



1. Clara and Benny differ on whether their neighbors' problems are any of their business. Which one of them is right? Is it possible that they are both right?
2. What do Izzy and Paul have in common? What parallels can you draw between their individual stories, and where do those lines diverge?
3. Izzy forces herself to absorb the horrible stories in her newsfeed; Randi and Rhoda identify as "citizens of the world" but also proclaim their willingness to retreat into a "happy little bubble." Do you think it's healthy to be able to compartmentalize tragedy, or is it more important to be keenly aware of what's happening around us, even when it's ugly?
4. Kristin never gets to tell her side of the story, except (in part) to the reader. What does it do to a person when no one bears witness to what's really going on in their lives?
5. Izzy books a guest for the radio show who explains why heartbreak is biochemically hard to shake. We've all had a friend like Izzy who just can't get over someone (or been in those shoes ourselves). Was there anything in particular about her frustration that you found unsympathetic?
6. How is Hallie's perspective different from the adults'? Why is she so pivotal to the story?
7. In some ways, Natalie relies outwardly on her neighbors more than any of the others, more by necessity than by choice. If you were in her shoes, would you have reacted differently after Hallie's newspaper (and Clara's role in it) came to light?

### *Discussion Questions*



8. Both Clara and the detectives acknowledge that the parents in town can be judgmental of one another. In what ways might those attitudes do harm to someone in a situation like Kristin's? How do they impact Clara?
9. Do you find it fair that some of Dr. Kirkland's patients publicly defend him after suspicions are raised, or do you find it disturbing?
10. Although domestic violence is alarmingly common, it's still perceived by many as carrying a certain stigma. Why do you think that is? What, if anything, could be done to change that?
11. Clara tells Izzy that the only way she knows of to escape an abusive man is not to have met him in the first place. Detective Bryant isn't forthcoming with solutions that convince Clara that Kristin had a good alternative to her disappearing act. Do you think Kristin did what she had to do? If not, what do you think she could have done instead?
12. Do you think that if Clara had foreseen the extent of the worry and scrutiny ahead of her, she would have influenced and helped Kristin the way she did?