

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

---

1. What does the island setting contribute to the story? What about the juxtaposition of New York City?
2. What do you think Claire's habit of writing words in the air with her finger demonstrates about her?
3. What does Claire's name change to Emily signify to you?
4. What does Clive's nickname, Gogo, indicate about his personality? About Edwin's?
5. Did you ever think Clive might pose a threat to Emily when he found out who she was?
6. What's the symbolism of Faraway Cay and the woman with hooves for feet? What does that mythology add to the story?
7. Emily's world in New York becomes very small after she encounters Clive. Do you think that was intentional or unintentional on her part? What might have motivated her to turn inward?
8. What do Alison's recorded diary entries reveal to Emily? Was Emily right to listen to them, or do you think it was an invasion of privacy? Do you feel differently about their mom listening?
9. What are the similarities between Emily's life in New York and Clive's? What are the differences?
10. What do you think about Edwin's relationship with Sara?
11. Alison witnessed a pivotal moment in Clive and Edwin's relationship. How did that shape the rest of the narrative—Clive and Edwin's relationship, their futures, Alison's tragedy?
12. When Emily learns the truth, and remembers the night before Alison disappeared, what do you think is her primary emotion? Grief? Relief? Guilt? Something else?

13. Do you think Emily coming into Clive's life was ultimately a bad thing or a good thing for Clive?
14. Emily speaks about the loss of a sister and different milestones they missed out on. What do you think their relationship would have been like in present day?

*Submitted by Pittsford Moms Book Club (Pittsford, NY)*

15. Why do you think the author chose to intersperse the voices of minor characters, such as the movie actor and other vacationers, throughout the book? What effect does this achieve?

*Submitted by The NYC Wine and Dine Bookclub (New York, NY)*

16. How did Emily's perception of her sister change from viewing her from a seven-year-old's perspective to listening to her audio diary as an adult? How did this change her assumptions about the events leading up to Alison's disappearance?

*Submitted by We Book and We Brunch Bookclub (Tucson, AZ)*

17. How do you think the story would have changed if Emily had been honest about who she was with Clive from the start?

*Submitted by Peter's Book Club (Charlotte, NC)*