

THE EXTRAORDINARY JOURNEY OF VIVIENNE MARSHALL
POSSIBLE BOOK CLUB QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER AFTER READING

1. Considering only the Heavens Vivienne visits, which, if any of them, would you choose? Do you agree with Vivienne's choice?
2. Now, outside of Vivienne's Heavens, what would you want to consider as your Heaven, or Heavens?
3. Do you believe Vivienne is literally visiting different Heavens, or is she having a wild trip, given the Morphine and her injuries?
4. What were the religious themes in the novel? Is there a difference between World Religions and individual spirituality? How is that topic explored in this novel?
5. What are the different types of "Love" identified in the novel?
6. Do you agree that there is a difference between a "physical love" and an "eternal love"? Why? How?
7. Vivienne mentions throughout the novel a paper she did on the "philosophy or psychology of aesthetics"? What did this mean to you? Do you think aesthetics can have an impact on your physical or spiritual life? How so? And if it ever has, please share an example.
8. Lachlan mentions a desire to simplify his mind, his day-to-day activities. What did he mean by this? Do you think a peace can be found by simplicity? How so?
9. Vivienne makes mention of nature as church. How did each of the Heavens she visited touch on this? What do you think of nature as church? Agree or disagree? If you agree, can you share an example of how maybe you have used nature as a church, or how you might?
10. What is the FMM? Have you ever lost anything in a body of water that had sentimental value?
11. Also, as for the FMM, if you are in the camp of people who believes Vivienne was not on a literal journey of Heavens, what do you think the FMM might represent (in terms of human anatomy)?
12. Armadillo is Vivienne's best friend. But do they share the same "truth" about love? Do they share the same belief about commitment to one person? Is this okay?
13. The homeless boy sleeping in a doorway is based on an actual experience the author had in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Have you ever been moved by homelessness? What are your thoughts on homelessness in America?
14. What do you think about Jack's Reserve? Is that a Heaven? What is it?

15. What do the different Heavens represent as the four posts of Vivienne's individual spirituality (any answer is correct here; but the author intended: Religion (Lachlan); Art (Armadillo); Family/Motherhood (Boy); Love, physical and eternal (Jack/Noah).
16. Is Ivan's heartbreak tolerable as presented here or is it too painful? Did it impact you in any way?
17. What are your thoughts on Marty? His speech about time vs. fate vs. circumstance, what do you think of that? Have you ever experienced something that you consider an act of fate?
18. What music would be in your Heaven?
19. If you were dying and had the capacity to write a final note, who would it be to, or, do you plead the Fifth? If you're willing to share, what would it say?
20. Vivienne's mother tells her she will never stop hurting over the loss of Noah, but that that is okay. Do you believe there are certain aches that do not ever cease? What can we do to lessen the pain of a lost one for ourselves, and also for others? Is it even possible to lessen the pain?
21. Vivienne mentions holding an occupation in Heaven that gives "boundless satisfaction and infinite entertainment." She uses a perfect skiing day as an example. Is there anything that you might use as an example of something that gives you "boundless satisfaction and infinite entertainment"? Is it practical for you to engage in this more often, now?