



**BOOK CLUB  
KIT**

# ONCE AGAIN: A NOVEL

What if you had one chance to save someone you lost?

Isolated in the aftermath of tragedy, Erin Fullarton has felt barely alive since the loss of her young daughter, Korrie. She struggles to mark the milestones her therapist suggests—like this day: the five hundredth without Korrie—but moving through grief is like swimming against a dark current.

Her estranged husband, Zac, a brilliant astrophysicist, seems to be coping better. Lost in his work, he's perfecting his model of a stunning cosmological phenomenon, one he predicts will occur on this same day—an event so rare, it keeps him from being able to acknowledge this milestone alongside Erin.

But when Erin receives a phone call from her daughter's school, the same call she received five hundred days earlier when Korrie was still alive, Erin realizes something is happening. Or happening *again*. Struggling to understand the sudden shifts in time, she pieces together that the phenomenon Zac is tracking may have presented her with the gift of a lifetime: the chance to save her daughter.

As Erin is swept through time, she's unable to reach Zac or convince the authorities of what is happening. Forced to find the answer on her own, Erin must battle to keep the past from repeating—or risk losing her daughter for good.

An emotional,  
imaginative time-slip  
thriller

Compelling,  
original, the kind of novel  
that will linger in the mind  
and memory  
— Midwest Book  
Review

For readers of  
Blake Crouch, Audrey  
Niffenegger, and Emily  
St. John Mandel

# discussion questions

1

What does this story say about the nature of grief? Do you think grief affects people differently?

2

Whether you're a parent or not, do you think you would have reacted in the way Erin did? What would you have done differently?

3

How did the portrayals of Zac and Erin impact the way you felt about them? Did these characterizations make you like one more than the other?

4

What surprised you most about this book? The author included scientific theory, thriller elements, and themes of family and love. Were you expecting this?

5

If you could give this book a new title, what would it be?

6

Have you ever experienced a sensation of déjà vu that lasted longer than a second or two? Have you ever wondered about the source or the changeability of our perception of time?

7

Were you surprised by the ending of the book? Did you think you knew how it would end or were you unsure until the final chapter?

8

If you could ask the author one still-lingering question about the book, what would you ask her?

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## author q&a

Catherine Wallace Hope grew up in Colorado, the setting for her thriller *Once Again*. She earned her degree in creative writing at the University of Colorado and also delved into dance in New York and art and psychology in California. When she returned to Colorado, she became an instructor at the renowned Lighthouse Writers Workshop, offering creativity workshops for writers. Currently, she and her family are living on an island in the Pacific Northwest where they serve at the pleasure of two astonishingly spoiled dogs.



You can find more at [catherinewallacehope.com](http://catherinewallacehope.com).

**Q: How did you come up with the idea for *Once Again*?**

Years ago, I woke up from a dream that my husband and I had once had a daughter, but she'd been kidnapped. It was so vivid, I remember it even now as if it were last night. In the dream, I realized our daughter's kidnapping was happening all over again. I was running around, trying to figure out how to keep the abduction from recurring. There was some confusion in a police station, and there were also trucks crashing into each other—you know, the way things switch in dreams. I was trying to get someone to help, feeling panicked and not making sense, and that's when I woke from the dream. The feelings really stayed with me the whole day, and as I turned it over in my mind, it occurred to me that it reflected in a couple of directions I thought were sort of cool. It reached backward into myth—the ancient story of Hades' abduction of Persephone, and it also reached forward into the future: emerging discoveries in astrophysics about our existence and about our understanding of time. I knew that the atomic clock in Boulder, Colorado, near where I lived, was the center for time measurement in the U.S. I'd always loved Boulder, and it felt like a bit of synchronicity that it could become the setting for this story.

**Q: What was the hardest part of writing this book?**

Without a doubt, the hardest thing was writing about the villain. Being in there with him was difficult. A less difficult part was letting go of stuff I really liked that had to be cut. There were big sections that I thought were interesting that ultimately turned out to be too distracting. But I've saved them all in a "cemetery document," so who knows what they might eventually turn into.

**Q: Do you have a background in science, or did you have to do a lot of research?**

I have no background in science. Not even remotely. I'm an English major through and through. But I love science. I've always found it fascinating and awe-inspiring; and I admire the discipline and brilliance of scientists. Before I wrote this book, I knew a little bit about gravitational waves and time crystals because I was curious about them. So, yes, I relied on research. All of the science in the book is extrapolated from real science. In fact, the field of gravitational-wave astronomy is advancing so quickly that I had to update some events in the story in an effort to keep up with it.

