

HADLEY & GRACE

Discussion Questions

1. In the beginning of the story, both Hadley and Grace believe they are failing their children. How did you feel about them as mothers at the start of the story?
2. Frank is a dangerous man. How do you feel about Hadley leaving the way she did? Jimmy has a gambling problem that endangers Grace and Miles's future. How do you feel about her leaving the way she did?
3. Skipper is a special boy who sees the world with a unique perspective. How did you feel about him as a character? Have you ever met someone like him?
4. Grace has an ongoing relationship throughout the book with her dead grandmother. Have you ever lost someone yet still felt their presence in your life? Do you think that presence is real, a memory, or a conscience?
5. Hadley and Grace take close to two million dollars from Frank. Do you think it was right for them to take the money? What if Grace had just taken the amount Frank owed her? Would that have been right?
6. Do you believe in karma? How about coincidence? Grace and Hadley end up at Frank's office at the exact same time to rob him, which sets in motion a series of events that alters their destinies. Do you think a hidden connectivity exists between us that often dictates our lives?
7. There is a remarkable synergy between the characters. Grace has street smarts, and Hadley has charm and is a gifted liar. Grace connects with Mattie. Mattie has a special understanding of Skipper. Hadley has a way with Miles. And, by the end of the story, they all would lay their lives on the line for the others. For Skipper, biological affiliations hold no weight. How do you feel about that? Do genetics dictate a family, or does something more powerful than blood tie people together and make them a tribe?
8. Grace and Hadley are accidental criminals. How accountable should they be held for their crimes? Do you think they deserve to be punished? Go to prison? If they were caught, do you think Grace's punishment, because of her past record, should have been more severe?
9. Mark and Hadley share an incredible moment. How do you feel about what happened between them? Do you believe in natural chemistry, or, as Hadley put it, "the simple unique magnetism of two particular organisms toward each other?" Do you find what happened between them romantic or tragic?
10. Jimmy, against Grace's wishes, shows up to help. How do you feel about Jimmy? Do you think Grace did the right thing in forgiving him?
11. At what point did you figure out Grace was pregnant? Were you happy for her, or did you feel sorry for her? Do you think maternal abilities are natural, or can they be learned?
12. An underlying theme of the story is about each of us having a better self within us hidden under strata of fear. Do you ever feel that fear stops you from being the best version of yourself? Grace tells Mattie the story of how she started over when she moved to California, and Mattie decides

to become Tillie. Do you think making a clear break like this is helpful in changing? Or do you believe we are hardwired to be who we are and incapable of true transformation?

13. Who was your favorite character? Why?
14. Movie time: Who would you like to see play each part?