



## Discussion Questions

1. Music is essential to this narrative. How familiar were you with opera, or classical music in general, before reading this book? How do you think the element of music contributed to the world building? How do you think the characters might have been different if music weren't such a part of who they are?
2. Sing is wary of her father using his celebrity status to help her get ahead in the music world, but her father also has great confidence in her as a singer. What choices do each of them make that frustrate or disappoint the other? Conversely, how do they prove themselves—their worth, their convictions, their intentions, etc.—to each other?
3. Nathan and George's relationship changes dramatically over the many years they are together at the conservatory. In what ways does Nathan change? In what ways does George? Why?
4. There are four fiddlers playing at the Mountain Grill session—the young girl and her grandfather, who are devoted local musicians; Teddy Lund, a student from the conservatory who often joins the session and who lends Zhin his dark violin; and Zhin Fan, a child prodigy now playing professionally. How is each fiddler unique? What qualities, positive or negative, does each one bring to the session?
5. In many ways, Lori Pinkerton is an unsympathetic character. Could this story, or any parts of it, have been written from her point of view? Do you think she would become more sympathetic in that case? Why or why not?
6. Nathan and Sing don't get along at first. How are they each to blame? What hurdles must each of them overcome before they can understand each other? At what specific moments could you sense the wall between them cracking?



7. Barbara Da Navelli and the Felix are two prominent maternal figures in this story. How are they similar? How are they different?
8. On page 227, Sing says, "That was the problem, wasn't it, with Barbara Da Navelli? She had a wish granted she didn't need. The Felix would have just torn out her throat." What do you think she means by that?
9. What does Sing think performing the role of Angelique will mean to her? After she does get to sing it, how does she feel? Why?
10. In the end, Sing chooses to stay at the conservatory. Despite the fact that Harland Griss approves her decision, it's always possible things will change at Fire Lake Opera during the two years she will wait before going there. Do you think she made the right decision for her career? For her personal life? Why or why not?

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