

printed from www.KrisRadish.com

sign up online for Kris' newsletter to get all the latest news and contests info!

READING GROUP GUIDE

Searching for Paradise in Parker, PA

A Novel

By Kris Radish

Bantam Hardcover

ISBN 978-0-553-80530-7

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

A wonderful, rejuvenating novel from the bestselling author of *The Sunday List of Dreams* and *Annie Freeman's Fabulous Traveling Funeral*, this is the story of Addy Lipton and her extraordinary midlife revival—of her dreams, her body, and (most important) her true self. Married to Lucky for nearly thirty years, she's put up with his junk collection, his bowling-ball addiction, and his tight-lipped way of pretending to communicate with her. Even after Lucky wins a trip for two to Costa Rica, she dreads the prospect of having to try to reignite their love on a tropical shore. But when Lucky fractures his back while tossing their luggage into his truck, he and Addy soon find themselves stumbling down a very different road to Paradise—one that will bring drastic changes to their marriage, and to the lives of everyone they know in Parker, PA.

The questions and discussion topics that follow are intended to enhance your reading of Kris Radish's **Searching for Paradise in Parker, PA**. We hope they will enrich your experience of this novel.

QUESTIONS AND SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What was the effect of reading Lucky's thoughts alongside Addy's story? How did your impression of both Liptons shift throughout the novel, as their feelings about each other shifted as well?
2. Discuss the title, and the concept of paradise. How did Lucky and Addy go about searching for bliss? What is your definition of paradise? Does it reside in a particular place, or in special people, or in some combination of both?
3. What major differences and surprising similarities do Addy and Hell share? How does their relationship compare to yours with your siblings?
4. What role do the Sweat-Hers play in Addy's life? What makes their brand of friendship ideal? Do Lucky and the Bobs share the same kind of bond, or are female friendships unique?
5. What would it take for all doctors to practice the way Margarite Sanchez does? What types of healing does she provide? Why is she willing to care for her patients so conscientiously, despite the impact this has on her income?

6. What does Mitchell's reunion with his birth mother spur in Lucky and Addy? What transition is marked by that event? Why are they able to be more open about their feelings with him than with each other?
7. Do you and your friends convene at a place similar to the First National Wine & Cigar Bar? If so, how did you choose the locale, and what makes it such a perfect venue for letting loose? If not, what would it take to claim a similar space for you and your best friends?
8. In chapter twenty-six, Addy opens a fanny pack containing mementoes from years gone by, including notes from Mitchell and love poetry from Lucky, but "Addy cannot hold on to the green notebook or any thoughts of joy, or even the slightest memory of something fine, sweet, and wonderful from her married past." When does memory help us through a painful time? When does memory interfere with moving forward?
9. How do the stories of Malibu Heidi, Debra, Lee, and Lingerie Sharon complement each other? How do their experiences with love shape the way Addy views her marriage?
10. What does Mitchell learn from his parents about empathy and kindness? Which of his parents' traits does he incorporate into his own personality, and which ones will he leave behind as a member of a new generation?
11. What makes Addy a great candidate for comedy classes? What enables her to make the leap from furious garage-door basher to professor of giggling?
12. What was your first theory about the notes described in chapter fifty? What is their effect on the Sweat-Hers?
13. Discuss the arrival of pirates at Parker's annual Fall Festival. What was their ultimate "loot"? When is the last time you wore a daring costume or posed as a swashbuckler?
14. What is the best way for a couple to determine whether their relationship can be salvaged? If you had been in Lucky's or Addy's shoes, what would you have decided about divorcing?
15. Did **Searching for Paradise in Parker, PA** cause you to see men in a different light? How has the book changed your view of love and life? How close are you to realizing the kind of dreams that are captured in the book's epilogue?
16. What themes of liberation and friendship appear in this and each of Kris Radish's previous novels? In what way does her storytelling empower readers?