



Book Club Questions Sweet Pea by Kit de Waal

1. When Denton dies, Paulette faces intense grief and discovers he had a secret family. How did this betrayal affect her perspective on life?
2. How do you think Paulette's inability to publicly mourn (not being able to attend his funeral) impacted her healing process?
3. Paulette has a habit of falling for men who are either unavailable or not truthful. What do you think causes her to keep going back to this type of relationship?
4. What are your thoughts on her brief relationship with Garfield? How did he influence her experiences and growth?
5. Set in 1970s London, the novel shows Paulette's feelings as a Black woman from St. Kitts living in a working-class British environment. How did her upbringing, especially the lessons from her grandmother, help or clash with her experiences in England?
6. One of the most exciting moments in the story highlights racial differences when the boys get into legal trouble. How did de Waal create suspense in this situation? Were you surprised by the way the community and the legal system treated Bird differently from Nellie?
7. Do you think Paulette's confrontation with Frank was justified? How do you feel about her decision to help him with his troubled grandson, Nellie? Could you show that kind of compassion?
8. Paulette's grandmother famously taught her to "avoid temptation and embrace love and forgiveness, in that order." Does Paulette successfully live up to this rule? By the end of the book, do you feel she truly forgave the people who wronged her, or did she channel her pain into caretaking?
9. Paulette builds a deeply unconventional "found family". Compare her relationship with her biological son, Bird, to her relationship with Nellie. How does the novel redefine what it means to be a mother?
10. How does the nickname "Sweet Pea" reflect Paulette's growth from a protected grandchild to a caring figure for others?

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