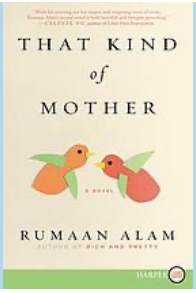
Discussion Guide



That Kind of Mother
Rumaan Alam

Ecco
2918
304 pages
ISBN: 978-0062667618

Black Maternal Health

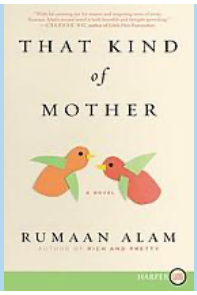
Summary

That Kind of Mother dives deep into questions about parenthood, adoption, and race: Is mothering something learned, or that you're born to? How far can good intentions stretch? And most of all, can love really overcome the boundaries of race and class? – Celeste Ng, author of *Little Fires Everywhere*

Questions

1. Rebecca considers Priscilla both an employee and a friend. Do you think Priscilla would consider Rebecca a friend as well? In what ways does the power imbalance between them affect their relationship?
2. Priscilla helps other women adapt to the physical trials of new motherhood, but she suffers the most devastating consequences herself. What do you make of the connection between her work as a caregiver and her own medical misfortune? Are we meant to see her death as purely a tragic accident, or were there other factors that may have put her at risk?
3. Christopher and Rebecca worry that Andrew's biological father might interfere with their adoption, but their lawyer assures them that "there is not a judge in this state who is going to privilege the objections of a black man over those of a white woman." Does Rebecca accept this as a positive? What are the implications of this idea as she raises a black son?
4. The shadow of the AIDS crisis flickers throughout the novel. Though it feels distant from the main characters' lives, does it affect them in any way? Why might the author have chosen to include this topic?
5. Christopher relies on Rebecca to take care of the children and the household, while Ian and Cheryl seem to share domestic responsibilities. What does the book have to say about the role of fatherhood?
6. Christopher is shaken by the unethical dealings at his workplace. Do you think Christopher meets his moral obligations, at work and at home? Is he fair in saying that Rebecca is sheltered from real-world issues?
7. Princess Diana is evoked throughout the novel as a source of inspiration. What qualities does she represent, and why is Rebecca so drawn to her?
8. When Andrew's teacher raises concerns about his behavior at school, Rebecca implies that a white student would not be similarly chastised. Do you agree that Andrew was treated unfairly? Is Rebecca misguided in her attempts to make Andrew feel accepted and loved?

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9. Neither Cheryl nor Rebecca seem to feel an obligation to contact Andrew's biological father. Do you agree with their decision to keep this piece of information a secret? Would it be in Andrew's best interest to know the truth, or not?
10. At the end of the book, Rebecca says in her award acceptance speech that the new millennium will offer a fairer and more equal world. What do you think of the choice to end the book on this note?

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