

The Girl in the Water

A book club guide to the novel by Joseph Howse

About this Guide

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Last updated on September 17, 2022

Published in Canada by Nummist Media :: Halifax, NS
nummist.com



Discussion Questions

1. What aspects of the novel are reflected in the cover art?
2. Which are the main relationships in the story? To the characters, what do these personal bonds ultimately mean?
3. Besides a personal life or a family life, what (if anything) do the characters ultimately value? Why?
4. To what extent is the story about choice? To what extent is it about “luck”?
5. If you were Nadia, whom would you trust?
6. If you were Ida, whom would you trust?
7. What characteristics unite or divide Nadia’s family? Ida supposes that Nadia has learnt a “sense of fairness” at home; do you agree?
8. A copy of *Crime and Punishment* sits on the shelf in the family home. Only Nadia ever reaches for it. What kinds of books and people attract her curiosity?
9. What importance do monuments and keepsakes hold for the characters and their society? Throughout the story, how do people treat such significant objects?
10. At the end of “III: Orphan”, what is Ida doing? Why?
11. How similar or dissimilar are the narrator’s perspective and Nadia’s perspective?
12. What comparisons does the novel draw between different settings that the characters either experience or imagine? Examples might include: East and West; Classical Antiquity, Holocaust, and Space Age; city, hinterland, and sea.