**Q: So are you saying the ring Erin wears is real?**

The ring is probably my writer's mind paying homage to J.R.R. Tolkien because I admire his imagination so much, but the time crystal in Erin's ring is based on a real thing. And the field of quantum computing is another area where things are rapidly evolving, and diamonds are part of that.

**Q: How did you decide what to allow each character to know?**

Well, in fiction, as in life, it seems like it's always a puzzle of what you don't know. Zac is observing events as they take shape in a simulation on a monitor, and Erin is seeing the same things as they happen to her in real life. The two of them are watching one extraordinary phenomenon unfold, but they are seeing it from separate perspectives. Neither knows what the other is seeing. Which, on a lesser scale, is what happens to everybody, all the time, right?

**Q: Your story has an uncommon blend of suspense, crime, romance, family dynamics and a major scientific discovery all in one day. Will readers take all of that in?**

I hope so. I think attentive readers can see the places where the elements join up, where the events dovetail. And as far as the range that takes place in a day, I mean, I think that's how life is. You go along the best you can for a normal stretch of small ups and downs, and then suddenly, everything changes and becomes enormous and everything hits at once. Or at least that's how it seems to me. Like a storm at sea.

**Q: Why did you decide to have Erin and Zac play such traditional roles—the soft, typical mother and the science guy, working dad?**

Traditional? I'm not sure I see them that way. Erin is drawn from the harvest goddess Demeter, who was a very powerful character in Greek myth. And Erin's ambition was to be a chef/restaurateur, which is typically a male-dominated profession. Zac, on the other hand, was inspired by Zeus, the sky god (which worked well for an astrophysicist), and in the end, it's his faithfulness to those he loves that propels him. As far as traditional parenting roles, I'm not even sure what traditional is anymore. I think mothers and fathers everywhere struggle with competing hopes and demands on their hearts and on their time, and I think there are few ambitions for men or women that match the monumental endeavor to be good parents.

# zac's banana nut bread



Prep Time: 15 minutes  
Cook Time: 50 minutes  
Total Time: 1 hour, 5 minutes

Trying the recipe? Be sure to tag Catherine on social media with your photos!  
[@catwallacehope](#)

## Ingredients

*For the banana bread:*

- ¼ cup salted butter, softened
- ¼ cup peanut oil
- ½ cup brown sugar
- ¼ cup granulated sugar
- 1 tbsp honey
- 2 whole bananas, mashed
- 2 large eggs, at room temperature
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1 cup flour
- ½ cup cake flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp salt
- ⅛ cup milk
- ⅛ cup yogurt
- ¾ cup walnuts, chopped
- 1 tbsp maple syrup
- a splash of bourbon

*For the ginger butter:*

- ¼ cup cream cheese
- ¼ cup butter, softened
- 1 tbsp honey
- ¼ tsp powdered ginger
- a grating of nutmeg
- ½ tsp vanilla

