

Hurricane Season Discussion Questions

1. Is there one character you connect with more? Maybe because of his or her actions, inaction, hesitations, or desires?
2. Betsy longed to have children but when it looked like pregnancy wouldn't happen for her, she closed the door on that dream. Do you have any experience with having to mentally move on from something you desired that wasn't totally in your control to achieve?
3. At the start of the book, Jenna loved her children but she also longed for a way to pursue her creative impulses. Did you understand her feeling of not knowing how to balance motherhood obligations with the need/desire to pursue her art and live a creative life? Or was it frustrating to see her making choices you wouldn't make?
4. If a woman takes time off from work or family obligations to pursue something she enjoys, do you think our society's reaction to that mother's choice is different than if a man wanted to do the same thing? Would a man receive comments like "You're a parent—you really should be home with your children"? Would it be easier for a man to pursue his passions and hobbies because he doesn't have mom guilt? Or do you think parents across the board battle guilt and pressure when trying to balance family obligations with personal desires?
5. It's often difficult for people who have no trouble having children to understand the internal feelings of those whose path includes infertility. What was your reaction to how Betsy handled her feelings of failure and inadequacy? If you feel comfortable sharing, have you or has someone you know ever dealt with infertility?
6. As much as he could, Ty tried to understand Betsy's feelings and choices. Do you agree with how he handled Betsy's dealings with Jenna and Betsy's decision to talk to the principal about school? Should he have responded or handled the situations in a different way?
7. Toward the end of the book, Jenna had the option to continue pursuing her art by moving to California and taking the job as Gregory's assistant at Berkeley. Do you think she could have made that option work for herself? What about for her children? Ultimately, she decided all she needed was to feel she had a choice in the matter but that she didn't need to take the job and go to California to feel fulfilled—she could do that at home with her children in the life they'd made for themselves. How did you react to her choices at the end?
8. What was your reaction to Gregory? Did you understand the connection between him and Jenna? Did you see him as trying to get her to make bad or selfish choices or as honestly trying to help her pursue the creative life she desired?
9. Over the course of the few months before Jenna left Nashville, Sam Oliver became a constant in her life by showing up every day (except Friday) to have coffee with her. What do you think he represented to her? What do you think he saw in her that kept him coming back? Was he just a distraction for Jenna or do you think they could have developed a deeper connection once she returned to Nashville?
10. Jenna's two friends were Max and Delores, both much older and wiser than she was. Why do you think she developed such important relationships with these two people? How did they affect her throughout the book?

