

LITERARY BOOK CLUB

August 2017 Selection

***The After Party* by Anton DiSclafani**

Joan Fortier is the epitome of Texas glamour and the center of the 1950s Houston social scene. Tall, blonde, beautiful, and strong, she dominates the room and the gossip columns. Every man wants her; every woman wants to be her. Devoted to Joan since childhood, Cece Buchanan is either her chaperone or her partner in crime, depending on whom you ask. But when Joan's radical behavior escalates the summer they are twenty-five, Cece considers it her responsibility to bring her back to the fold, ultimately forcing one provocative choice to appear the only one there is.

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Discussion Questions:

1. *The After Party* is a book about obsession. Cece's obsession with Joan remains platonic, but carries many of the same qualities as romantic love. Do you think Cece ever crosses the line between platonic and romantic in her love for Joan?
2. Why do you think Cece is so drawn to Joan? Does it have to do with Cece's own insecurity, or is Joan really as glamorous as she seems?
3. Think about Cece's marriage to Ray. Are there points in the story where you root for Ray, as a foil to Joan? Which of Cece's loves- her husband or her best friend- do you think should have come out on top?



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4. Consider Joan's big secret. Why do you think she keeps this secret from Cece, even as Cece tries so hard to pry it away? What is Joan's personal purpose for being so elusive?
5. Cece and Joan assist Cece's mother's suicide. Do you think Cece and Joan acted responsibly? Should they have listened to Cece's mother, or let her die naturally? How does this decisions affect Joan, Cece, and the arc of their relationship?
6. The book is set in the 1950s. How might Joan and Cece's relationship look in modern times? Do you think it would have been affected by technology? Would Joan's glamour have been diluted or amplified through the use of social media?
7. How do the politics of the times affect the plot of the story? Discuss the Southern oil industry and the way the characters live in its wealth. How is race explored—particularly with Idie and Dorie's story lines—and how this is a product of the period?
8. Money plays a huge role in *The After Party*. Discuss how the characters handle their wealth, and where they place their respective values. Joan's fortune belongs to her parents, while Cece is wealthy through both her marriage and her inheritance. How does this change your perception of both characters?
9. Have you ever been an imbalanced relationship? Why does Cece stick around for Joan, despite Joan's apathy? Discuss.

Help others with their decision to read this book by simply leaving your comments and reviews online at <http://www.booksamillion.com/p/9780399573187>

Recommendations:

- If you liked *The After Party*, you might like *The Swans of Fifth Avenue* (<http://www.booksamillion.com/p/9780345528704>)
- You might also enjoy *The Yonahlossee Riding Camp for Girls* (<http://www.booksamillion.com/p/9781594632709>)