



## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR *OTHER WATERS* BY ELENI N. GAGE

- 1.) At first Maya hides her belief in the curse from her analyst, Dr. Bernard, because, she says on page 62, "he'd think I'm crazy!" Do you know anyone who has beliefs that are at odds with their profession or the rest of their outlook? Are you superstitious at all? If so, in what ways, and how do your beliefs impact your life?
- 2.) Maya never introduces Scott to her parents because, she tells Heidi, it's never been the right time. Do you think she would have introduced him to them if they had stayed together? And, if so, would they have accepted him as her partner?
- 3.) What do you feel is the most significant relationship in Maya's life?
- 4.) This book is filled with female characters who are wrestling with their roles in the world. Do you feel their cultural mores and traditions strengthened these women or limited them? What about in your own life? Do you feel empowered or suffocated by your own cultural traditions and expectations?
- 5.) How familiar were you with Indian or desi culture before reading this book? The author does not italicize, nor explain, many of the Hindi words she uses. What do you think about this choice? Did you find it effective or confusing?
- 6.) When Maya meets Raki, he seems like the answer to her prayers (or maybe to her mother's prayers). Why do you think she's drawn to them? What do she and Raki have in common; how are they similar to each other and how are they different?
- 7.) Can you think of other books written from a cultural viewpoint that differs from the author's? Do you feel it's appropriate for an author to write from the point of view of characters whose cultures differ from his or her own, and if so under what circumstances? When is it all right to adopt the point of view of another culture, and when is it culturally insensitive?
- 8.) What do you think happens to Maya after the end of the book? Where do you see her a week, month, and year after the party at the Chelsea Piers?