



Book Club in a Bag

Discussion Questions

“Somewhere in France” by Jennifer Robson

1. If you had the chance to grow up as the daughter of Lord and Lady Cumberland – knowing that you would live in unimaginable luxury but be denied an education, the chance to work and very likely the chance to choose your own spouse – would you do it?
2. Do you feel Lady Cumberland’s treatment of Lilly is motivated by sincere concern on her part for her daughter’s welfare? Or is it a case of her obsessively adhering to the conventions of aristocratic society, no matter what the cost?
3. Do Robbie’s motivations in pushing Lilly away after the bombardment of the Fifty-first make sense to you?
4. What about Lilly’s motivations? Is she right to insist on staying at the Fifty-first no matter what? Wouldn’t it be reasonable for her to compromise and take up a position elsewhere in France?
5. Before reading “Somewhere in France”, if someone had mentioned the First World War to you, what would have come to mind? Has your perception of the First World War changed as a result?
6. “Somewhere in France” is set in the recent past, barely a century ago. Were there any aspects of life in the novel that surprised you by their modernity? Did its characters feel familiar to you, or more like inhabitants of “a different country,” to paraphrase a well-known description of the past?
7. Do you think Robbie and Lilly’s relationship would have been possible without the war and the changes it brought to British society?
8. Do you think it really would have been possible for Lilly to become friends with women like Annie and Bridget, or is that wishful thinking?
9. How do you think Lilly and her friends were changed by their experiences in the WAAC? Would it have been easy for them to return to ordinary life and the status quo after the war?

The above questions were created by the publisher, William Morrow, to enhance your discussion of the book. The questions are available at the end of the book.

Book Club in a Bag

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