



Book Club in a Bag Discussion Questions

The Story of Us by Catherine Hernandez

1. How has the past shaped the lives of the main characters? Do they reflect any of your own experiences or those of anyone in your life?
2. Why do you think the author chose to narrate the story through the eyes of Mary Grace's newborn baby? What effect did this have on the novel, and how you experienced reading it?
3. How do you feel about this quote from the author: "Despite how bleak the future seems; I want people to read the last pages of the book believing in love and the power of family." Was this your experience when you finished the book?
4. Mary Grace had big dreams when she left her country, looking for work and a better life. After reading her about her journey and her struggles, have you learned something new or been exposed to different ideas about people in other parts of the world? Would you be able to change your own life as drastically?
5. This story explores many subjects: dementia, elder care, gender identity and overseas workers. Has this novel helped to bring awareness to any or all of these areas? What were your initial perceptions or judgements as you read, and did they change?
6. Are you familiar with the term "Intentional Family"? Discuss what meaning this has for you and how the novel explores this concept.
7. Was your connection to the novel and its characters enhanced by the setting of Scarborough Ontario?

These questions were created by Clarington Library, Museums & Archives staff to enhance your discussion of the book.

Author Biography

Catherine Hernandez is an award-winning author and screenwriter. She is a proud queer woman who is of Filipino, Spanish, Chinese and Indian descent and married into the Navajo Nation. Her first novel, *Scarborough*, won the Jim Wong-Chu Award for the unpublished manuscript; was shortlisted for the Toronto Book Awards, the Evergreen Forest of Reading Award, the Edmund White Award, and the Trillium Book Award; and a finalist for Canada Reads 2022.

<https://www.catherinehernandezcreates.com/about.html>

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