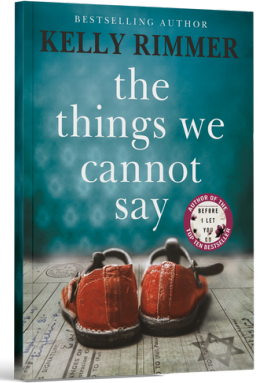


# DISCUSSION GUIDE

## THE THINGS WE CANNOT SAY

KELLY RIMMER



1. Which characters in this book were your favorites? Why? Alina and Alice narrate the story – but is there another character you wish you could have heard from directly?
2. Were you more engaged in Alina's story or Alice's? Why? Were you satisfied with how the two story threads came together?
3. Alina lives a relatively sheltered life. How is her behavior shaped by her family's attitude towards her? How does she change over the course of the story?
4. Alina, Julita and Alice are all very different women within the same family, although each has a unique approach to how she raises her children. Do you think there's a relationship between how each woman approaches motherhood, or does circumstance and personality play a larger role here?
5. Why do you think Wade held himself at such a distance from Eddie? Why did this damage his relationship with Alice so much? And why did Wade and Eddie's relationship change when Alice was away?
6. Tomasz was coerced to serve in the Wehrmacht, and in doing so, inadvertently played a role in one of the most horrific chapters in human history. How did this decision change the course of his life and the life of his descendants?
7. What should Tomasz have done, faced with the pressure to comply with the Nazi agenda? Do you think he redeemed himself once he deserted the Wehrmacht, or are some acts unforgivable?
8. Do you think Tomasz ever intended to follow Alina, or did he know all along that he'd need to turn himself in after she left with Saul? And if Tomasz had escaped to safety with Alina, would he have been able to leave his guilt behind?
9. Take a moment to reflect on your own family's story. Do you know much about your grandparents' early lives? How have your grandparents' decisions in their youth affected your life? What questions do you wish you could (or would you like to) ask them about their younger years?
10. Did you learn anything new as you read this book, and if so, what was it?
11. Which scene in *The Things We Cannot Say* affected you the most, and why? What emotions did that scene elicit?
12. Were you satisfied with the ending? Did the story end as you expected or did you envision a different resolution for Alice or for Alina?
13. What will you remember most about *The Things We Cannot Say*?
14. Who would you recommend *The Things We Cannot Say* to?