



Discussion Questions

1. Have you ever had an event so defeating that it took you considerable time and/or effort to “get back on the horse”, so to speak? I am sure I have better examples than my current situation, but right now, it feels a feat to get past this long covid and aftershocks of my father's death to resume my normal life activities.
2. What do you think about Greta's lifestyle? Do you think it is sustainable as she ages? I think if she desires things like marriage and a family, it will not be feasible for her to continue as such, but Greta seems very self-aware in this sense. She notes how if she meets anyone who makes her want to change course, she will have to and will do so.
3. Have you lost a parent? How has it changed your relationship with your still-living parent? My mom died 10 years prior to my father. In many ways, it made me closer to my dad, though our communication patterns and rhythm was definitely altered.
4. Discuss Conrad's relationship with Greta. Why was it so distanced? What might happen to breach this divide? I think they valued very different goals in life and were unable to communicate effectively about these differences. Starting to talk, as they did on this trip, was a huge first step. Reinforcing their love and admiration for each other was another, as we saw play out, especially with Conrad's actions at the end of the book.
5. Asher and Greta joke that he is the favorite child. Did your family of origin have a favorite child? Do you have a favorite child among your own children? My family laughs because I am constantly telling a different child they are my favorite, depending on who does a kind turn or makes a good choice! 😊
6. Greta and Ben seemed unlikely companions, yet discuss what drew them together. What were their similarities? Differences? Aside from their similar age on the ship, they were both very driven in their profession/passion. They each were at a crossroads in life. That said, they were living entirely different lives from each other.
7. Preeti was one of my favorite characters. What purpose did she serve in the story for Greta? Preeti reminded Greta not only of where she had started on her journey but of what it meant to love her music for the joy of it.
8. How was the story shaped by the setting of Alaska? What meaning did this provide? I have never been to Alaska, but from what I understand and per the description in the book, it is majestic and powerful in its raw beauty. Greta and Conrad's grief was so raw and powerful, so this was fitting. Also, her mother had long loved Alaska and arranged the visit, so made it the perfect postmortem voyage.
9. What was the significance of the sign that Greta's mom, then her dad held at her concerts. What way can we send similar messages to our own children (presuming they're not rock stars 😊)? It was a way of saying, “I believe in you! I am proud of you!”. We can do this by showing up for school concerts and games, cheering on grades and accomplishments and simply telling our kids we love them every night before tucking them in.
10. Discuss the unwritten next part of Greta and Ben's story. What do you think will happen? I loved the slow ending of Smith's novel! It gave you both the truth of what happened without giving away the end of their story. Personally, I think they will end up together.



New and Upcoming Book Club in a Bag Titles

Demon Copperhead	by Barbara Kingsolver
The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek	by Kim Michele Richardson
Finding the Mother Tree	by S. Simard
Ace of Spades	by Faridah Àbíké-Íyímídé
How to Have Difficult Conversations about Race	by Kwame Christian
Someone Else's Shoes	by Jojo Moyes
The Ways We Hide	by Kristina McMorris
The Rose Code	by Kate Quinn
Spare	by Prince Harry
West With Giraffes	by Lynda Rutledge
Shout	by Laurie Halse Anderson
Speak (Novel Edition)	by Laurie Halse Anderson
Hester	by Laurie Lico Albanese
Hang the Moon	by Jeannette Walls
Homestead	by Melinda Moustakis
Dear Edward	by Ann Napolitano
The Last Days of Summer	by Steve Kluger
Maame	by Jessica George
Under the Magnolias	by T. I. Lowe