

Surrender My Heart

Book Club Discussion Questions

1. Popular music provides a gateway between the past and present for Kitty and John's story. Did any of the songs from their playlist stir up memories for you? Were they related to a past love?
2. Kitty shoulders the burden of her family's secrets for thirty-five years to protect the people she loves. Was she justified in her resentment toward her mother? What could her mother have done differently?
3. Vera's death cut off Kitty's one avenue for relief from bearing her secrets alone. If you were Kitty, what would you have done? Would you have told Jillian everything on the beach?
4. Kitty learns in therapy that the weight she carries, her preference for outdated clothing, and her choice of lipwear unconsciously tie back to her past. What did this tell us about Kitty?
5. Kitty's aunt Vera has a relationship with Kitty's mother (Vera's identical twin) that contains an underlying tension. Vera freely encourages and protects Kitty's relationship with John. She loves them both as if they were her own. At critical times during the story, she clearly condones and becomes a conduit for teenage behavior that Vivian would clearly not approve of. Was Vera justified in her support of Kitty and John given the secret between her and her twin sister, Vivian? Or do you think part of her motivation was payback?
6. It's clear from John's first meeting in 1979 with Kitty's mother that Vivian treated him with thinly veiled prejudice. John attributed her judgment to his socioeconomic position and his Hispanic roots. Do you agree? Or do you think she told him the truth after Kitty left: that her prejudice was grounded in the threat he posed to Kitty's future?
7. Kitty maintains that she made "the best of the worst choices." Do you agree that she did given John's fears and issues?
8. Was Kitty justified in keeping her secret again when she reunited with John at the ten-year reunion knowing there was nothing either of them

could do? Do you think they would've lasted had she told him the truth either time, or do you think her early sacrifice led to a better life for all involved and enabling her and John to achieve a well-deserved "happy ever after" thirty-five years later?

9. Many themes are presented in this novel: loss, secrets, family politics, love, resilience, forgiveness, and acceptance. Which of these themes resonated most with you?
10. Given everything you've learned, how much would you sacrifice for the ones you love? Under what circumstances would you do those things?
11. Vivian and Bill made a moral choice to keep a secret in exchange for a free college education for Kitty. Were Kitty's parents justified in the end?
12. Tattoos are a symbolic device used in the Caught Up in Love series to represent commitment and wearing what matters most to us forever on our skin. What did you think in regards to John and his commitment to Kitty? Is this something you would ever do to symbolize what you hold most dear?

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