## Method

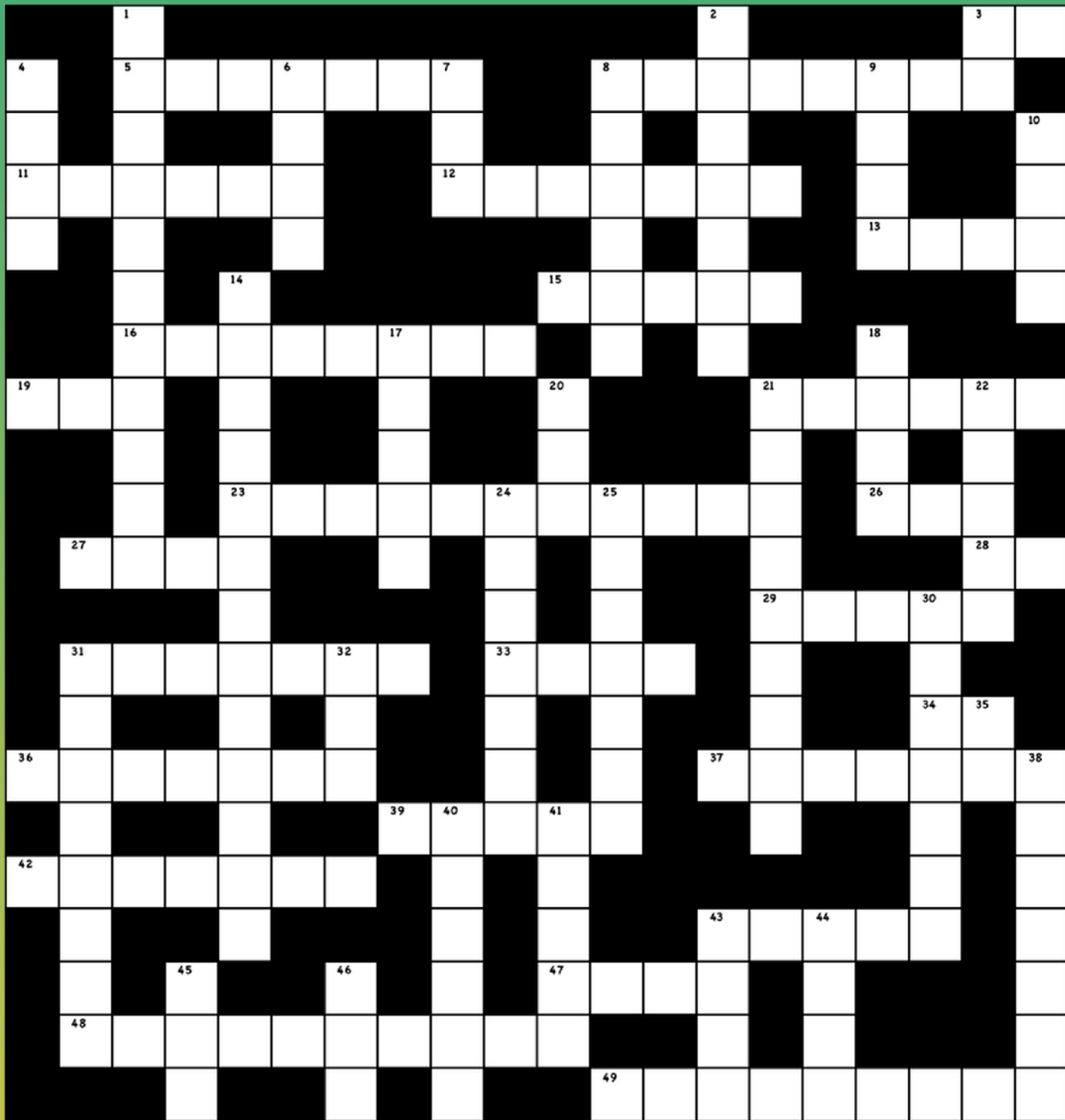
*For the banana bread:*

1. Preheat oven to 325°F.
2. Coat the inside of a loaf pan with butter, and set aside.
3. Mix oil, butter, sugar, and honey in a large bowl.
4. Add eggs, vanilla, and banana, and stir until smooth.
5. Gently stir in dry ingredients, milk, and yogurt to form a smooth batter.
6. Stir in ½ cup of walnuts.
7. Pour batter into loaf pan and top with ¼ cup of walnuts.
8. Bake on lower shelf of oven for 50 to 60 minutes.
9. Remove from oven and drizzle maple syrup evenly over top of bread. (If you're feeling daring, combine the maple syrup with a small splash of bourbon before drizzling.)
10. Let cool for 15 minutes before removing from pan.
11. Slice and serve with ginger butter.

*For the ginger butter:*

1. In a bowl, combine ingredients until creamy.
2. Spread onto warm banana bread.

# A Crossword Puzzle



only readers can solve  
(Answers are on page 8.)

# Crossword Clues

## Across

3. What \_\_\_ you had one chance to save someone you lost?
5. Zac's field of study is loop \_\_\_\_\_ gravity.
8. A Montana city where Aidon wants to go.
11. Three Dog \_\_\_\_\_ Mining Mill.
12. Electrons within a diamond atom are like these.
13. Zac hopes to discover a "new physics of \_\_\_\_\_."
15. A feeling of wrath.
16. Where Zac and Erin went to college.
19. License Plate Recognition.
21. Korrie's favorite color.
23. Make of vehicle Tom Drake drives.
26. Association to which Dr. Tanner would belong.
27. An electron and a flaw can bond and \_\_\_\_\_ luminescence.
28. Exclamation of a negative response.
29. To make a conjecture or hazard an estimate.
31. Foreshadow that something momentous is likely to happen.
33. The title of the novel is \_\_\_\_\_ *Again*.
34. Registered Owner.
36. Type of gem Zac uses to create time crystals.
37. What the weather is doing the second time Erin looks out of the kitchen window.
39. The opposite of too late is too \_\_\_\_\_.
42. Nordic island country where Erin's parents vacationed.
43. What the paramedic cuts from Korrie's wrists.
47. Perform something again or differently.
48. What Mark and Jin build from Zac's model.
49. One of the insects Erin and Korrie see beside the brook.

