

Reader Questions for BEFORE WE WERE STRANGERS:

1. What would you do if you suspected your father had murdered your mother? Do you think Sloane handles the situation in the best possible way?
2. Sloane makes the statement that crime doesn't have only one victim. Myriad people can be hurt by one person's criminal behavior. The family of the victim obviously suffers. But what about the family/friends of the perpetrator? Do you think they are victims, too? Why or why not?
3. Jealousy can cost us relationships we truly value. It's what came between Sloane and Paige, two women who would've maintained a lifelong friendship otherwise. Do you blame Paige for what she did with Micah as soon as Sloane left town at eighteen? What about what she did with Sloane's father once Sloane returned to town? Would you say it's possible to get past this level of jealousy? How should one go about overcoming such a negative emotion before it causes irreparable damage?
4. No one is all good or all bad. Even psychopaths have some redeeming characteristics. Name a few of the redeeming characteristics of the worst character in this story. Name at least one negative characteristic of the other characters.
5. Sloane and her brother Randy view the same situation in two totally different ways. Why do you think Randy was so resentful and defensive? What often stands in the way of us seeing our own "truths?"
6. Micah didn't love Paige, and yet he married her in order to do the right thing and be a father to the baby they were having together. Do you feel as though he should have made this sacrifice? Or do you believe he should've been more realistic about his limitations from the beginning? Why do you think he wasn't?
7. Brian Judd is a character whose life would've turned out completely different had he never met Clara McBride. How do you feel about this character? Do you have any sympathy for him?
8. Do you see Paige as a character who could be redeemed? Why or why not?

9. The relationship between parents and children is extremely complex. Do you feel it's possible for people to both love and hate someone who is in their own family?
10. Clive died before the story opens, and yet he was an important figure throughout. How do you think he impacted everything that came after his death?