



QUESTIONS & ANSWERS WITH KATIE POWNER

1. Is Moose Creek modeled after a real town in Montana?

Yes and no. There are many, many small towns in Montana. I live in one, and I've visited many others, so I wanted to make Moose Creek a composite of several little towns. I love to draw inspiration from real people and places for my stories, but I didn't want to be limited by the restrictions of making Moose Creek true to reality. I wanted Moose Creek to be what I needed it to be. However, people from my neck of the woods will probably notice some easter eggs in *A Flicker of Light* that have to do with very specific, very real towns!

2. In *A Flicker of Light*, Grandma June is diagnosed with dementia. How did you research to portray this disease in your story?

In a way, you could say I spent about ten years researching for this book. I spent years as a volunteer in the dementia unit of several nursing homes—leading sing-a-longs, painting fingernails, and holding the wrinkled hands of beautiful people whose own minds had betrayed them—and then walked through the experience of having my own grandmother diagnosed with dementia. These were life-changing experiences. I also did a lot of reading online about the medical side of dementia and about other people's experiences. I was nervous at first about getting it right in the story, but in the end, I felt it was important to give Grandma June a voice, even if I didn't do it perfectly.

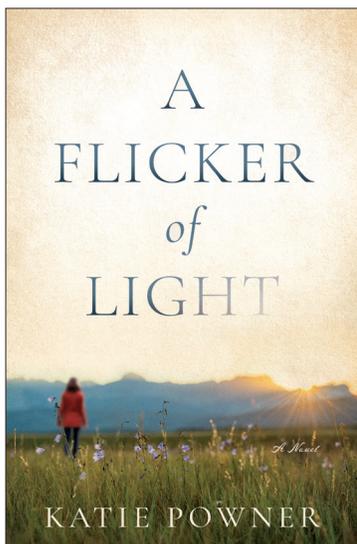
3. Your novel follows several characters—is there one you consider the main character? How did you balance between different perspectives?

I consider Bea to be the main character. It's her relationship and interaction with Grandma June that really drives the heart of the story. But when there are three point-of-view characters, each one seems like the main character at times!

Balancing the different perspectives was not as difficult as I thought it was going to be once I had a goal for each character's journey. But it did require more planning and plotting than probably any book I've attempted before.

4. Why do you think readers enjoy books that focus on small-town life and culture?

I think most people are drawn to the simple life. Small towns move at a slower pace and offer such a wonderful sense of community. Who wouldn't enjoy that?



A Flicker of Light

by Katie Powner

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