



Colorado Book Club Resource

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR HUM OF OUR BLOOD BY MADELYN GARNER

1. How does the triptych format at the beginning of each section influence your reading experience? What effect does this structure have on the unfolding narrative of Brad's illness?
2. In what ways does Garner navigate the complexities of portraying her son's life, including aspects of his sexuality and experiences, with both vulnerability and objectivity? How does this dual perspective enhance the depth of the poems?
3. Discuss the significance of the imagery associated with childhood objects, such as in the poems "As Ouija Board," "As Etch-A-Sketch," and "As Playground Swing." How do these symbols contribute to the themes of innocence, loss, and the passage of time?
4. How does Garner convey the transformation of grief throughout the collection? Are there specific poems or lines that resonate with the evolving nature of mourning?
5. Considering Brad Braverman was an accomplished photographer, how does the inclusion or mention of his photographic work within the poems add layers to the narrative? In what ways do visual art and poetry intersect in this collection?
6. How does the collection reflect the societal attitudes and challenges faced during the early years of the AIDS epidemic? What insights does it offer into the experiences of those directly and indirectly affected by the crisis?
7. In what ways do the poems address the concepts of resilience in the face of illness and the preservation of memory after loss? How does Garner balance the portrayal of pain with moments of hope or beauty?
8. Given that the collection was published over two decades after Brad's passing, how does the passage of time influence the tone and perspective of the poems? What does this suggest about the long-term process of healing and remembrance?

Discussion questions generated by ChatGPT.



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