

Questions for discussion

- 1) Do you think it is a coincidence or a pattern that Maria, who had an abusive father, then found a man who abused her?
- 2) This leads us to consider the next generation: might Natalie's life turn out differently through having known Sebastian?
- 3) Do you think Maria could have found her way out of her abusive relationship without the support of her sister? Does breaking out of a box of abusive control rely heavily on the support of others, and from having someone mirror back a different reality?
- 4) Similarly, how differently do you think Sebastian's life would have turned out without the support of Delilah?
- 5) Do you understand the decisions Sebastian's mother made when he was young? Do you forgive her for her actions?
- 6) In what ways do the themes of this novel match those of 'West Side Story'? Did the novel's nod to this famous story effect your reading of it and if so, how?
- 7) In your experience, is there a fine line between love and possession? Can the two be easily confused? What different kinds of love are illustrated in the novel?
- 8) How are Sebastian and Maria alike and how are they different? If they had met under happier circumstances, do you think they would still have fallen in love?
- 9) How important are your childhood memories to you? Is there a single memory you feel defines who you are?
- 10) How did you feel about the way the novel ended? Was it as you expected? Would you have preferred a different outcome?