

WHERE BUTTERFLIES WANDER

Discussion Questions

1. Pen believes her sister's spirit manifests itself in butterflies and birds and is therefore still with them. Do you believe spirits linger for a time . . . or possibly forever? Is Pen's sense of Bee's presence real or, as Pen alludes, simply her "wish" for it to be true?
2. How do you feel about Brendon not clarifying the truth about Bee's death and allowing everyone to believe she went back into the pool without him knowing? Do you think Leo might have purposely altered the truth to spare Brendon the blame? If a lie results in less suffering, is it justified?
3. Do you think Marie's decision to move in order to have a fresh start was the right one, or do you agree with Hannah that "the dents and scratches" go with you and it takes more than a change of scenery to heal deep wounds?
4. Banjo plays a minor but significant role in the story. Several times, the characters reflect on how he reacts to hardship—the loss of Bee, the cone on his head, losing a paw. Do you think there's a lesson to be learned in how animals cope compared to humans?
5. Davina is badly scarred. Have you ever known anyone with a physical deformity? What was your reaction when you first met them? Were you eventually able to see past it?
6. How do you feel about collecting things for someone you lost as a way of keeping them around? Do you ever talk to loved ones who have passed?
7. Do you think Marie was right telling Davina to leave, taking her to court, and calling the sheriff when Davina returned? How do you think Marie should have handled things? How do you think Davina should have handled things?
8. How do you feel about Leo going behind Marie's back and giving Hannah the migraine tincture? Do you think Marie was right to feel betrayed?
9. How do you feel about the Egides being vilified in the press? Do you think the news and social media have too much power to destroy people's reputations and lives?
10. Davina's scars go deeper than her skin. She says it took years for her to recover enough to be a mother, and by then, Rose was mostly grown, and she didn't want to disrupt her life. Do you understand her decision, or do you think she made a mistake?
11. How do you feel about Brendon and what he did? Do you agree with Davina that doing one thing bad doesn't make you a bad person and that you can redeem yourself by doing things that are good? Do you think a five-to-one ratio seems about right?
12. The butterfly effect is the idea that something small, like getting a coffee, can have much larger effects, like altering your career. It's the notion that the world is deeply interconnected and that a small occurrence can influence a much larger complex system. This entire story came from a pinprick hole in an arm floatie, that infinitesimal event influencing countless lives. Can you think of a time when your life was impacted by the butterfly effect?
13. In the story, fire destroyed so much. Have you ever been in a fire or known someone who has? How do you feel about Danny Canton being blamed for the fire?

14. How do you imagine the future unfolding for the characters?
15. Who was your favorite character? Why?
16. Movie time: Who would you like to see play each part?