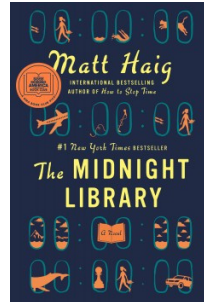


Further Reading

The Midnight Library (Sep 2020)

by Matt Haig

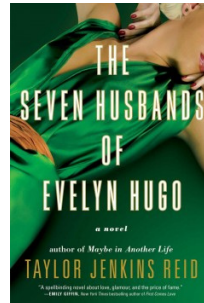
Between life and death there is a library, and within that library, the shelves go on forever. Every book provides a chance to try another life you could have lived. To see how things would be if you had made other choices . . . Would you have done anything different, if you had the chance to undo your regrets?



The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo (Jun 2017)

by Taylor Jenkins Reid

When an aging and reclusive Hollywood icon selects an unknown magazine reporter to write her life story, the baffled journalist forges deep ties with the actress during a complicated interview process that exposes their tragic common history.



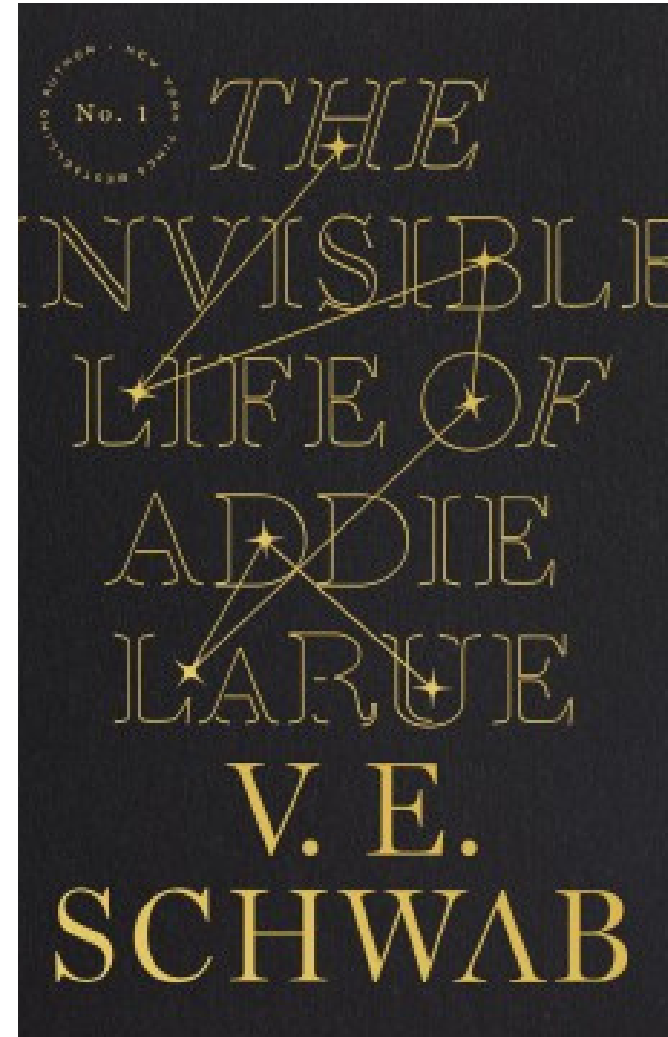
The Bear and the Nightingale (Jan 2017)

by Katherine Arden

After Vasilisa's mother dies, her father goes to Moscow and brings home a new wife. Fiercely devout, city-bred, Vasilisa's new stepmother forbids her family from honoring the household spirits. The family acquiesces, but Vasilisa is frightened, sensing that more hinges upon their rituals than anyone knows.



BOOK DISCUSSION



Discussion Questions

1. What are the best and worst things about Addie's invisible life? What is the emotional toll of being unable to imprint herself on the heart and mind of another person? When does it give her an advantage?
2. Discuss the intense power struggle between Addie and Luc. What makes him such a master of seduction? How does Addie reclaim her power and agency over the course of the centuries?
3. Addie slips into the homes (and even the clothes) of people from all walks of life. Which abode did you like the best? If Addie borrowed your house, what would she enjoy the most about the contents of your cupboards and your closets?
4. As we meet Addie's many lovers, Remy stands out as the first man who lived up to her girlhood fantasies. On the magical night they met, Addie was dressed in a pair of trousers, a buttoned coat, and a tricorne hat. How did her disguise (as "Thomas") stoke their passion?
5. Living without a bank account or a phone or an address, Addie is reduced to pilfering and theft to quell her physical suffering. Is it a blessing or a curse that she only has to worry about momentary suffering, not survival? What new appreciation do you have for the ordinary things you count on to make it through difficult times?
6. In Part Three, Chapter II, the author writes, "The time between Thursday night and Saturday afternoon is merciless, every second doled out with the care of an old woman counting pennies to pay for bread. Not once does it seem to quicken, not once does she lose track of it. She can't seem to spend it, or waste it, or even misplace it." How does the possibility of an infinite lifespan change the way Addie sees life itself?
7. Addie's situation is transformed when she steps into *The Last Word* for the first time. Discuss the role of the written word in her life. What does her taste in books say about her? What does it mean for her to be deprived of a lasting version of her own life story?
8. Belief plays such a central role in the narrative, specifically in the shaping of foundational identities, from the LaRue family's rigid Christianity to Estele and her faith in the old gods, to Addie, whose belief in a fantasy shapes the physical representation of Luc, and Henry, whose loss of belief leaves him feeling lost. How does Estele's immersion in the spirit world compare to Henry's studious theology?
9. As the chapters unfold from the seventeenth century to modern times, and as the novel oscillates between rural life and spectacular cities, what timeless, universal aspects of human nature emerge? From warfare to popular culture, revolution to liberation, how much progress does Addie witness? To what degree does she also watch history repeat itself?
10. As the intention behind Bea's project was revealed, what did you discover about the power of art to preserve hidden truths? In what way is Addie's identity written in the stars?
11. How did you react to the novel's ending? What had you been predicting for Addie?

Courtesy of macmillan.com