



Discussion Questions for Jennie Melamed's GATHER THE DAUGHTERS

1. What do you think about Janey's claim that there are no wastelands? What evidence is there to support this? Is there evidence that the wastelands exist?
2. How have their upbringings and their relationships to their fathers' upbringing affected Janey, Caitlin, Mary, Vanessa, and Amanda?
3. At Mrs. Balthazar's party, Denise asks Amanda, "What happens to the sons, when the fathers leave?" What does this statement signify? Does it change your view of the island?
4. How culpable are the men for abusing their daughters, when their culture and religion expects it of them? How does this level of responsibility compare to someone who abuses a child in our society?

5. Which character did you feel the strongest connection to? Did this change over the course of the novel?

6. Are there any elements of life on the island that you could see existing in real life in the future? If so, which ones?

7. In many works of fiction, we see utopias quickly descending into dystopias. Do you think *The Island* was originally a utopia, or was it always a dystopia for its inhabitants? How and why do utopias often turn into dystopias?

8. What did you make of the novel's end? Did you want more closure? Where do you see the main characters in ten years?

9. Which scenes or developments in the novel affected you the most?