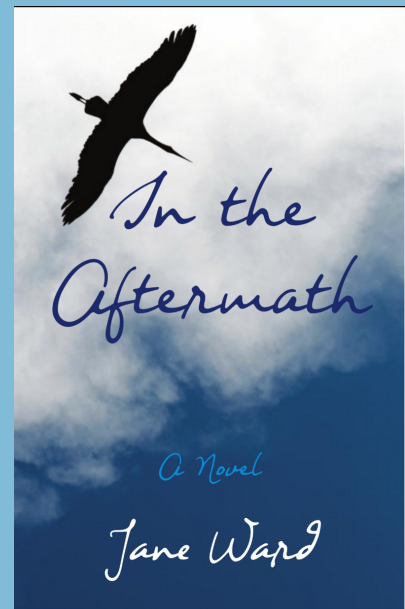


# Reading Guide for IN THE AFTERMATH



1. How does this book treat the subject of family. In this novel, what makes a family?
2. Dan, the young banker, feels responsible for David's death. Is he? If not, who is? Why?
3. Jules believes in quality products; David believed in sacrificing quality for business reasons. Is there a constant battle in contemporary America between quality and profits?
4. Do you think the kids in this novel are okay? Will they be okay?
5. What allows Jules to move on? Could she have done so without the money she received?
6. Is this novel about forgiveness of others? Ourselves? Is it about mercy?
7. What do you think will happen to all the characters now?
8. Part of *IN THE AFTERMATH* deals with missed opportunities and also second chances. Discuss.
9. The author uses several points of view to tell David's story and the subsequent stories that result from his bad decisions. Why do you think she chose to do this?
10. Why do you think Jules stopped baking as a career?

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## Meet Jane Ward

### What's your story? Why did you become a writer?

I was the kid who read early (age 4) and from then on proceeded to lose myself in books and make-believe. I have a still vivid memory from kindergarten of the teacher sending someone to the rest room to bring me back to class. She was so upset with me and I couldn't understand why. I thought I'd been gone for about a minute; come to find out it was more like 20. I had started daydreaming and completely lost track of time! Library visits were my favorite activity. I was a shy child, a true introvert, and I could hide in the stacks with books and not have to talk to anyone. One day it occurred to me that I could write books like the ones I loved to read, and so I began writing stories—not very good ones at first!—primarily to entertain myself. Fiction writing as my calling was confirmed about 15 years later when I read a story excerpt aloud in a creative writing class in college. There was a long pause when I finished and then my classmates erupted in applause.

### What make you want to do it again and again?

A character appears in my imagination. Clothes, hair, scars, everything. Then he or she does something that is odd or bad or desperate and I become eager to understand why. Then I write to understand why. I don't finish until I do, or at least have a better understanding. There's nothing like the absolute absorption into a make-believe world. To me it's the most compelling place ever. I'm the kindergartner daydreaming in the bathroom again, only now, no one interrupts me. I have the power! When I finish a story, I realize it's all been about helping a reader understand why someone would do something odd or bad or desperate, and not about me escaping real life at all. That's always a surprise.

### What do you want people to know about you and what you write?

- I'm an optimist!
- I'm funnier in real life than my books with their sometimes heavy themes would suggest!
- I am fascinated by people. The food stories I enjoyed writing the most were the profiles of the chef or the jam maker or the baker. Their food was great but their journeys into the business and who they were when they left work behind were more interesting.
- I am a visual person, which may seem an odd way to describe a person who uses words. But I think I use words the way other artists use paint: to create a picture. Only in my work the picture is appearing in a reader's mind from the words I've used.

## Real Life Favorite Spots in this Fiction Writer's World

My novels always reference New England. No surprise. I grew up in—and return time and again to—Massachusetts. The varied landscapes and local touchstones are the places I see most clearly when my characters and their actions develop and take shape. Here are a few special spots north and a little west of Boston.

**Plum Island:** [Parker River National Wildlife Refuge](#) and Sandy Point State Reservation

Excellent walks and birding opportunities in the wildlife refuge with a simply beautiful and peaceful state reservation beach at the end of the peninsula.

**Amesbury:** [Amesbury Public Library](#).

The library where I began doing library advocacy work. A circa 1900 Richardsonian-style building right in downtown Amesbury.

**Rockport:** [Halibut Point State Park](#)

An old granite quarry on coastal Rockport. A great site for a family hike. Take a picnic and sit on the granite slabs at the ocean's edge to eat.

**Manchester-by-the-Sea:** [Singing Beach](#)

The go-to beach in college and post-graduation because my friends and I could take the train from Boston to Manchester and walk in. A truly lovely spot, easy to walk its length because it's not as large as the area's better-known beaches like Good Harbor and Crane.

**Ipswich:** [Appleton Farms](#)

A working New England farm managed by the Trustees of Reservations. Take your pick of programs, enjoy fresh and local produce from the food store, or walk or ride your horse around the extensive trails.

**Essex and Ipswich:** [Woodman's](#) and [Clam Box](#)

Fried clams. There's other fried food on both menus (and Clam Box's lobster rolls are very good!). But Ipswich and Essex are known for their clams, so don't miss.