## Down

1. Zac uses lasers to throw electrons out of \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Decorative embellishment Korrie used on a valentine.
3. Present tense of *was*.
4. Something Erin wishes she could accomplish but cannot even start.
6. What Dan finds and sends to Zac.
7. Who Erin is to Korrie.
8. Type of bread Zac makes.
9. Zac's place of work.
10. When Tom Drake looks into Korrie's \_\_\_\_\_, it's as if he sees a little bird.
14. Type of waves generated by binary black holes.
17. After now.
18. A region or part of a location.
20. Solid phase of water.
21. Falcon for which Korrie's school is named.
22. Deviates from a perpendicular position.
24. Rebecca Kincaid's profession.
25. Prone to take offense.
30. Anna Schacht is the "purse \_\_\_\_\_":....
31. Squidling \_\_\_\_\_, as Korrie calls herself.
32. Slightly lower and raise one's head in assent.
35. Resting atop.
38. Seriousness.
40. Type of clock used to measure gravitational waves.
41. Discover or acquire knowledge.
43. Item of clothing the SAR dogs used as a source of scent.
44. Destiny.
45. Emergency Medical Technician.
46. Building where the NIST team works.

Answers on page 8.

# Answers

		<sup>1</sup> E								<sup>2</sup> G					<sup>3</sup> I	F				
<sup>4</sup> B		<sup>5</sup> Q	U	A	<sup>6</sup> N	T	U	<sup>7</sup> M			<sup>8</sup> B	I	L	L	I	<sup>9</sup> N	G	S		
A		U			O			O		A		I			I			<sup>10</sup> E		
<sup>11</sup> K	N	I	G	H	T			<sup>12</sup> M	A	G	N	E	T	S		S		Y		
E		L			E					A		T			<sup>13</sup> T	I	M	E		
		I		<sup>14</sup> G					<sup>15</sup> A	N	G	E	R					S		
		<sup>16</sup> B	E	R	K	E	<sup>17</sup> L	E	Y		A		R			<sup>18</sup> A				
<sup>19</sup> L	P	R		A			A			<sup>20</sup> I				<sup>21</sup> P	U	R	P	<sup>22</sup> L	E	
		I		V			T			C				E		E		E		
		U		<sup>23</sup> I	N	T	E	R	<sup>24</sup> C	E	<sup>25</sup> P	T	O	R		<sup>26</sup> A	P	A		
		<sup>27</sup> E	M	I	T			R		O		R		E				<sup>28</sup> N	O	
				A						R		I		<sup>29</sup> G	U	E	<sup>30</sup> S	S		
		<sup>31</sup> P	O	R	T	E	<sup>32</sup> N	D		<sup>33</sup> O	N	C	E		R			T		
		R			I		O			N		K			I		<sup>34</sup> R	<sup>35</sup> O		
<sup>36</sup> D	I	A	M	O	N	D				E		L		<sup>37</sup> S	N	O	W	I	N	<sup>38</sup> G
		N			N			<sup>39</sup> E	<sup>40</sup> A	R	<sup>41</sup> L	Y			E			N		R
<sup>42</sup> I	C	E	L	A	N	D		T		E								G		A
		E			L					O		A		<sup>43</sup> C	U	<sup>44</sup> F	F	S		V
		S		<sup>45</sup> E			<sup>46</sup> L	M		<sup>47</sup> R	E	D	O		A					I
<sup>48</sup> S	I	M	U	L	A	T	I	O	N				A		T					T
				T			B		C			<sup>49</sup> B	U	T	T	E	R	F	L	Y



# Thank you!

Hi!

I want you to know how thankful I am that you took time out of your busy life to read *Once Again*. It took me about two years to do the research and the actual writing, and then another two went into all of the mechanics of publishing; and if I've done my job well, it should have taken only a few hours for you to experience the story from beginning to end. Yet, my hope is that something of the story will stay with you as you make your way forward into the future. Erin, Korrie, Zac, Tom, and all the others still live in my mind; and it's almost as if I can catch glimpses of them as they go on with their lives. And while you've been reading *Once Again*, I've been writing hard to compose a new novel. Feel free to keep in touch, and don't hesitate to ask if you're curious about how that effort is going.

I wish you well, and I hope to connect with you again soon.

Happy reading!



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