

# QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

## THE COMPLICITIES

1. What is the meaning of complicity to you?
2. Do you feel that any of the characters in the novel are complicit? If so, who? And in what way? Are some more complicit than others?
3. Why does the whale stranding have such a big impact on Suzanne?
4. What do you think of Suzanne's decision about the money? Would you do the same? Why or why not?
5. Why does D'Erasmus describe the death and decomposition of the whale in such detail?
6. The story of Suzanne and those around her is told through different POVs. Why do you think the book is narrated in such a complex way?
7. Why do you think D'Erasmus chose not to give Alan a voice? What do you think he would say if he were telling his side of the story?
8. What is the role of money in this novel? If it were a character, what sort of character would it be? How does class affect the people and events in the book?
9. What would be the most just outcome in the situation described in the novel? How often do we see just outcomes in situations like this, and why do you think that is?
10. Throughout the novel, the characters all find themselves in risky, compromised, or dubious circumstances. Why do you think they make the decisions that they do? What are the value systems of each character? How and why do these sometimes clash?
11. Suzanne, Lydia, and Sylvia are all mothers. How does motherhood influence their characters, their choices, and the trajectory of their lives in general? What are the differences among them, as mothers?
12. Of all the characters in the book, Noah has perhaps the most vulnerable and sincere relationship with Alan. What kind of father is Alan to Noah? How does the father-son dynamic affect what happens in the book? How is it different from the mother-son dynamic? Have you seen that difference in your own experience?
13. In *The Complicities*, the past just won't stay in the past. Why do you think the past has such a grip on these people? What makes it so sticky?
14. Which character do you find the most sympathetic? Why?

