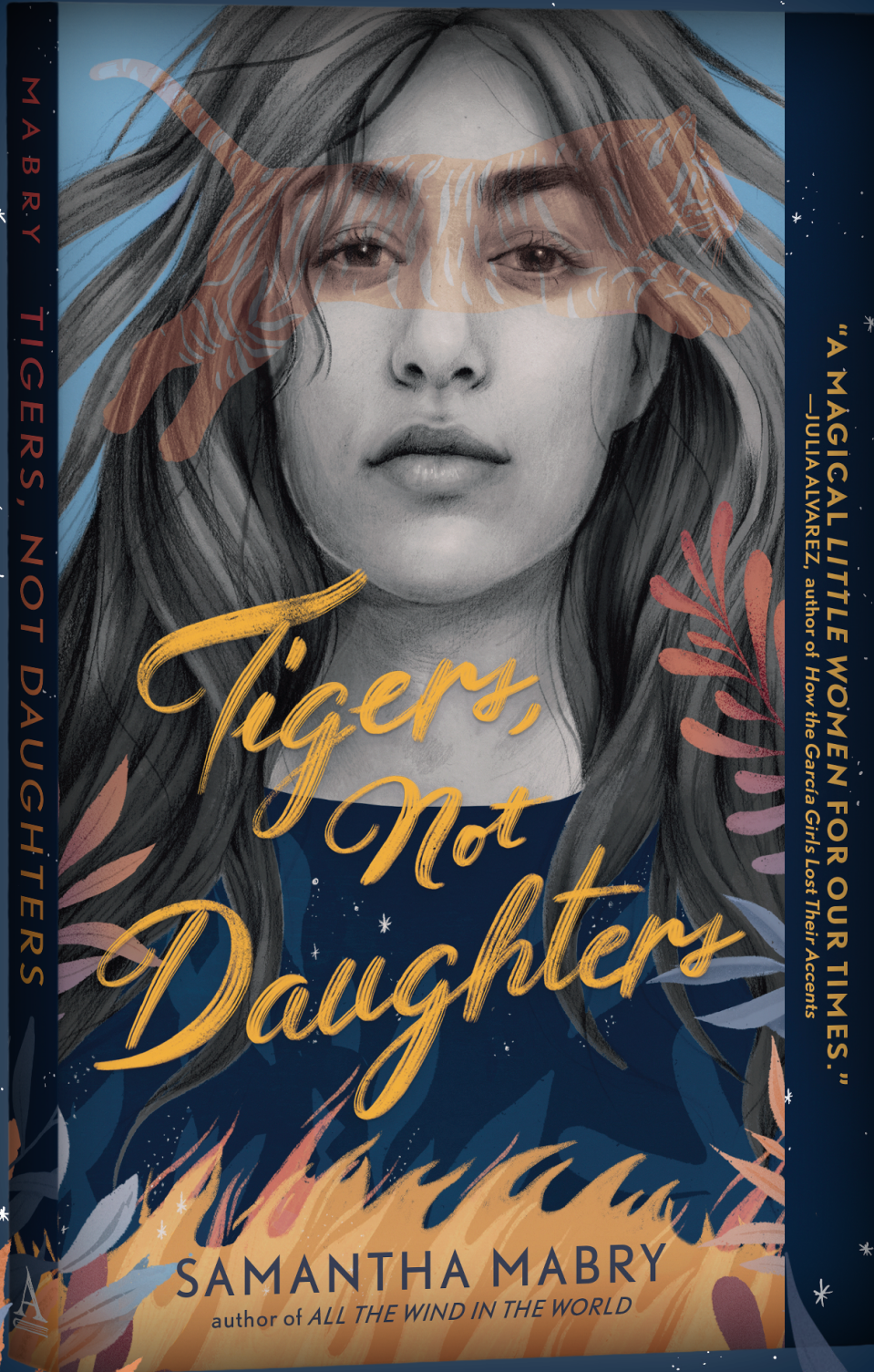




DISCUSSION GUIDE

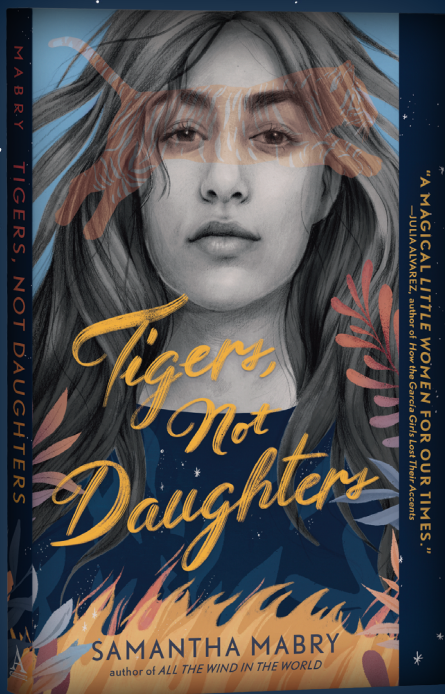


MABRY TIGERS, NOT DAUGHTERS

*Tigers,
Not
Daughters*

SAMANTHA MABRY
author of *ALL THE WIND IN THE WORLD*

"A MAGICAL LITTLE WOMEN FOR OUR TIMES."
—JULIA ALVAREZ, author of *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents*



ABOUT THE BOOK

In this tale about ferocious sisterhood, Jessica, Iridian, and Rosa are consumed by grief and haunted by the memory—and the ghost—of their sister Ana a year after her death.

