

In Duet with God: The Story of a Lifelong Friendship

Group Discussion Guide

- 1) What qualities in Flora led Jessica to think of her as “a saint?”
- 2) When Jessica’s father leaves, and her mother has a crippling accident, what effects do these tragedies have on Jessica? How does she cope? What tragedy have you experienced in your own life? In what ways did that experience have on you? How did you cope?
- 3) Discuss Jessica’s experience of meditation, as she conveys it in the chapter, “Overlooking the Hudson.” What is the significance of the experience she describes? Does it remind you of an experience in your life? What significance has it had for you?
- 4) In the final chapter of Part 1, "I Love You," why, at the variety store, was Jessica’s encounter with Flora so significant?
- 5) What compelled Jessica to travel across the world? What was she searching for? What form has your own search taken? What do you feel you’re searching for?
- 6) Jessica’s diary entries were written when she was ten years old. Why do you think she interspersed these childhood diary entries throughout the entire book? Choose one diary entry. How does it relate to the chapter that follows?
- 7) Why is music so important to Jessica? What role does it play in her life? What aspect of self-expression in your life is especially significant? Why?
- 8) Read the chapters titled, “Two Deacons” and “A Fresh Start.” What compelled Jessica to become baptized? What was Jessica’s experience at her baptism?
- 9) Read the chapter titled, "Calvary" (Section 3 - "Flora's Past"). Why did Flora state that "it's not right to say anything bad" about the people who abused her?
- 10) Read the chapters titled, “You Are So Precious,” and “You Made My Daughter Cry.” What differences distinguish Jessica’s mother from her grandmother? In what ways were those differences evident?
- 11) Read the chapter titled, “Innocence.” (Section 2 – “Flora’s Love”) Why is Jessica touched as Flora contemplates the letters she's received? Can you recall a moment of innocence in yourself or another person? What feeling does that memory evoke?
- 12) Was there someone special in your life? What are her or his qualities? What influence or effect did that person have on you?