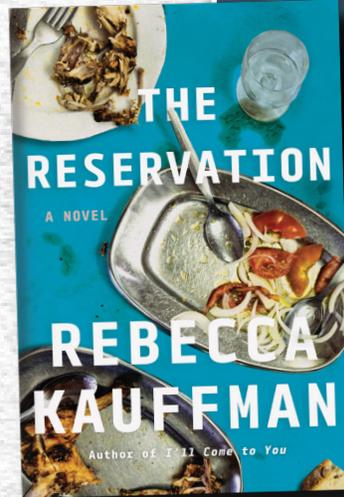


The Reservation by Rebecca Kauffman Official Discussion Guide



- 1.** The assumptions that characters hold about one another play an important role in this story. What are some examples of this?
- 2.** In what ways does Orsa's heartbreak over the loss of her sister, and her inability to conceive children of her own, impact her treatment of different employees?
- 3.** The space that the restaurant occupies in the lives of the staff members differs tremendously from one to the next; for some it is a huge part of their identity while for others it is barely a blip. Discuss how this impacts their attitudes and interactions.
- 4.** The end of Edgar's chapter reads: "See, the heart was a home with many rooms. And you would never stop relying on an impossibly complex network of truths, lies, and concessions to keep it all propped up and protected, like boards behind the walls, or bones within the body." Do you agree with this idea? Why or why not?
- 5.** The book takes place over the course of one day, with chapters named for job titles and told from each of these different points of view. How did this structure impact your reading experience?
- 6.** The concept of theft extends beyond the missing steaks in the book. What are your thoughts on the various definitions of theft put forth by characters?
- 7.** Do you approve of Orsa's handling of the investigation and its outcome? Why or why not?
- 8.** How did the chapter titled "The Diners" - in which the main characters featured are unnamed and unaware of the theft - correspond to the rest of the narrative?
- 9.** Did you find yourself cheering for or against certain characters in "The Bartender," when accusations are made, and the full picture starts to come together?
- 10.** "The Bar Guest" expresses his belief that stories, by virtue of being stories, are "never, ever true." What do you make of this statement?