with him? Go around the room and state whether you read the start of Nicole's journey in *The Girls of Mischief Bay*. Does the perception of those who read that book differ from that of those who did not?

*Join the mailing list at SusanMallery.com to receive an email when Susan releases a new *Mischief Bay* novel.*



Chicken Enchilada Casserole

from Supper's in the Bag

- 15-oz can of tomato sauce
- 10.5-oz can of cream of chicken soup
- 2 T chili powder
- 1 t garlic salt
- 15-oz can of black beans, partially mashed
- 6 C cooked chicken, shredded (1 rotisserie chicken works nicely)
- ½ C sour cream
- ½ C frozen corn
- 2 C shredded cheddar-jack cheese, divided
- 12 corn tortillas, cut into 1-inch slices, divided
- 2 C baby spinach leaves
- Sour cream, green onions, and tomatoes for garnish (optional)



Mix tomato sauce through garlic salt. Set sauce aside.

Mix beans, chicken, sour cream, corn, and 1 C cheese. Set filling aside.

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. Line a 13x9-inch pan with foil and spray with nonstick spray. Spread about ¾ C of sauce into the prepared pan. Layer half of the corn tortilla strips on top of the sauce, partially overlapping. Put the filling on top of the tortillas, and the baby spinach on top of that. Spread another ¾ C of sauce over the spinach leaves. Cover with the rest of the tortilla strips. Top with all of the remaining sauce.

Cover with foil and bake for half an hour. Top with remaining cheese and bake for another 5-10 minutes, until cheese has melted and started to brown, and mixture is bubbly. Let sit for 10 minutes before serving. If desired, garnish with a dollop of sour cream, green onions and tomatoes.