



Discussion Guide for Book Clubs

- 1) How does the book change or expand how you define abuse?
- 2) Do you find yourself drawn to the author's father? Why or why not? Is he a sympathetic character?
- 3) The book is organized around a literary technique known as the objective correlative where objects and situations serve as symbols for revealing complex emotional terrain. What did these mundane yet evocative objects and events come to mean in the book and to you as a reader?
- 4) What is the role of memory in trauma? What is the role of memory in grief? What is the role of memory in caregiving? What is the role of memory in identity?
- 5) What questions and answers do the book reveal about forgiveness?
- 6) What do you make of the author's mother in the story? Is she a sympathetic character?
- 7) What appears to be the significance of friendship in the author's life?
- 8) The author and her partner, Mike, are involved in what is referred to as a LAT, a "living apart together" relationship. What seem to be the strengths and limitations of such a union?
- 9) What is the role of anger and rage in the book? How do we see the anger and rage that the author witnessed and experienced in various settings as well as her own legitimate rage at specific conditions and arrangements? How do we see the author re-channel that rage creatively in ways that are highly transformative?
- 10) Where in the story is there evidence of healing, recovery, and personal triumph?