



# *If I Tell* by Janet Gurtler

## Discussion Questions

- 1 Secrets play a big role in all of the characters' lives in *If I Tell*.  
Are you good at keeping secrets?  
What is the biggest secret you've ever had to keep?
- 2 What would you do if you were Jaz?  
Keep the secret and pretend like you don't know, or tell and deal with the consequences?
- 3 From the beginning we learn that Jaz and her mom have an unusual relationship.  
What is your relationship like with your mom?  
Do you wish it was different? How?
- 4 When Jaz meets Jackson for the first time, he surprises her because she's heard rumors about him at school.  
Do rumors change your impressions of people you don't know?
- 5 Jaz was traumatized by an incident in the pool when she was younger and has refused to swim since.  
Why do incidents like this happen?  
Why do you think Jaz didn't talk to anyone about it?
- 6 Jaz feels betrayed by Lacey and Simon. In the past she's forgiven Lacey for mistakes she's made when she's been drunk but feels that what she did this time was unforgivable.  
Should people be accountable for mistakes they've made when they're under the influence of alcohol or drugs? Why or why not?



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- 7 When Jackson finds Jaz in the park playing her guitar, he is intrigued and tells her, *“People might surprise you if you look harder. Sometimes you have to look beneath the surface.”*  
What does Jackson mean?
- 8 When Jaz meets her mom and Simon for dinner, she tells her mom, *“I could not care less about you or your stupid baby. I feel sorry for it. You’re the worst mother in the world.”*  
Have there been times when you said or did something you came to regret? Were you able to make amends?
- 9 Jaz is surprised by her feelings for her new baby brother.  
How does she show this? Discuss a time when you’ve had to defend your brother or sister or another family member.
- 10 Postpartum depression is a serious illness that many women face after they have babies but it’s not something most people talk about. Mental illness has many stigmas.  
Why do you believe people are often afraid to talk about mental illness? Is it something you are comfortable talking about? Why or why not?
- 11 The characters in *If I Tell* are flawed and make mistakes.  
When should we forgive people’s mistakes and when should we decide not to? What is the biggest mistake you ever made? Were you able to fix it? Did you learn from it?