

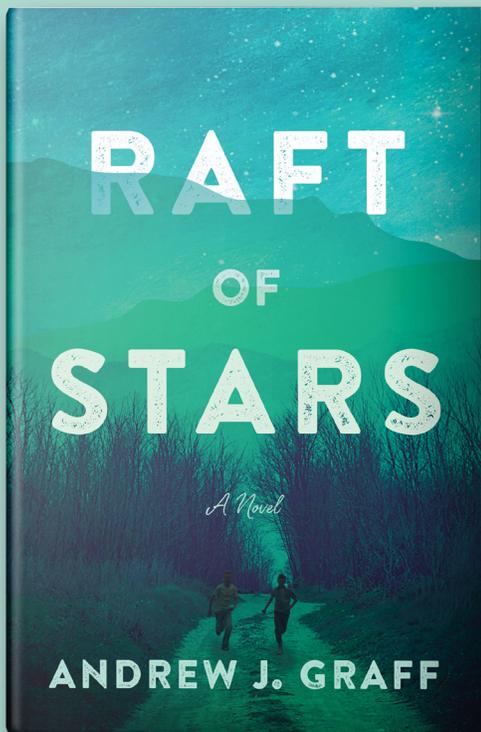
RAFT OF STARS

A Novel

ANDREW J. GRAFF

Reading Group Guide

1. Author J. Ryan Stradal called *Raft of Stars* an adventure story with a warm heart and “a whole town of characters for readers to fall in love with.” Who became your favorite character while reading, and why?
2. In what literal or figurative ways does the novel reflect its title, *Raft of Stars*? What were your expectations when you first read the title, and how were those expectations met (or not)?
3. *Raft of Stars* could be described as a coming-of-age story, and not only in reference to the two boys. How did other characters come of age or grow during the course of the novel? Did you ever feel like giving any of the characters a piece of advice? What was it?



4. In the first chapter, Fish overhears his grandfather saying that the boys are “strong and good.” Why was this so significant for Fish to hear, and how did hearing it affect him in later scenes?
5. The novel’s point of view is controlled by three characters—Fish, Tiffany, and Cal. Why do you think the author chose to follow most closely the hearts and minds of these three characters instead of others? What was unique or similar about their emotional journeys?
6. Constable Bobby is a minor character who plays a humorous role but also a critical one. How did the constable complicate and advance the story’s plot in key ways?



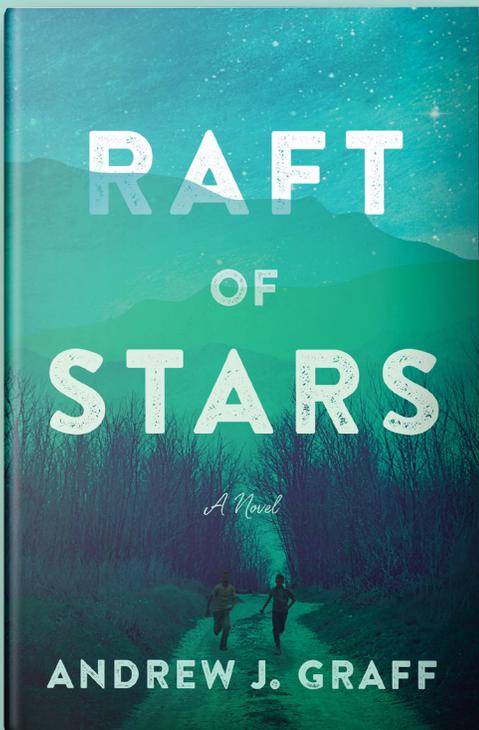
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7. Animals play a big part in this novel. Bears, beavers, and coyotes recur in the scenes and thoughts or memories of certain characters. How did each of these animals appear in the story? What did each seem to represent?
8. When the boys take a break to do cannonballs in the river, Fish becomes aware of a thought that shocks him: *It was possible for a person to never again be afraid of anything*. Did Fish ever reach this space of fearlessness in the novel? If so, how and when did it come?
9. Tiffany forms a special relationship with Bread throughout the novel and claims at the end that “no height or depth or power” will stop her from adopting a little brother. Why was Tiffany so drawn to this boy, and what about her life makes her uniquely suited to care for him?
10. The novel’s later scenes look forward. They suggest a burgeoning relationship between Cal and Tiffany, that Teddy is bored by his “peaceful” farming life, and that Cal never really wanted to be a cop. What do you think the rest of the summer or even the next year may look like for this cast of characters? How will they all end up?



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