



## I Know You Love Me, Too

**Amy Neswald**

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In her debut novel-in-stories, *I Know You Love Me, Too*, Amy Neswald threads the relationship between two sisters through fourteen linked stories to create a genre-bending experience. The half sisters, eight years apart in age, must figure out who and what they are to each other after the unexpected death of their father, the only person intent on linking them together. Haunting in both its language and images, the novel is quiet but intense.

The story begins at older sister Ingrid's art show, where italicized descriptions of her work are interspersed with the story. The scene is subtle in revealing the themes that come to dominate the book: artistic and emotional isolation, the fear of losing art, the distance between the sisters, Ingrid's fear of not fulfilling her artistic potential, and loss. The emotions of Ingrid's art are translated into language in a joyful manner.

Ingrid's younger sister, Kate, is often dismissed by her older sister, but the stories reveal a different story of a child set adrift after her father's death, hiding under a guise of perfection. The narration switches story by story, occasionally decentering Ingrid and Kate entirely. As a result, the characters take on a public presence as well as their private thoughts, making them fully rounded.

The language is compelling, both in terms of its descriptions and its apt observations. In "Forty-six", repetition and figurative language engine the story, showing the near mania that drives Kate. In another story, a character remarks, "Love is like that: it is hard to get the measurements just right."

The novel-in-stories *I Know You Love Me, Too* follows the evolution of a sisterhood—a troubled relationship covered via visceral descriptions and lush language.

CAMILLE-YVETTE WELSCH (November / December 2021)

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