



Discussion Questions

A December to Remember by Jenny Bayliss

1. North Novelties & Curios was passed down to Augustus through generations. What does the shop—its name, history, and unique trinkets—tell us about Augustus' commitment to family and legacy? To what extent is Augustus' approach to life admirable?
2. Evidenced by the late Augustus' warm reception, the people of Rowan Thorpe held a shared, beloved impression of Augustus. Still, he remained a mystery. What quality described of him at the beginning explains this discrepancy?
3. In their youth, the three half-sisters eagerly awaited their summer reunions, when they were free to eat ice cream for breakfast, climb trees, and sleep under the stars. But overtime, the sisters became estranged. Discuss the transition from childhood to adulthood. What did the sisters lose and gain during this period? In what ways does Augustus defy this process for them?
4. Early in the novel, we witness Joe's undying support for Maggie. What attracts them to each other? To what extent is circumstance a culprit of their romantic tug-of-war? Discuss whether true love is possible in the absence of circumstance.
5. Simone and Star have a unique relationship. How would you describe their dynamic? To what extent do Simone's reactions toward Star reflect her feelings around motherhood?
6. Nomadic and unconventional, Star (full name Heavenly Stargazer Rosehip) is described as a free spirit. Identify and explain a moment in which Star lives up to her name. If you were Star's sister, how would you have dealt with that moment? Who in your life shares Star's spirit?
7. Displacement is a major theme in this novel. Discuss how this manifests in each sister's life? For each sister, what does it mean to return home?
8. Later in the novel, the sisters reinstate the old Rowan Thorp Winter Solstice celebration. Discuss, in relation to the spirit of the holidays, the impact this has on the sisters' relationships? Compare and contrast this celebration with the essence of their summertime reunions.

9. To unlock their inheritance, the sisters must complete tasks through an orchestrated game. How did you react to each task? How can we apply this approach to our own life?
10. Whether it's climbing or lighting up a tree for Christmas, trees play a big part in driving the story's aspirational ideas. Referencing the phrase "to see the forest for the trees," discuss the sisters' relationship to the woods. In what ways do trees evoke nostalgia?
11. Rowan Thorp is a tight-knit community where people know each other's business but still have each other's backs. Using a character as an example, discuss how proximity to community impacts the formation of one's sense of self.
12. In the end, Augustus' caveats proved fruitful. Discuss the bizarre or unconventional ways you've received love. How did you react to these displays of affection in the moment?

Source: Penguin Random House Reader's Guide

