

## Within the Walls

1. "Within the Walls" is a story about Sofi, who has suppressed a grave trauma for a long time until the past comes back to haunt her. How common is it that we suppress difficult things instead of dealing with them? Do you do that yourself? Have you experienced that people in your surrounding do this?
2. How would you describe Sofi's personality? What made her the person she is? Why do you think she was so severely affected when what she had so long suppressed floats up to the surface?
3. Do you recognize Sofi's personality in someone around you?
4. Do you think Sofi changes during the book? If so, how?
5. Sofi's experiences take place in an abbey in France. What role does the abbey and its environment play for Sofi's experiences and acting? Have you ever visited an abbey and what did you experience there? Does it matter to the story that the abbey is situated in France and not in Sweden, Sofi being Swedish?
6. In France, Sofi meets a couple of persons who she in the end do not know if she can trust. Do you recognize Sofi's reactions towards other people?
7. Sofi was gravely let down by her husband. Why do you think she reacted so strongly even though her husband says he was never physically unfaithful – he just met another woman secretly and helped her with her work and the economy?
8. When does infidelity start? Can you be untrue without having a sexual relationship?
9. Can you understand that Sofi blames her husband for the death of her son? Do you think she will ever be able to reconcile to the fact that her son is dead?
10. Sofi writes about Marguerite Duras. Do you know Duras? Do you think the choice of writing about her in particular affects Sofi's experiences at the abbey?
11. How important is the past in the story about Sofi? Do you think that had happened that did happen if she had not gained knowledge about the deaths of the soldiers?
12. Sofi watches photographs of dead soldiers and she is photographed herself. How big a role does photography play in this book? How do old photos affect us?
13. In the end, Sofi reaches some sort of reconciliation and forgiveness. Are there things we can never reconcile with or forgive? Should we always strive towards reconciliation and forgiveness regarding ourselves and others?

14. A higher might, God, is present in the book. Do you think Sofi is a believer in God?  
In the beginning of the book? In the end?

15. Does this book remind you of another book or film?