



# The Silent Sister

Review by Dana Schmidt, Yankton Community Library

At the age of 25, Riley MacPherson has lost her mother to cancer, her older sister Lisa to suicide, and now her dad to a heart attack. The only loved one she has left is her brother Danny who may be suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and has not had anything to do with his parents for many years. After her father's sudden death, Riley is returning to her childhood home to tie up loose ends and prepare the house for selling.

As she begins this daunting task, she meets Jeannie, her dad's girlfriend of nearly seven years that Riley knows nothing about. She is surprised to find out that she didn't know her dad as well as she thought she did...but that is only the beginning. She discovers that her dad had more secrets than she could have ever imagined. Through her discoveries and sometimes conflicting information from those around her, Riley learns unsettling details about her parents and her sister whom she barely had a chance to know.

Riley's sister, Lisa, had been the perfect child, a good student and a music prodigy. Though Riley was very young when she died, Danny resented constantly living in Lisa's shadow, both before and after her death. When cleaning out her father's house, Riley makes a shocking discovery. At the time of her death, Lisa was actually set to go on trial for murder.

Riley needs to decide what she will do with her new-found knowledge and how it has the potential to affect the rest of her life.

Chamberlain knows how to weave a great story. Her writing draws you in from the very first page and keeps you reading. According to her online biography page, her books are "often filled with twists and surprises and-I hope-they also tug at the emotions. Relationships-between men and women, parents and children, sisters and brothers-are always the primary focus of my books. I can't think of anything more fascinating than the way people struggle with life's trials and tribulations."

I loved this book! I felt that Riley was easy to connect with and you become swept along with her dramatic journey and conflicting emotions. Chamberlain creates characters that are so real and in doing so draws out real emotions from her readers from sympathy, to annoyance, to fear and uncertainty.

*The Silent Sister* is one of 26 books written by Diane Chamberlain, many which are owned by Yankton Community Library. Diane's newest book, *Pretending to Dance*, is due to be released in October of 2015.



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