



ALL THE WORLD CAN HOLD

READING GROUP GUIDE

1. What were your initial impressions of the three main characters when you first met them? How did those impressions change (or stay the same) over the course of the cruise?
2. How does the confined environment of the Sonata and the absence of current technology (smartphones, constant access to the Internet) affect the way the characters experience the trip?
3. Which moment or scene stayed with you after finishing the book? Why was it memorable or meaningful?
4. In what ways do cultural expectations or family dynamics shape the characters' decisions and the pressures they feel?
5. Was there a relationship in the book that felt especially real or familiar? What about it stayed with you?
6. How do issues of race, class, and gender affect the characters' lives and the ways in which they respond to the aftermath of 9/11?
7. What do you think the novel suggests about risk—emotional, personal, and professional—and the cost of avoiding it?
8. At one point, Lucy thinks to herself that “maybe this is just what adulthood is—a series of choices made and doors closed, one after another, until she ends up in the room that is her life.” What’s your reaction to this particular outlook?
9. Regret and the possibility of redemption are two of the novel’s themes. What other themes did you identify that resonated with you?
10. What do you think happens to Franny, Doug, and Lucy when they return to land at the end of the book? Is what you think different from what you hope?