



Book Club Discussion Questions

1. Hibakusa (Japanese for atomic bomb-affected-people) commonly suffered monstrous injuries and emotional trauma, effects from radiation, and life-long fear of radiation exposure, including sterilization. How might you explain Koji's ability to move on after experiencing the bombing of Hiroshima?
2. How did you view Ruby's relationship with her stepmother? Do you think Ruby resented her stepmother, or did their relationship change over the course of the book such that they came to a place of understanding? Why or why not?
3. What sort of reaction did you have to Ruby's relationship with her father? Do you think Ruby felt deserted by her father? Why or why not?
4. How would you describe the relationship between Ruby and Koji? What drew them together and forced them apart? How were Ruby and Koji different and how might these differences have affected their relationship?
5. What surprised you the most about Koji's life and experiences in Japan?
6. How familiar were you with the WWII Japanese American incarceration before reading this novel? Has your understanding of the incarceration changed in any way and, if so, how?
7. How do the racial issues and events in the book relate to events happening today? How does the threat of nuclear war relate to events happening today?
8. How do you think you would feel and react if a nuclear bomb destroyed your hometown while you were living there?
9. How do you think you would feel and react if you were suddenly removed to a camp thousands of miles away from your home without knowing how long you would be there?
10. In the end, do you think Ruby was happy with her life? Why or why not?