

THE THREAD THAT CONNECTS US

Discussion questions

- The book begins with a section about a girl and a boy who fall in love in Mogadishu. How does this section set the tone for the book?
- Since her dad left, Safiya has built defences to stop herself getting hurt. Why do you think she has done this? Do you think this will continue to protect her in the future?
- Halima talks about her memories of her home as 'treasures'. Make a list of all the treasures that come to mind when you think of your home.
- Safiya describes her and her mum as being 'fractured'. What does she mean by this?
- Halima says she 'drowned' when her mum brought a stranger into their home. What do you think she means by this?
- At home, Safiya wears different layers of herself. Do you understand what she means by this? Do you think a lot of people wear different layers? Why do they do this?
- Why do you think the relationship between Safiya and Yusuf feels so complicated?
- Safiya feels alone, even though she lives with her mum. Why does she feel this way?
- We get to hear from both Safiya and Halima throughout the book. How does this dual perspective impact the story and your feelings towards the characters?
- How does Halima's experience of moving to a new country allow us an insight into the experiences of immigrants?
- Halima begins to uncover secrets her mother has been keeping from her. How does this affect their relationship?
- Halima experiences racism when she moves to England. What do you take away from these scenes in the book?
- Why does Halima begin to see herself in Safiya? What experiences can they both relate to?
- What does faith mean to both Safiya and Halima?
- How do the events in the canteen bring the girls together?
- The girls begin to work together to uncover the truth about their family. Does this bring them closer?
- Do you agree with Yusuf's behaviour and his reasons for acting this way?
- Why is Safiya so reluctant to trust what Yusuf says about his feelings towards her?
- Does the argument between Safiya and her mum shock you? Why/why not?
- Why do you think Safiya agrees to help Halima?
- When the truth is revealed in the airport, both girls are shocked. Discuss how surprised you were by this reveal, and whether it changed your opinion on any of the characters.
- What does sisterhood mean to you? Discuss how Halima and Safiya became sisters to one another, even before they discovered the truth.

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