★ “*Little Women* meets *The Virgin Suicides* with a magical realist twist in this evocative and lovely novel . . . An engaging, heartfelt exploration of the multifaceted inner lives of teen girls and sisterhood.”

—*School Library Journal*, starred review

★ “Borrowing elements of magical realism and Latinx folklore, this is a story that is often uncomfortable; in its quest to explore grief, family, and the traumas inflicted by each, it lays its characters utterly and unforgettably bare.”

—*Booklist*, starred review



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Book of 2020

★ A SLJ Best Book
of 2020

★ A Shelf
Awareness Best Book
of 2020

★ A 2020 BCCB Blue
Ribbon List title

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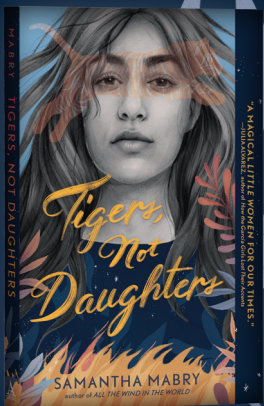
MRS.

This guide was created by **Xelena González**. Xelena González is the acclaimed author of *All Around Us*, *Where Wonder Grows*, and *Lotería Remedios*. She has served as a public librarian in her hometown of Yanaguana/San Antonio and as a school librarian in Guangzhou, China.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Who was your favorite Torres sister and why?
2. On page 29, a news report introduces readers to an escaped zoo animal that becomes another character of sorts. What do you think the hyena represents in this story? Discuss the timing of its escape, appearances, and death in relation to other plot points in the story.
3. In her acknowledgments, the author notes that the title of this book was inspired by a line in Shakespeare's *King Lear*. In the play, an excessively proud king tries to gauge the loyalty and love of his daughters, who, like the Torres sisters, were also left motherless. At one point the king uses the phrase "tigers, not daughters" as an insult to his willful children. Mabry says she aimed to write a story "in which those words meant something completely different." Do you believe this book achieves that goal? What do these words mean to you? What would they mean to a character like Rafe Torres?
4. It is said that the process of grieving contains various stages, including shock, denial, guilt, anger, bargaining, depression, and, eventually, acceptance. Talk about the ways the Torres family members may have exhibited these attributes.
5. Some people, like Rosa, find signs and synchronicities where others might see mere coincidences or logical explanations. Do you lean in one direction? Do you believe Rosa had any exceptional gifts or insights? If so, why do you think some people are more sensitive to the supernatural?
6. Assuming there was a ghost haunting the Torres household, what message was the ghost trying to send? What do you think about Father Mendoza's suggestion that it could have been their mother's spirit?
7. On page 12, we witness the Torres family on a typical Sunday morning after Ana's death. Jessica devoted those days to her boyfriend John and then to work, while Rosa meditated in the yard before attending church with neighbors. This chapter, from Iridian's point of view, introduces readers to the family's relationship with the church, including some tensions with clergy that existed for Rafe and Jessica. Discuss the role of religion and the church in this story.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

8. In the opening pages, the boys fantasize about rescuing Ana “from our old neighborhood, with its old San Antonio families and its traditions so strong and deep we could practically feel them tugging at our heels when we walked across our yards.” In what ways do you think culture or tradition shape the Torres family and the community in which they live?
9. Why do you think it took Jessica so long to leave John? What are some signs of an abusive relationship? Is abuse always physical? Are there other instances of abuse in this book?
10. Discuss the various ways in which the teen characters are confronting their burgeoning sexuality. Is there a difference between the way the male and female characters are portrayed in this regard?
11. Rafe had a particularly harsh way of dealing with Iridian. What is the reason for this clash? If Rafe’s reaction had been different, could they have had a better relationship?
12. The neighborhood boys held on to the secret of Ana’s death and her later appearance as a ghost. Ana guarded some secrets during her life. Jessica kept the nature of her abusive relationship to herself. Rafe received cryptic messages from men requiring money. Meanwhile, Iridian divulged her private feelings only in her journals. What are the ways in which secret-keeping is helpful or harmful to the characters in this story?
13. Each chapter focuses on a different character, but the boys’ point of view is unique in that it is told in the first-person plural, as a chorus. In what ways does this shifting perspective offer new angles to the unfolding story?
14. “If these walls could talk” is a saying that means every place holds a story. If the Torres house were a character, what would it have to say?
15. Imagine that you have been asked to write the sequel or the next chapter to this story. What would you like to take place? What questions would you like answered?

