

# THE LOST AND FOUND BOOKSHOP BY SUSAN WIGGS

04/15/2021

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. After her mother dies, Natalie reflects: “No one knew what to say to people facing a grief so big and shocking. Natalie wouldn’t know, either.” Is there a right thing to say in these moments? What would you do if Natalie were your friend?
2. “There was a book for everything. Somewhere in the vast Library of the Universe, as Natalie thought of it, her mom could find a book that embodied exactly the things Natalie was worrying about.” Which books have helped you overcome difficult moments, or been a cure for your worries or caused a revelation in your life? How do books help the different characters in this novel?
3. At Blythe’s funeral, her friend Frieda reads a passage from the children’s book CHARLOTTE’S WEB. If you could have any book be part of your memorial service, what would it be?
4. Natalie tells her mother that her schoolmates’ reaction to her non-traditional family --- a single mother, grandfather and grandfather’s Chinese girlfriend --- make her feel like a “freak.” How did growing up in this non-traditional family shape Natalie? How did being raised by a single father shape her mother Blythe’s life? What about Peach and Dorothy?
5. When Natalie finds out that her mother had taken a DNA test, she thinks to herself: “Who were her ancestors? Oftentimes throughout her life, she’d felt like a stranger to herself. Was that the reason?” Does learning more about her family history --- through the DNA test and other ways --- help Natalie, or Grandy Andrew? Do you know anyone who has had a similar experience uncovering their family history, either by DNA tests or more traditional methods?
6. Blythe finds running the bookstore “a grand adventure,” but Natalie’s corporate work at the winery “...was the opposite of a grand adventure. But then she would remind herself about the steady salary, the benefits and pension plan, and decide it was all worthwhile. Stability had its price.” Are you more of a Blythe or a Natalie in your approach to work? Does Natalie ultimately change her mind and come to accept the “grand adventure” of being a bookstore owner?
7. “Your mother used to say you’ll never be happy with what you want until you can be happy with what you’ve got,” Cleo tells Natalie. Do you agree? What does Susan Wiggs say



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about happiness throughout this novel? What does it mean that Grandy Andrew's book about his life is called "A Brief History of Happiness"?

8. When they find the military medal hidden in the store's walls, Grandy insists that they return it to the owner's heirs despite their shaky financial situation: "After learning of its value, Andrew had toyed for the briefest of moments with the notion of selling it. But there was no profit in keeping something that rightfully belonged to someone else." Would you have done the same?

9. When Trevor confesses the truth about his background to Natalie, admitting that he's a "fraud" and a "hoax," she tells him "For what it's worth, it wouldn't have mattered... I love what you've done with your life. You turned it into something really beautiful." Would you have responded the same way? What did you think about Trevor once his deceptions had been revealed?

10. At the end of the novel, Susan Wiggs gives us an update on the characters' lives. What do you think the future holds for Natalie and Peach? For Grandy Andrew ? For the Lost and Found Bookstore itself ?

11. Do you have a favorite local bookstore? What do you love about it?

