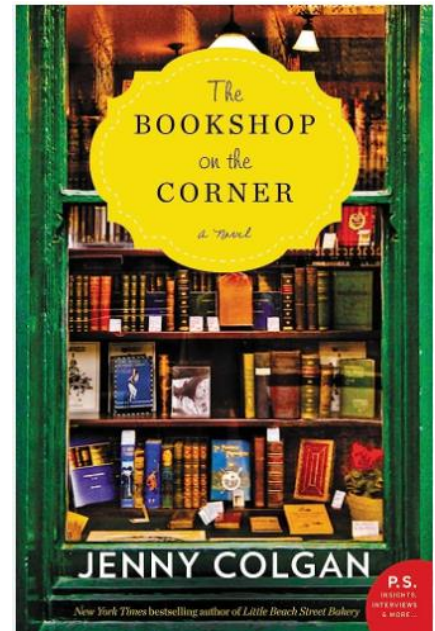


The Bookshop on the Corner by Jenny Colgan

Discussion Questions

1. Nina always liked to feel that *Little Women* was close by in a crisis. Why do you think this book gave her such peace? Did anyone else in the story have an “automatic comforting device”? Are there any books that make you feel the same way Nina did about *Little Women*, perhaps a favorite go-to?
2. Why wasn't Nina deterred by the old man who wouldn't sell the van to a woman as little as her? How did she get around this and still manage to acquire it? Were there any loopholes attached?
3. Why did Nina love to have books around her and especially to recommend books to others? Do all book lovers have a bit of this in them?
4. How was it that “someone Nina had met so briefly, under such extraordinary circumstances, should turn out to be able to pinpoint exactly what Nina was feeling” with a poem written in another language?
5. Why did Marek say that “Poetry is good for people in strange lands”? Is there something about poetry's format or content that made him think so? Are certain poems or styles better than others for this? What do you think might have been Nina's favorite poem before the one from Marek?
6. Why did Nina choose the name “The Little Shop of Happily Ever After” for her mobile bookstore? What did Surinder think of it, or Lennox? Was it an accurate name in any way?
7. Nina noticed that the goriest serial-killer series always went to the most mild-mannered looking of people. Why was it that “the more sensibly dressed the person, the more unutterably depraved they liked their fiction”? What part did clothes versus literature preferences play in this book?
8. Surinder told Nina that she liked “to appear a pushover, but inside you're as tough as boots.” Nina admitted that everyone's different from how they look on the



inside. How was that accurate about Nina but not Surinder? Who else was different on the outside, and were there reasons for that?

9. Why did Griffin want the new librarian position so badly, then greatly regret acquiring it? Would Nina have ever fit in there, and why or why not?

10. At one point, Nina was working a lot of overtime and told Griffin, "I only think in books. So I'm working too hard and it's like *Hard Times*, then I go home and it's *Cold Comfort Farm*." How are these titles appropriate for her work and home life? What title would Nina have given to Surinder's life, or Griffin's, or Lennox's? Can you think of any humorous titles for any of your current life situations?