

BOOK CLUB QUESTIONS

Ashes, Ashes, They All Fall Down

Note: This novel was inspired by a true story and while the storyline is basically fiction, the conditions and diseases illustrated such as, drug addiction, depression, mental abuse, HIV/AIDS, infant drug addiction, endangering the welfare of a minor, sexual assault, assault and murder, are very real and are widespread in our society.

With Josey's childhood and young adult experiences was it difficult to believe there could be any acceptable excuse for her to start using drugs of any kind. What do you think?

In real life many people speak adamantly about what they would do in a specific situation. In this situation, why didn't the extended family step forward instead of just making excuses? What do you think you or your family would have done to help the children and at the same time keep them out of the foster care system?

Why do you believe Josey referred to her parents as 'the parents'?

Have you experienced, or do you know of a person like Martha Spangler?

There is nothing like a meddling mother-in-law, but everything Sadie Taylor did was a plan to protect Josey from her son. Do you agree with Sadie's position?

Why do you think Jonathan and Keith disappeared in the military? Why did they join separate branches? Why do you think Keith went AWOL in the Navy?

Anton appeared to have suffered psychological damage from his earlier life and his need for self preservation. How did you feel when you realized he was a hit man and a sociopath?

Timmy: Just give Timmy discussion time.

Sabur had mentally abused Josey with cocaine for several years; it was his form of control. It took the possibility of another baby born addicted, Sadie's support, and long term rehab to give Josey the strength she needed to stay clean. Even after finding out Sabur was being unfaithful Josey decided to go back to him. Without knowing how the book ended, did you agree with her decision?

Josey appeared distant and unfriendly when she met her nineteen year old roommate, Shauna. She was visibly shaken when Shauna turned up dead. Could Josey have helped Shauna, or should she have tried?

In the end Sadie gave Josey and Lloyd an ultimatum. They had everything two people could ever want and until her natural death she was their keeper. Do you believe Lloyd and Josey would live happy ever after?

The entire Whitman family fell down. Timmy and the parents' bodies returned to ashes. At the end of the story only Josey and Kim were standing again. After reading the book do you think the title was appropriate to the story?

Is the book cover reflective of the story?

Thank you for selecting *Ashes, Ashes, They All Fall Down* as your book club read. If you enjoyed the book please leave a positive review on Amazon.com. Also, please write me with your comments at: aballardjo@aol.com.

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