



On the Rocks

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Questions for Discussion

1. Ben's break-up with Abby was unusually abrupt and painful. Why do you think that Abby continued to speak to him after the way he treated her? Do you think she would've behaved the same way if she didn't have email and text messaging to rely on for communication?
2. Ben breaks up with Abby via Facebook. How has technology changed the modern dating scene? Have you seen any of this in your own life? Do you think this has been a change for better or for worse? How would Abby see it?
3. Ben breaks up with Abby in order to move out of his comfort zone and build a new life for himself. Although he handles the situation poorly, do you think he has any redeeming qualities?
4. Abby had some difficulties handling her sister Katie's engagement. Do you think she redeemed herself and repaired her relationship with her sister by the end of the novel? Do you think she was justified in feeling the way she did?
5. Abby has a moment where she realizes that she's more like her mother than she thought, and it results in some very serious soul searching on her part. Have you ever gone through an experience that showed you something about yourself you found surprising? How did you address it?
6. Abby has a tumultuous relationship with her mother and her sister. Do you think her relationships with her family change over the course of the novel? How so? What does she learn about family?
7. A year after Ben calls off their engagement he comes back and tells Abby he wants a second chance. Do you think that some people who make bad decisions deserve a second chance? Would you have entertained giving him one?
8. Abby thinks that she has some unrealistic expectations on dating and relationships because of the fairytales that surrounded her as a child. Do you think that fairytales play a role in distorting young girls' ideas about how relationships work in the real world? Do you think they can potentially be harmful? Why or why not?
9. Grace and Lara's lives are both upended by situations involving "the other woman," though Grace is having an affair and Lara has lost her husband to one. Do you think they're both treated sympathetically? How are they ultimately able to find common ground?
10. Toward the end of the novel, Abby finally has a productive conversation with her mother, and says that she's happy that her mother finally understands that "sometimes, a girl just wants her mother to lie to her." What do you think she meant by that?
11. Abby and Bobby have a unique relationship, one that ultimately helps her get over Ben once and for all. Why do you think Bobby took it upon himself to help Abby move on with her life? Do you think he really had feelings for her, or was he solely trying to be her friend?
12. Grace and Abby seem to think they know what's best for each other, when neither one of them have their own lives figured out. Do you think their reliance on each other was more helpful or harmful when it came to dealing with their relationships? Why?
13. What do you think it says about how women define happiness today that all three women ended up alone but happier than they were when they were in their relationships? Do you think that modern women focus as much as love and marriage as they used to?
14. Do you think Abby, Lara, or Grace will find their happy endings, however they're defined, after their summer of self discovery? Do you think any of them are better positioned to find themselves in healthy relationships? Why or why not?