

Book Club Questions

Happiness Falls by Angie Kim

1. What were your first impressions of each member of the Parkson family? How did your perceptions evolve over the course of the novel?
2. How would you describe Mia’s voice as a narrator? Is she “reliable”? How would the book be different if Angie Kim had written it in the third person?
3. How did the structure of the book, including footnotes and charts, influence your reading experience?
4. Discuss the relationships between the Parkson siblings—and among the three of them. What do they learn about one another? How do you envision their relationships evolving after the events of the book?
5. Do you think it can be more difficult to see the people closest to us as they really are? Why or why not?
6. As Kim explores in Happiness Falls, we tend to equate oral fluency with intelligence (and vice versa). How did the character of Eugene challenge your assumptions about nonspeaking people?
7. How does race—including the perceived race of mixed-race characters—play into the novel? What biases and stereotypes must each character contend with?
8. Discuss Adam’s Happiness Quotient project. Do you agree with his theories? What do you consider your baseline? Do you think it needs adjusting? Do you think it’s possible to intentionally lower it? If so, do you think that would make you happier?
9. Do you think Adam was right to keep Eugene’s progress from the rest of the family? Why or why not?
10. What did you think of the ending? What do you think really happened—did Eugene repeat parts of John and Mia’s conversation, either subconsciously or intentionally? Was the note real? Do these answers matter?

Book Club questions by the publisher

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