



## READING GUIDE

**Mississippi:** The Mockingbird Bridge series is set in a small town in the Mississippi Delta. Mississippi has a rich and complicated history.

- There aren't many romances written in this setting. Why do you think that is?
- Do you think readers avoid romances set in the deep south because of southern stereotypes?

**Small Town:** The Mockingbird Bridge series is set in a small town (less than 1,000)

- How did you feel about the way small town challenges appeared in the book?
- There are many challenges that small towns face, from infrastructure to drug use. Did any of the issues the residents of are dealing with reflect what's happening in your own hometown?

**Race:** At its heart, the Mockingbird Bridge series is a romance. The stories often address serious issues about race and prejudice.

- Were you concerned about reading a romance that addressed uncomfortable aspects of racial prejudice and inequity?
- Did those issues add or detract from the story?
- What did you think of how the residents of Colton came together to address these issues?
- Do you think living in a small town that is half Black and half White forces the characters to interact more with people outside their race?
- Is there a moment in the series or book that made you question your own assumptions or bias about race?

**Family:** Family dynamics are an important part of the Mockingbird Bridge series. Some characters have loving and supportive families while others have a more complicated dynamic.

- How did familial relationships help and harm the protagonists?
- For the characters who created a found a family for themselves, what "family" members were the most important and why?

**History:** History, particularly Black and Civil Rights history, is woven into all the Mockingbird Bridge books.

- How do you think the past impacted the hero or heroine's journey?
- In **The Way Home**, a plantation house is restored. Currently in Mississippi the Bryant General Store, the site where the incident that incited Emmitt Till's murder is a point of contention, with some wanting to preserve the site and the Bryant family, along with others determined to let the site deteriorate until it disappears. Do you think sites from a dark time in history should be preserved or allowed to evaporate from history?
- Did you learn something about history that changed your perspective or challenged your belief system?