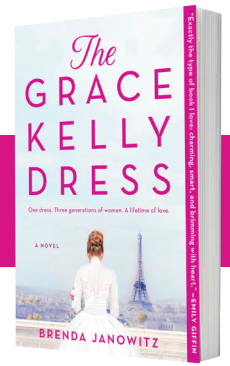


Discussion Guide

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION



- 1) ***The Grace Kelly Dress*** is about an heirloom wedding gown that's been passed down through three generations of a family. Do you have any heirlooms in your family? How important are these items? How did they become heirlooms?
- 2) What does the dress mean to each woman in the novel? What impact does it have on their lives, and how does it shape their expectations for love, marriage, and family?
- 3) How does the dress reflect the times in which each woman is living? Discuss the role fashion can play in forming (or performing) identity and in pushing societal boundaries.
- 4) Which woman's version of the dress was your favorite? Why? How did you feel about the alterations each generation made? Do you think the women should have made changes or kept the original version?
- 5) Family roles define many of the women in this book: Rose is an orphan, Joanie is an only child following her sister's death, and Rocky struggles with her relationships with her sister and mother. How can familial expectations define a person? Can you ever step outside of these roles?
- 6) Discuss how each woman in the story is touched by loss. How does the death of a loved one affect our daily lives? How do you keep those you've lost in your life and honor their memory?
- 7) In chapter twenty-four, Diana tells Rose that her friends are like family to her. Discuss what this phrase means and how it applies to your own life.
- 8) Do you think Birdie was right in keeping the truth about Michele's death from Joanie? Have you ever had a family secret you withheld from loved ones? How important is it to shield our children from life's more difficult moments?
- 9) Why do you think Grace Kelly—and her wedding dress—have inspired so many? How does her influence live on today, half a century after her wedding and decades after her untimely death?
- 10) Discuss the importance of tradition. How can family tradition both bond people together and cause tensions and misunderstandings?