**The author has created a list of questions for your book club or group of readers. Click here to download.**

**Discussion Questions**

1. How does the tragedy of Zlata’s life influence the three generations of women—the grandmother, mother, and granddaughter? How have the experiences of your female ancestors influenced your own life without your even knowing it?
2. What changes in Anna over the course of the novel? What does she come to understand about herself and others? In what ways is this a novel about growing up? What were your own pivotal experiences that caused a major shift in the way you looked at the world?
3. Why doesn’t the relationship between Anna and Iosif work out? How would you describe their relationship?
4. How does the past affect the characters in the novel? Is there a way for them to free themselves from the past?
5. What choices does Sarah have in her life? How does she exert her autonomy and at the same time seem very fragile and dominated by the men in her life?
6. Why do Sarah and Leon react to the murder of their parent in such differing ways? Does their marriage seem destined to fail?
7. In what ways does Sarah become the unlikely hero of the novel? Are there heroes in your own family who have never been acknowledged?
8. What sense of Brezhnev’s Soviet Union do you get from the novel?
9. What are the experiences of Jews in the three generations across time and country as the novel shifts from Russia/the Soviet Union to the United States? Can you relate any of your own family history to the history depicted in the novel? What is the immigrant story of your own ancestors?
10. What do you think of Sarah and Leon going back to the Soviet Union in 1931? And Anna going in 1980? Have you or anyone in your family longed to go back to the country you or your ancestor once came from?
11. How relevant is the novel to today’s current time period?