

## Book Club Questions – This Place of Wonder

What makes a family? Knowing the characters in this story, discuss their relationships and if or how they form a family.

There is an underlying layer of denial in this book, for example Maya's long-term denial of her drinking, Meadow's denial of Augustus' affairs, Augustus's denial of the finances of the restaurant. Can you think of other examples from the book? How do these levels of denial affect or drive the story?

Augustus's death has a profound effect on each of the women in his life, though each of these characters are lost in some way even before his death. Talk about the ways the women are 'lost' and how they either help each other or continue to perpetuate this 'lostness.'

Nora is always finding a means to an end. Was she born with this ability or do you think it was forced upon her through her life's circumstances?

How did you feel about Nora's pursuit of Meadow's story? Or how Augustus had so freely shared elements of it with her? Meadow had operated under the strictest walls of privacy, established and fortified for her ability to survive and remake her life. What did you think about these people who tried to uncover her deepest secrets? Do you consider Augustus's act a betrayal? Why or why not?

Through her stint in rehab and the journey of building her life back, Maya realizes a number of things about herself that she never knew or that she knew but hadn't acknowledged before. Do you think it takes a shattering experience to have these epiphanies, or can they happen at different times in life for other reasons? Can you give examples?

Are you familiar with love languages? Meadow says that feeding people is her love language. Do you see others in the book, obvious ones and maybe those that aren't so obvious? Can any form of care be a love language, or do you think there are degrees?

What did you think of the letter that Augustus writes to Maya? Does this give her the chance for resolution, or is it not enough?

This story explores each of the women through their relationship with Augustus, but who do you think these women are independent of him?

Even though Augustus dies on page one, he is very much 'alive' throughout the story. What did you think of him? Is he a good guy or a bad guy in this story? What do you think his main role in the story is?

How did you feel about the mystery element in the book?

Barbara tells this story through three different points of view, but all of their stories are told by using first person voice. Do you like this storytelling choice, or do you prefer a third person point of view? With each woman speaking in first person, were their voices different enough where you could tell them apart?

Why do you think Rory did not get her own chapters, told in her voice?

Barbara has talked about her love of California and how aspects of the state often make their way into her books. What did you think of the rugged coastline setting of this book? Have you read other Barbara O'Neal books? Which setting(s) have been your favorite in the books you have read of hers and why?