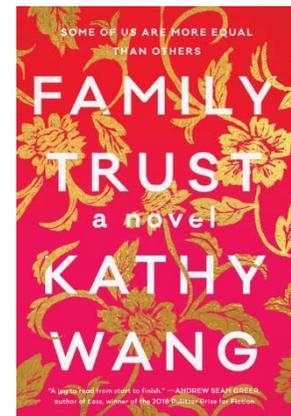


Family Trust
William Morrow

By Kathy Wang
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Introduction

When Stanley Huang, the patriarch of the Huang family, is diagnosed with pancreatic cancer, his wife, ex-wife, son and daughter are deeply concerned. Mostly for Stanley himself, of course, but also for the fate of his estate. His son, Fred, is caught between a disappointing job and an oblivious girlfriend, his career and love life at the edge of ruin. His daughter, Kate, is supporting her husband while his startup gets off the ground (one day it will, he promises her). Stanley's current wife, Mary Zhu, twenty-eight years his junior, finds herself floundering with his care while his ex-wife, Linda Liang, is finding new love online.



For years, Stanley has dropped hints that he's worth millions of dollars. Now that his time seems to be coming, everyone could benefit from a piece of the family fortune. But just what is he leaving, and to whom exactly is he leaving it?

As they grapple with each other and their greed, the Huangs throw the fate of the family into the balance, leaving themselves with only two outcomes: come together or be torn apart for good.

Questions for Discussion

1. To what degree do you think the Huangs are affected by Silicon Valley's specific culture? How does the environment shape their ambition and expectations?
2. How are the trajectories of Fred and Kate's careers shaped by gender expectations and stereotypes?
3. In what ways do each of the men in *Family Trust* act on their sense of entitlement and ingratiate their egos? How do the women in the book react to this?
4. In some ways Linda is the wife Stanley needs while Mary is the wife Stanley wants. How do they counteract each other and compliment each other? How well did each know the "real" Stanley?
5. The original title for this book was "A Man of Means". How does this title reflect the events of the book? In what ways does the book's tagline, "Some of us are more equal than others" ring true?
6. How does the theme of excess versus restraint play out in the book? What does it reveal about the Huang family dynamics?

7. What are the similarities and differences in the way Fred and Kate relate to being Chinese American? How does that come into play in their romantic relationships?
8. Linda is arguably the best at reading people and situations but can also be judgmental. Do you consider her to be a reliable narrator? How reliable are the other points of view in the book?
9. Would you say Mary is a sympathetic character? Were you surprised when she disappeared?
10. Right before he dies, Stanley thinks that he is "lucky to have always been lucky." Does this seem accurate to you? How much did luck factor into the situation each of the characters find themselves in nine months after Stanley's death?
11. What does Kate's friendship with Camilla reveal about her marriage with Denny? What gaps does Camilla fill in Kate's life?
12. Mary says she feels closest to Fred, Kate, and Linda when she allows herself to feel angry about Stanley's betrayal and false promises. What role does anger play in the story? How does Stanley unite and divide those closest to him?