

## About LOVE, ISH

Mischa “Ish” Love knows she’ll be one of the first settlers on Mars. She’s applied to - and been rejected from - the Mars Now project forty-seven times, but the mission won’t leave for ten years, and Ish hasn’t given up hope. She also hasn’t given up hope that Tig will be her best friend again. When Ish collapses on the first day of seventh grade, she gets a diagnosis that threatens all her future plans. As Ish fights cancer, she dreams in vivid detail about the Martian adventures she’s always known she’d have - and makes unexpected discoveries about love, fate, and her place in the vast universe.

“Mischa’s unique voice and way of perceiving the world are consistently absorbing, and her additional struggles with losing her best (and only) friend and coming to terms with being adopted expand it far beyond her illness . . . A star-bright story of love, courage, and unflagging spirit.” Starred review

—*Booklist*

“A worthwhile and affecting odyssey.”

—*Kirkus Reviews*

“This book packs an emotional punch . . . [A] heartbreaking and sharply wry tale about friendship, family, fate, and illness.”

—*School Library Journal*

## About KAREN RIVERS

**Karen Rivers** has written novels for adult, middle-grade, and young adult audiences. Her books have been nominated for a wide range of literary awards, including the Silver Birch Award, the Stellar Book Award, the White Pine Award, and the Sheila A. Egoff Children’s Literature Prize.

When she’s not writing, reading, or visiting schools, she can usually be found hiking in the forest that flourishes behind her tiny old house in Victoria, British Columbia, where she lives with her two kids, two dogs, two birds, and two fish.

## Curriculum

Grade 5, 6 Science and Technology (Understanding Life Systems, Understanding Earth and Space Systems)

Grade 7, 8 Science and Technology (Understanding Life Systems, Understanding Earth and Space Systems )

Grade 5, 6, 7, 8 Language (Reading, Writing)

## Student Objectives

After reading *Love, Ish*, students should be able to:

### Grade 5-6:

- Assess the effects of social and environmental factors on human health and propose ways in which individuals can reduce harmful effects of these factors.
- Evaluate the social and environmental costs and benefits of space exploration.
- Identify components of the solar system, including the sun, the earth, and other planets
- Explain how humans meet their basic biological needs in space.

### Grade 7-8:

- Analyse the costs and benefits of selected strategies for protecting the environment.
- Assess the impact on local and global water systems of a scientific discovery or technological innovation.
- Explain changes in atmospheric conditions caused by the presence of bodies of water.
- Develop and explain interpretations of texts using stated and implied ideas from the texts to support their interpretations

## Getting Started

1. Discuss climate change with the students. What do they already know about it?
2. Discuss Mars and the history of space travel.

## Discussion Questions

1. Ish's parents tell her she should "lighten up". Do you think Ish is too serious? (Chapter 3)
2. Tig says "internet relationships are easier than real ones." Do you agree? (Chapter 4)
3. Why do you think Tig leaves without really saying goodbye? (Chapter 8)
4. What do you think of Ish's reaction when she is told about her brain tumor? How would you react? (Chapter 11)
5. Should Ish tell Tig about the brain tumor? (Chapter 12)
6. Why is Ish resisting Gavriel's friendship? (Chapter 16)
7. After Ish's hair is pulled out, why does she go to Lunch Island? (Chapter 18)
8. On the opening page of the novel, Ish says one of the things she will miss most when she goes to Mars is her parrot, Buzz Aldrin. If this is true, why would she let him go? (Chapter 19)
9. Ish says she hates Iris, but she used to admire her. What has changed between them? (Chapter 20)
10. Ish tells Tig not to come see her after he finds out about her brain tumor. Does she mean it? (Chapter 20)
11. When Ish dreams, she prefers that they take place on Mars, why is that? (Chapter 20)
12. After referring to the tumor as a Brussels sprout for a long time, Ish finally calls it cancer. What is the significance of that? (Chapter 20)
13. Ish says she's not scared of death because there isn't a choice, is she being honest with herself? (Chapter 22)

## Class Activities

1. Map out the solar system/Create a model or drawing of the solar system.
2. Discuss what can be done to prevent further pollution. Is there an alternative to living on Mars?
3. Discuss the possible effects of pollution on the human body.