

READING GROUP GUIDE



Introduction

Victoria is a forty-three-year-old career woman who fell for a man twenty years her senior; Liz is thirty-two years old, living a fairly unstable life, and is trying to make her situation work. The two barely breathe the same air, but they collide headfirst when they meet in a group for expectant mothers and find common ground against all odds.

Alienated from the other women in their parenting class who

seem to have it all figured out and due within a week of each other, Victoria and Liz's bond becomes a lifeline as they navigate their pregnancies and relationships. But as they grow more secure in their futures with each other's support, the friends confront a shocking revelation that will change the course of both their lives. Victoria and Liz then must reckon with their relationships, their impending journeys of motherhood, and the strength of their own bond...



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



1) In the opening chapter, Victoria's pregnancy causes her a huge professional loss. How does this event—and the rest of the novel—portray the complexities of femininity?

2) Victoria and Liz are complete opposites who nevertheless find kindred spirits in one another. Did you relate equally to both characters, or to one more than the other? Does their life-changing friendship remind you of any in your own life?

3) Both Victoria and Liz lack strong connections with their mothers. How does this affect their attitudes toward motherhood, and their relationship with each other? How did this play into their need to find “the tribe” that will support them as they venture into the uncharted waters of motherhood?

4) Liz and Victoria confront the impossibility of “having it all.” How do their journeys encapsulate the struggles of modern womanhood? How are their individual experiences similar, and where do they diverge?

5) Over the course of the book, both Victoria and Liz question the viability of their romantic relationships. How do their decisions convey their respective priorities in relationships, and do you agree with them?

6) There is a twist midway through the book. Did you expect it? How did it change your perception of the characters?

Spoiler-y Questions Ahead!

7) In Chapter 11, Liz explains to Victoria that her mother changed her name when she was young because she wasn't living up to Sage. Later, Liz learns that Angela did this in deference to Liz's desire for a more common name. How does this discovery shape Liz's view of her mother? In general, what role do names play in the book? How do they shape a narrative of identity?

8) Ace conceals a major secret from his wife, which he then explains to Victoria as his own truth. Do you understand his point of view? Do you find his actions to be forgivable?

9) When Victoria watches *The Catch*, she wonders if she is in a demented episode of the show. In life, do you think there is there always a catch? In what ways does the show serve as a metaphor in the novel?

10) Victoria challenges Liz to consider her worth and what real love should look like, while Liz initially believes she's being realistic about relationships. How do you interpret this tension between settling and practicality? Do you agree that “all the little ways” two people show up for each other ultimately reveal true compatibility?

11) Liz and Victoria's relationship highlights the idea that family isn't always defined by biology, but by choice, care, and loyalty. Do you connect with the concept of chosen or found family? What relationships in your own life does their bond bring to mind?

12) Before giving birth, both Victoria and Liz worry about how they'll feel about their babies. Will they love them? Will attachment come naturally? What if the maternal instinct doesn't kick in? Though Victoria expresses more concern while she's pregnant, it's Liz who struggles once she gives birth. Do their pre-birth fears and post-partum feelings resonate with you? How do their connections with their babies affect how Victoria and Liz feel about themselves as mothers? How do they impact their relationships with others in their lives?

