

BOOK CLUB KIT

MISSING SAM

A NOVEL

THRITY UMRIGAR

AUTHOR OF HONOR

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- 1 Ali and Samantha have different interpretations of the argument they have on their way home from the party and why they are arguing. Who is right? How do their family dynamics play a role in their warring positions?
- 2 Have you found yourself repeating your own family dynamics in arguments with your significant other? What makes it so difficult to move beyond that pattern?
- 3 Samantha's tripping and falling the morning after the fight with Ali seems to echo the rift between the two women. Is there a symbolic way of reading her fall? Does that change your reading of the novel?
- 4 At one point Ali realizes that although she might see herself as American, not everyone around her sees her that way. What does this say about self-image and the formation of identity?
- 5 How does the novel chart what trauma does to an individual and to a couple? What are the obstacles that Sam and Ali face to having a happy marriage?
- 6 How does setting the book in 2019 affect the plot and character development? What was happening in the world at that time? How do you think the story might have played out if it were set earlier in the 2000s?
- 7 To what extent does social media affect what happens to Ali? In what ways has social media affected your perceptions of an incident?
- 8 What do you think of George's character? Without excusing his actions, do you feel any pity for him?
- 9 Umrigar has described the novel as "a social critique disguised as a mystery novel." Do you agree or disagree? How does *Missing Sam* differ from other mystery novels that you have read?
- 10 What role does reconciliation and healing play in the novel?
- 11 What does the novel say about the importance of allyship? How do we apply that to our everyday lives?