

# First Mistake Discussion Questions

by Sandie Jones

## Author Bio: (from Fantastic Fiction & Sandie Jones's website)

Sandie Jones is a freelance journalist and has contributed to the Sunday Times, Daily Mail, Woman's Weekly and Hello magazine. If she wasn't a writer, she'd be an interior designer as she has an unhealthy obsession with wallpaper and cushions. She lives in London with her husband and three children.



## Characters:

- **Alice Evans Davies** – (36) – Mother to Sophia (15) and Livvy (8). Interior Designer. Creative mind behind AT Designs. 1<sup>st</sup> husband, Tom Evans, disappeared 10 years earlier and is presumed dead. Struggled and was institutionalized with major depression after Tom died. Currently married to Nathan. Best friend is Beth. Her mother is Linda
- **Nathan Davies** – Alice's second husband. Business side of AT designs. Livvy is his daughter.
- **Tom Evans**– Alice's first husband. Was a civil engineer but left to start AT Designs with Alice. Used his million-dollar inheritance to start business. Went missing on a ski trip 10 years previous. Sophia is his daughter. Brother is in prison.
- **Beth Russo** – Single mother. Teacher. Daughter is Millie. Millie's father cheated and left and was never seen again. (9 years ago). Father passed away when she was a teenager.
- **Lottie** – Young employee at AT Designs. Creative interior designer. Alice is her mentor.
- **Maria** – Teacher friend of Beth's from "before."
- **Matt** – Employee at AT Designs
- **David Phillips** – Owns Temple Homes. Divorced. Was Alice's 1<sup>st</sup> love
- **Tom** – Beth's good-looking boyfriend. Father of Mollie. Buys and sells wine.
- **Tyson** – Beth's beloved dog
- **Mr. Yahamoto** – Lawyer in Japan

## Discussion Questions:

1. Did you like the book? Why or why not?
2. This book is titled "First Mistake." What was Alice's first mistake? Beth's?
3. There are two timelines in this novel – present day Alice and Beth from 9 years ago. Did having the two timelines work or did you find it confusing? Why or why not?
4. How did you like the pacing of the novel? Did it keep your attention? Why or why not?

5. Alice obviously loved Tom. Do you think her feelings for her 1<sup>st</sup> husband affected the way she treated Nathan? Regardless of who Nathan was in the end, did their marriage have a chance considering Alice's residual feelings for Tom? Why or why not?
6. What do you think happened to Alice's Tom?
7. Alice is very nervous about leaving her children. Do you think this was a realistic response to Tom's loss and Alice's resulting institutionalization or was it excessive? Why or why not?
8. What do you think happened to Beth's dog when it went missing?
9. Did Beth give too much away (house keys, money, etc.) to Tom or was it inevitable?
10. When did you start doubting Beth's Tom? What made you doubt his sincerity? What clues were there?
11. Did you figure out Beth's secret? When? What clues were there?
12. Can you become true friends with someone who you think "did you wrong"? How realistic is Alice and Beth's friendship?
13. Do you think Beth's course of action was right or wrong? Why? Was she looking for revenge or for justice? What other way could she have gotten revenge/justice?
14. Did you figure out Nathan's secret? When? What clues were there?
15. Why do you think it took Nathan 9 years, a marriage, and a child to enact his plan? Why do you think he waited so long to get his final (i.e. Japan) project started?
16. Why do you think the author ended the book in such a vague way? Who do you think Alice saved in the Epilogue? Did she make the right choice? Why or why not?
17. Sandie Jones has written other books. Will you read them?

### References:

- Fantastic Fiction – <https://www.fantasticfiction.com/s/sandie-jones/>
- Sandie Jones – <https://sandiejones.com/>
- Novelist – <https://web-a-ebSCOhost-com.ezproxy.clevnet.org/novp/detail?vid=2&sid=f8300384-f955-45e4-a7e5-9d6d48f41204%40sessionmgr4008&bdata=JnNpdGU9bm92cC1saXZl#UI=10781476&db=neh>

---

## Sandie Jones's Books

### Stand Alone Novels

- The Other Woman (2018)
  - The First Mistake (2019)
  - The Half Sister (2020)
  - The Guilt Trip (2021)
  - The Blame Game (2022)
- 

### If you liked The Murder List, try...

- Little Secrets – Jennifer Hillier
  - You Will Never Know – SA Prentiss
  - The Paper Wasp – Lauren Acampora
  - The Wrong Family – Tarryn Fisher
  - You Are Not Alone – Greer Hendricks
-