BOOK CLUB DISCUSSION GUIDE

A Country Called Brooklyn

by Hane Selmani

Organized by the four parts of the memoir, these discussion questions invite readers to explore the events, relationships, cultural traditions, and moral questions at the heart of *A Country Called Brooklyn*.

I. THE FAMILY

1. What were your first impressions of Hane's family and their life in Brooklyn?
2. How did the family's Albanian traditions shape the way they viewed honor, marriage, and personal freedom?
3. Were there moments in Part One where you felt caught between sympathy for the family and frustration with some of their beliefs?
4. What surprised you most about the immigrant experience described in this section?
5. How did the Kanun continue to shape family life even after they came to America?
6. Which family member stood out most to you and why?

Reflection

- Have you ever inherited beliefs or expectations that you later questioned?
- How much of our identity comes from family, and how much comes from society?

II. HER FINAL YEAR

1. As Jariyeh's story unfolded, what warning signs did you notice in her marriage?
2. Did you feel that the people around her recognized the danger she was facing?
3. How did cultural expectations affect the choices available to Jariyeh?
4. Were there moments when you wished someone had acted differently? Who and why?
5. How did your feelings toward Mehmet change throughout this section?
6. What emotions did this part evoke most: sadness, anger, helplessness, or something else?

Reflection

- Why do people sometimes remain silent when they see troubling behavior?
- How do family loyalty and personal responsibility come into conflict?

III. THE BLOOD FEUD

1. How did shame and the threat of blood feuds influence what people could or could not say?
2. How did this section change your understanding of honor-based cultures?
3. Did you view the blood feud tradition as a system of justice, revenge, or something more complicated?
4. Which revelations in this section challenged your assumptions the most?
5. How did the author's investigation affect your understanding of what happened to Jariyeh?
6. What role did rumors play in shaping people's actions and decisions?

Reflection

- Can a cultural tradition remain meaningful while some of its practices become harmful?
- What responsibilities do later generations have in questioning inherited beliefs?

IV. THE NIGHT OF

1. How did reading the events of the murder affect you emotionally?
2. What details from that night stayed with you the most?
3. Did your understanding of the crime change as the events were reconstructed?
4. How did the witness testimony and later investigation influence your view of the case?
5. Were you surprised by the legal outcome?
6. What questions remained unanswered for you after finishing this section?

Reflection

- Is justice the same as truth?
- Can a family ever fully heal from an event like this?

FINAL DISCUSSION (After finishing the book)

1. What do you believe was the true motive behind Jariyeh's murder, and does the book ultimately answer its central question?
2. How did the author's spiritual reflections influence your understanding of the story?
3. What does the title A Country Called Brooklyn mean to you?
4. Which theme resonated most strongly: Immigration, Family, Honor, Justice, Identity, Forgiveness, or Truth?
5. What part of the book will stay with you long after finishing it?
6. If you could ask Hane one question, what would it be?