

***What Happens Next* by Christina Suzann Nelson**

Faith Byrne has made herself into a popular podcaster after being an investigative reporter for several years. Her podcast, “What Happens Next” deals with the positive ways families have handled themselves after a tragic event. Faith herself is going through a very rough time as her ex-husband is getting married and both of their teenage daughters will be spending the summer with his family in Hawaii.

As Faith makes plans for her first summer alone, she receives a letter from a childhood acquaintance. Early in her school-age years, Faith, her mother, and father had spent the summer with her father’s mother while her dad worked on a construction project nearby. Faith’s home life was often in upheaval and this summer was no different. Her mother was pregnant and having miscarried before, the doctor had given her strict instructions for rest. Moving in with her grandma gave Faith structure and freedom, and a new best friend, Heather, who lived next door.

The letter Faith receives is from Heather’s older sister Brooke. The news Brooke shares is shattering to Faith. Soon after Faith’s family left town, Heather disappeared. Her family, the local police, and the community searched for Heather, without success and with no real leads materializing. Heather’s mother has never been able to move on, and Brooke is asking, really begging, that Faith consider sharing their story on her podcast with the hope that someone will hear their story and share some information.

The story of Heather doesn’t fit Faith’s typical podcast, but once Brooke has reached out Faith decides to return to Deep Valley. Since Faith’s summer is free and the girls are busy, it is an easy decision to stay in the small house her grandmother still owns. But going back 37 years and remembering her summer in Deep Valley is also going to bring up some of Faith’s own unresolved questions, including her father’s suicide. What actually happened that summer? What could have happened to change so many lives?

What Happens Next is a bit of a mystery as well as a story of dealing with long –buried emotions and grief. The story is told from multiple viewpoints, with a time line that moves from 1987 to current day.