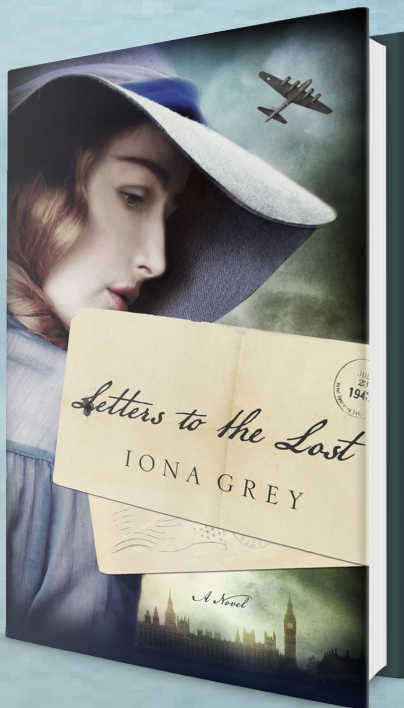


READING GROUP GUIDE



ABOUT THE BOOK

I promised to love you forever, in a time when I didn't know if I'd live to see the start of another week. Now it looks like forever is finally running out. I never stopped loving you. I tried, for the sake of my own sanity, but I never even got close, and I never stopped hoping either.

Late on a frozen February evening, a young woman is running through the streets of London. Having fled from her abusive boyfriend and with nowhere to go, Jess stumbles onto a forgotten lane where a small, clearly unlived in old house offers her best chance of shelter for the night. The next morning, a mysterious letter arrives and when she can't help but open it, she finds herself drawn inexorably into the story of two lovers from another time.

In London 1942, Stella meets Dan, a US airman, quite by accident, but there is no denying the impossible, unstoppable attraction that draws them together. Dan is a B-17 pilot flying his bomber into Europe from a British airbase; his odds of survival are one in five. In the midst of such uncertainty, the one thing they hold onto is the letters they write to each other. Fate is unkind and they are separated by decades and continents. In the present, Jess becomes determined to find out what happened to them. Her hope--inspired by a love so powerful it spans a lifetime--will lead her to find a startling redemption in her own life in this powerfully moving novel.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. To what extent is Jess a modern day version of Stella? What are the similarities and differences in their characters and situations?
2. Do you perceive Charles as being the perpetrator of injustice, or as much as a victim of attitudes of the time as Stella?
3. Will would never describe himself as hero material. Would you?

1. Stella wonders how she could have done things differently, to change what happened. Given the restrictions of the time, what could she have done?
2. Will and Jess are from very different backgrounds. How likely is it that their relationship will stand the test of time?
3. Do you think the novel presents a positive view of the 1940s, or a negative one?
4. Stella and Nancy share the same background and upbringing, yet it has affected them in very different ways. How has it impacted on each of them in terms of their personality and the choices they make?
5. How much does the war affect the events of the story?
6. What do you see as the central theme of the book?
7. What do you think Stella and Dan's life would have been like, had they managed to find a way to be together?

WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT IONA GREY?

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