



Discover. Read. Share.

The Bear DISCUSSION GUIDE

- The author chose not to name the characters in *The Bear* or describe them at length. Also, the location of the setting (city, country) is not disclosed. Discuss how this choice impacted your impression of the book, as well as the book's impression on you.
- While the location was not named, did you imagine it to be anywhere specific? If so, where and why?
- The cause for the end of humanity in this novel is also not discussed. Did you speculate while reading, or focus on the story at hand? Why?
- Discuss the importance of storytelling—of the way both the humans and animals in the book carried each other's legacies, and how this practice occurs in the world today.
- Discuss any folklore, mythology, or tradition that you think may have been tapped into as the author wrote this story. Any ideas on why the particular animals that had most prominent voices in the book might have been selected?
- Why do you think a bear was the focus of all the animals? Also, discuss the book's leverage of the puma.
- How does this book handle grief and loneliness? How do you feel the character's words and actions in those moments reflected the state of their world?
- The father in this book does quite a good job of creating an identity of the late mother for his daughter. What contributed to that? How did this impact the daughter?
- Did you learn anything new from this book? Do you feel any more confident in your own ability to survive and thrive if thrown into nature to do so?
- How did you feel during the reading of this novel—did any moments stand out for you? Did that feeling continue or change when you completed the book?
- Discuss the idea of nature as the main character of the book.
- How did each character's relationship and maturity toward each other evolve—both humans toward animals and the animals toward the humans—throughout the story?
- Were you surprised by the pilgrimage to the mountain, and the way the novel included a traditional method of laying loved ones to rest? Discuss end-of-life traditions from different cultures, and how you felt about the practices the family in this book passed on to one another.
- How would you describe the style and writing of this book?
- Did this book make you examine any habits toward the natural world in your own life? Is there anything you'll consider changing after reading it?
- *The Wall Street Journal* called this book a "post-apocalypse utopia," and it has been referred to as defying genre. Do you agree with those categorizations? Why or why not?

Loved *The Bear*? Check out our exclusive Author Q & A, Meeting Planner, and Recommended Next Reads...all available at theclub.hoopladigital.com.

