



PEACHTREE

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



Sing Like No One's Listening

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ABOUT THE BOOK

Nettie Delaney has just been accepted into a prestigious performing arts school—the very same school her superstar mother attended. With her mother's shadow hanging over her, Nettie has her work cut out for her, and everyone is watching. To make matters worse, Nettie hasn't been able to sing a single note since her mother died. Whenever she tries, she just clams up. But if Nettie's going to survive a demanding first year and keep her place in a highly coveted program, she'll have to work through her grief and deliver a showstopper or face expulsion.

All may not be lost, however, when Nettie stumbles upon a mysterious piano player in an empty studio after class. Masked behind a curtain, can Nettie summon the courage to find her voice? Or will the pressure and anxiety of performing come crashing down?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why do you think Nettie's grief over her mother's death causes her to lose her ability to sing?
2. Discuss the role singing plays in Nettie's life. If you were in Nettie's situation, how would you go about finding your voice again? Would you go to Duke's even after a terrible audition?
3. Do you think it's fair for Nettie to be accepted at Duke's after her failed audition?
4. Why is Miss Duke important to Nettie's growth in the story? How is Steph's approach to Nettie's recovery different than Miss Duke's?
5. How is Fletch different from the rest of Nettie's friends at Duke's? Why do you think Fletch continues to collaborate with Nettie even though she can't sing?
6. Do you think Fletch encouraging Nettie to help him write a song is beneficial to Nettie's recovery? Why or why not?
7. Imagine you meet Nettie at Duke's and hear her attempt to sing in class. Without knowing anything about her mother, what would you think about her?
8. If you were one of Nettie's friends or classmates, would you be as patient with her after she claims to have lost her voice?
9. Nettie endures frequent verbal and even physical abuse from her ballet teacher, but none of her classmates ever step in to defend her. Why do you think that is? How would you react if you witnessed Nettie's treatment?
10. Aside from grieving her mother's death, Nettie deals with pressure from her grandmother to stay thin as well as a consistent barrage of derogatory comments from Millicent Moore. How do you think Kiki or Alec would handle that kind of harassment?
11. At Duke's, so much importance is placed on a person's appearance and encouraging students to be nothing short of perfect. Why is this problematic? How does this influence the way students see themselves and treat their peers? Do you see similar pressures in your own life?
12. Consider the bullying and sexual assault Alec deals with before starting at Duke's. How different do you think this story would be if the author chose to tell it from his point of view?
13. How do you think Jade and Natasha are vital to Nettie's growth and success?

14. Is Nettie's grief the only thing holding her back from finding her voice? What else might be keeping her from moving on?
15. Other than being Nettie's closest friends at school, why are Alec and Kiki so important to Nettie's recovery?
16. Why do you think seeing the tape of her mother dancing helps Nettie finally break out of her shell? What else may have helped Nettie regain her confidence?
17. Nettie admits, "After what happened with Mum and the voicemail, and then Fletch—I'm scared to feel *anything*" (p. 212). Nettie faces so much grief and heartbreak in such a short amount of time. Do you find her ultimate ability to rediscover her voice surprising? Why or why not?
18. Do you think Nettie would have agreed to secretly sing for Jade in the musical even if Jade hadn't tried to blackmail her? Why or why not? Why is it easier for Nettie to sing behind a wall than actually face a crowd of people?
19. Nettie proves that you should never sacrifice your dreams even when giving up seems like the easier option. If you were Nettie, would you have persisted?
20. Do you think Nettie would have been able to overcome her grief without her friends and teachers? Why or why not?

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