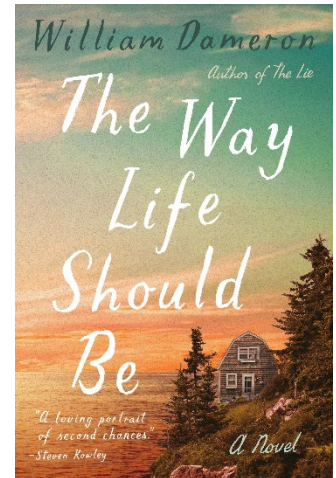


Discussion Questions for *The Way Life Should Be: A Novel* by William Dameron

1. This novel explores the generational trauma theme and how it shapes our identities. *Each of us carries a ghost child inside, whispering their fatal injuries in a language that can take the rest of our adult lives to hear.* Was there a specific character who faced challenges you identified with more than the others? Was there a character whose actions made you feel anger?
2. Matt creates a list of *Cottage Rules*, “The goal is that we will not want to kill each other following this glorious summer of family togetherness in Maine,” which appears between the chapters. Would you have added any rules to the list?
3. Thomas muses, *We think we know our spouses better than they know themselves because, in a way, we create them, as if before us they were waiting to be brought to life.* Do you think this is true? What do you think he means by this?
4. Why do you think Abbie refuses to call Thomas her father?
5. Why do you think Thomas could not address Matt about his drinking until the end of the book?
6. *Change comes in the form of daily decisions that you may never have considered unless presented with the opportunity.* Do you believe that actual change comes from daily decisions, or does it take something more monumental to affect true change?
7. Have you visited Maine? After reading this book, would you be more or less inclined to visit?
8. Identity is a significant theme in this book, and how it is shaped by external forces, family, small towns, roles in the community, and how we portray ourselves through social media. Do you think it is possible to change our identities, or is it an intrinsic part of who we are?
9. In the book, Conor plays a game of Kiss or Slap. What do you think this game represents? Which character do you think deserves a kiss, and which one deserves a slap?
10. Which character do you believe changed the most by the end of the book?
11. Which actors would you cast if you were to make a movie or limited series out of *The Way Life Should Be*?



Maineiac Cocktail

SIMPLE RECIPE

Ingredients

- Fresh mint leaves
- Fresh lemon
- 2 tablespoon sugar
- 1 cup blueberries
- 1/2 cup blueberry vodka
- 2 cups lemonade
- ice

Directions

1. Place mint leaves, sugar and blueberries in a cocktail shaker.
2. Muddle mixture with the end of a wooden spoon until blueberries are broken.
3. Add vodka and ice; shake vigorously for 30 seconds
4. Divide mixture among two tall glasses. Top with each with lemonade; stir.
5. Garnish with blueberries, mint and lemon slices.

Notes

Make a place for everyone. Enjoyed best when shared

