



FLATIRON
BOOKS
NEW YORK

The Stardust Grail

Reading Group Guide

Welcome to the Reading Group Guide for *The Stardust Grail*. Please note: In order to provide reading groups with the most informed and thought-provoking questions possible, it is necessary to reveal important aspects of the plot of this novel—as well as the ending. If you have not finished reading *The Stardust Grail*, we respectfully suggest that you consider waiting before reviewing this guide.

1. What is the “right” way to preserve history? What is the “best” way? Are those two things the same?
2. How might Earth be impacted culturally by First Contact? As one of the characters observes, “You can’t live in the universe without leaving footprints.” Is there ever a way for civilizations to meet that doesn’t cause harm? Does it matter?
3. What responsibility do people have individually or as members of a civilization for colonization and/or the negative impacts when people and cultures collide?
4. Is it possible to understand something wholly alien? Do you think there is anything universal about life?
5. Is it possible to truly love something or someone you don’t understand? How can trust exist on such a foundation?
6. What do we owe other living things—both members of our species and other people?
7. Do you agree with Maya’s decisions? What about the other characters? What would you have done?
8. In the final sentence of the book, a new opportunity for exploration presents itself. What do you think is the right way to approach that opportunity, given everything that happened in the book?