**Beverly:** [Bonny Breads](#)

The baker here knows what she's doing with bread. Try the cardamom buns.

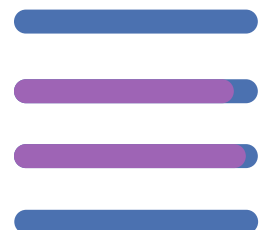
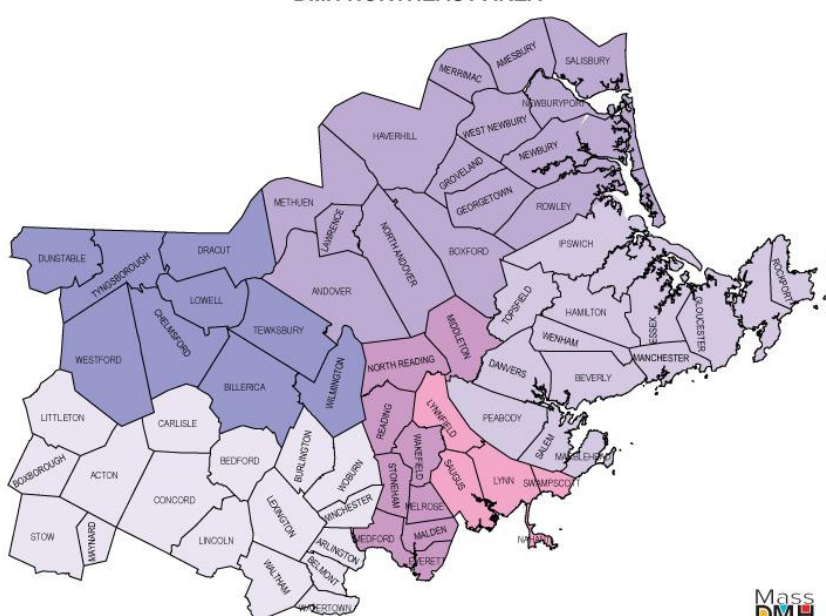
**Middleton:** [Richardson's Ice Cream](#)

Grape-Nut or Moose Tracks? I never veer from one of my two favorites. Best ice cream in Massachusetts, don't let anyone tell you otherwise.

**Arlington:** [Quebrada Baking Company](#).

Quebrada gave me a job years ago baking on weekends when I had never baked commercially before. Consistently tasty baked goods made with quality ingredients.

DMH NORTHEAST AREA







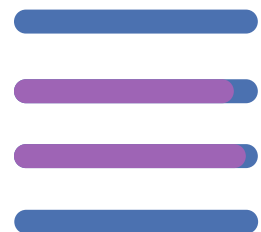




## Dried Cherry-White Chocolate Chunk Scones *(In the Aftermath)*

- 2 cups unbleached all-purpose flour 1/8 teaspoon salt
  - 2 teaspoon baking powder
  - 1/4 cup sugar
  - 5-1/3 tablespoons very cold unsalted butter, cut into small pieces
  - 1/2 cup chilled heavy cream
  - 1 large egg
  - 1 teaspoon vanilla
  - 1/2 cup white chocolate chunks or chips
  - 1/2 cup dried tart cherries (such as Montmorency)
  - 1 large egg mixed with 1 Tablespoon water for an egg wash
  - Bakers sparkling sugar\*
1. Preheat oven to 425 degrees and prepare a baking sheet by lining it with a sheet of parchment.
  2. In a large mixing bowl, stir together flour, salt, baking powder, and sugar. Using a pastry cutter, cut the cold butter into the dry ingredients until the butter is the size of tiny peas and evenly distributed.
  3. In a small bowl, mix together the cream, egg, and vanilla with a fork until they are well blended.
  4. Make a well in the center of the dry ingredients and pour the cream mixture into it. Using the blending fork, gently incorporate the flour into the liquid until barely mixed together.
  5. Add the white chocolate and cherries and continue mixing with the fork only until the dough holds together. Knead dough lightly in the bowl for a couple of turns, then turn the dough out onto a floured cutting board or pastry cloth. (Note: It is important to keep from over mixing scone dough for a tender and crumbly scone.)
  6. Pat the scone dough into an 8- or 9-inch circle that is approximately three-quarters of an inch thick. Transfer circle to prepared baking sheet.
  7. On the baking sheet, cut the circle into 8 wedges using a sharp knife.
  8. Brush the top of the scone circle lightly with the egg wash and sprinkle with sparkling sugar. Set in the preheated oven to bake for 15-18 minutes, or until golden brown all over without any wet spots on the surface.
  9. Remove the baking pan to a cooling rack. Re-cut the scone wedges and gently separate these so there is at least an inch of space between each wedge. Return the baking sheet to the oven for an additional 2-3 minutes. Scones are done when there is no sign of wetness at the edges, or when a toothpick inserted into the center of one comes out fairly clean, with only a few crumbs sticking to it. Remove scones to a cooling rack and allow to cool and set a bit before eating.

\*Sparkling sugar is a large crystal decorating sugar that will not melt when baked. It is available through baking supply stores.



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By Jane Ward

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