

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Reina lost her dad when she was eight but still strongly feels his presence and often believes he is guiding her. Do you believe spirits watch over us, or is it just our longing and memory of them that makes it seem that way?
2. Reina's entire life is altered when she takes a chance and sends the email to Brenda, saying she will go on the Camino in Matt's stead after he loses his passport. It was a "sliding door" moment—a single small decision that changed everything. Have you had a moment like that, an opportunity you seized that determined everything that came after?
3. "The Camino has absorbed many tears, and it is a keeper of secrets." Do you think there's something specifically mystical about the Camino de Santiago, or do you think any extraordinarily physical challenge where one is left alone with their thoughts for an extended period would have the same cathartic effect?
4. The pilgrimage is steeped in religious history and symbolism, and part of Isabelle's journey is a coming to terms with her relationship with God. Ted, Ned, and David also have a conversation about whether existentialism and God can peacefully coexist. How do you feel about Isabelle's reconciliation of her knowledge of evolution and her faith?
5. Was there one specific moment in the story when you decided Reina and John weren't meant to be together? Do you think if they married that they would have had a life that "would have continued in its imperfect-yet-entirely-acceptable way?" What do you think her future looks like with Matt?
6. Nicknames play an important role in the story. Reina is "Velma," "Little Buddy," "Doc," and "Rainbow." Isabelle is "Mi Geni," "My Masterpiece," "Billy Goat," and "Bella." Do you have a pet name and what is the meaning behind it?
7. Reina discovers her long-lost uncle on the trail. How do you feel about David? Do you think Reina was right to forgive him? Do you agree with David when he says, "Every morning we are born again, and it's what we do today that matters most?"
8. Reina discovers she is Andorran not Portuguese, and the revelation is stunning. After learning what she does about her mom, she sets off to discover more. Do you think it's important to understand where you come from, or doesn't it really matter?
9. The deal Isabelle strikes with Senor Sansas comes at a steep price—her home, her identity, seeing her family again, the future she dreamed of with Peter . . . and ultimately, her pa. How do you feel about the deal she made with Senor Sansas?
10. Isabelle understands what it means to give up your family and ultimately decides she can't ask Peter to do that for her. "True love means putting the other person first." Do you think she did the right thing? Should she never have gotten involved with him in the first place, knowing the jeopardy she put him in and that they had no future together?
11. Before reading this story, had you heard of the Camino? Does the story make you want to experience it?
12. How do you imagine the future unfolding for the characters?
13. Who was your favorite character? Why?
14. Movie time: Who would you like to see play each part?