

BOOK CLUB KIT

Book Club Kit

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

SPLINTERS

ANOTHER KIND OF LOVE STORY

LESLIE JAMISON

AUTHOR OF THE RECOVERING AND THE EMPATHY EXAMS



*"Filled with
heart, humor,
and unsparring
insights...
A standout."
—PEOPLE*

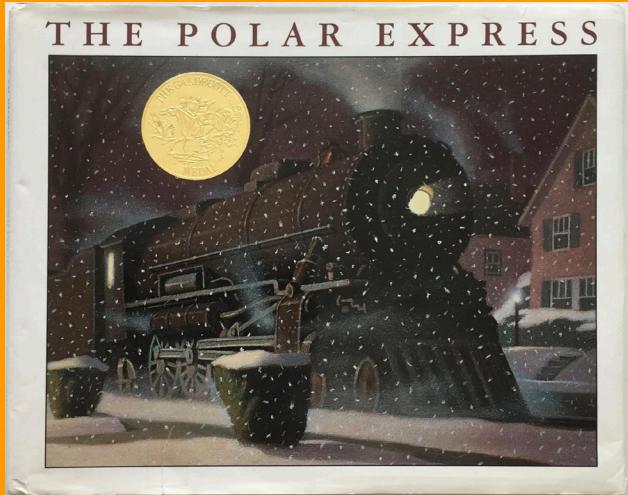
Discussion Questions for Your Book Club

1. “People told me motherhood would feel like deprivation—losing time, losing sleep, losing freedom—but it felt more like sudden and exhausting plenitude.” So much of *Splinters* is about the ways that our lives contain many emotions at once: grief and love, exhaustion and wonder, guilt and hope. In your own life, are there ways you have experienced some kind of surprising plenitude—unexpected illumination or pleasure—in times of loss or struggle?
2. Jamison teaches her students that it is crucial to “get specific” when writing. Which specific details in *Splinters* resonated most with you?
3. While caring for her daughter, Jamison meditates on the relationship between domesticity and profundity. In your life—at home, at work, with strangers or loved ones—how and when have you experienced profound moments in ordinary, day-to-day routines?
4. Jamison writes, “Once you’re finally out of a broken marriage, it feels like you’re just dripping with love.” Did you find anything about her experience of divorce to be surprising? Why or why not?
5. Jamison writes that when she met C, she was “drowning in the revocability of my own life. I wanted the solidity of what you couldn’t undo.” What do you think she means by this? Are there times when you have found yourself craving what she calls “a binding contract with the self”?
6. In becoming a parent, Jamison reflects in new ways on her own childhood. How does motherhood change her perception of her mother, her father, and their divorce? What are some of the ways your conception of your childhood—key memories or relationships—has evolved over time?
7. Throughout the book, Jamison finds love and support from her friends and broader community, though the emotions underpinning these relationships are unexpectedly complicated. Of her friendship with Colleen, for instance, Jamison writes: “It seemed shameful to need from a friend what I was supposed to need from my husband.” Why do you think she feels this way? Do you think our society assigns more legitimacy to romantic relationships? How do you value love and friendship in your life?
8. “My daughter broke me open for the whole world. She broke me open for everything that wasn’t her.” As her daughter gets older, Jamison writes about the experience of observing her gain consciousness of the world around her. How does the experience of watching a person come into their own change the ways in which we perceive ourselves and the world around us?

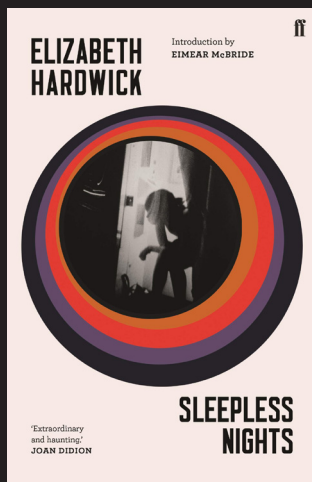
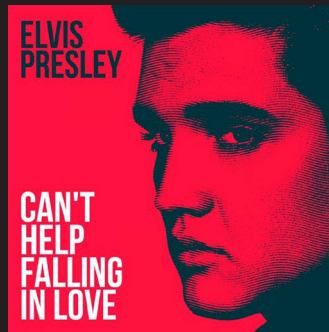
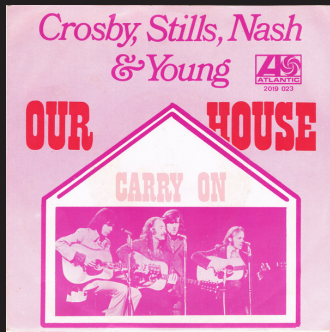
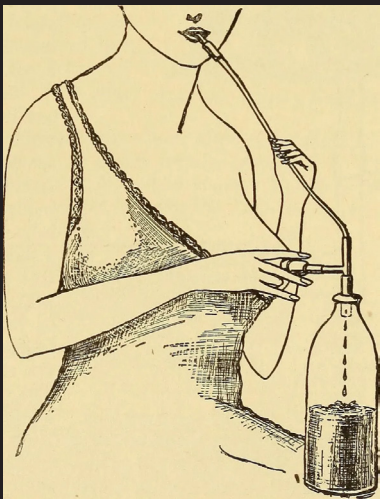
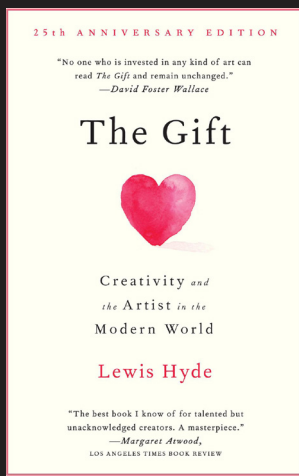


The World of Splinters

Splinters is rich with references from art, music, poetry, and fiction. Use these references as jumping off points for future reading and exploration.



Georges Seurat's "Evening, Honfleur", Artist Donald Judd's house in Marfa, *The Polar Express* by Chris Van Allsburg, Artist Wendy Red Star and her daughter Bea Red Star Fletcher, Garry Winogrand's "Women" (2 photos), Wangechi Mutu's "Eat Cake", *The Maggie B* by Irene Haas, Lea Lublin's 1968 performance "Mon Fils"



“Wise Up” by Aimee Mann, *The Gift* by Lewis Hyde, Louise Bourgeois’s “The Couple” (in Oslo), “Nick and the Candlestick” by Sylvia Plath, Judy Chicago’s “The Dinner Party”, The Turning Torso in Malmö, Breast Pump in use (1917), “Our House” by Crosby, Stills, Nash, & Young, “Can’t Help Falling in Love” by Elvis, Hami melons hanging at a fruit bodega, *Sleepless Nights* by Elizabeth Hardwick