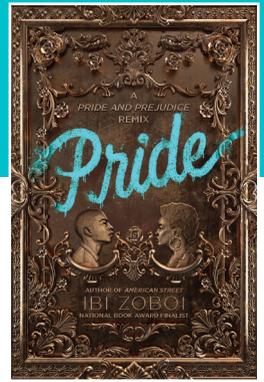


PRIDE

by Ibi Zoboi



BOOKTALK

Zuri Benitez knows exactly who she is and where she comes from, and she won't let anyone change her—definitely not the wealthy Darcy family who just moved into the biggest house in her hood. While her four sisters are dazzled by the handsome Darcy brothers, Zuri knows better. She's totally focused on getting into Howard University, so that someday she can return to Bushwick to improve life for the vibrant, diverse community she loves. Zuri doesn't have time for snobby Darius Darcy, especially when she's spending time with Warren, who can out-swag him any day. But as the summer passes, Zuri begins to realize that she may have misjudged both Warren and Darius—and that just as her neighborhood is beginning to change, like it or not, so is she.

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

GROWTH. While visiting Howard University, Zuri reflects on the girls who have attended before her: “Maybe they couldn’t go back to their old hoods because they’ve grown too big, too tall. Not in size, but in... experience. In...*feeling*. I wonder how I’ll change, too” (p. 142). What does it mean to grow in the way that Zuri describes? How do you see Zuri grow and change over the course of the novel? Do you think that Zuri might grow too “big” for her hood in Bushwick someday?

JUDGEMENT. After Zuri accuses Darius of treating her badly, he points out, “You judged me too,” and she eventually agrees (p. 256). Do you think that Zuri was justified in her initial judgement of Darius? Once you know more of his story, do you think that Darius was justified in his treatment of Zuri? What judgements do you think the community, and Zuri, made about Darius and his family? What judgements do you think that the Darcy’s made about Zuri and her family? Talk about a time when your initial judgement of a person or a situation changed once you knew them better.

CLASS. After Darius’ grandmother treats her rudely, Zuri observes that “Money can’t buy manners” (p. 172). Why does Zuri think this? What does the interaction between Zuri and Catherine Darcy reveal about each

one’s character? Can you think of other moments in the novel where social class and identity play a major role? Why does Zuri feel like she and Darius come from such different worlds? Do you think that coming from different social classes as they do is a barrier, or a bolster, to their love?

PRIDE. As Zuri struggles to accept moving away from Bushwick, her father tells her, “Don’t let your pride get in the way of your heart, mija” (p. 269). Why does Zuri’s father give her this advice, and what does it mean to you? After reading Zuri’s reflection on pride (p. 272), how do you think Zuri defines pride? What role does Zuri’s pride play in her character development, and how does it shape the novel? What are the things in your own life of which you are the most proud?

CHANGE. Zuri tells Darius, “I’ve been taking this train my whole life. The train is the same. The stops are the same. But the people are different” (p. 220). What does Zuri’s observation reveal about the state of Bushwick? What are some of the forces driving the gentrification that she sees happening in her neighborhood? What are the consequences of these changes for the people in Zuri’s community? Are there areas of your city or town that are experiencing similar changes?