

YOUR VOICE IS ALL I HEAR

— by Leah Scheier —

DISCUSSION GUIDE



THERE'S A FINE LINE BETWEEN LOVE AND BETRAYAL

April is used to being ignored. So when her only friend transfers to a different high school, April braces for the worst year of her life. Then she meets Jonah. He actually understands her, and she is swept away by his charisma.

But Jonah's haunted by a traumatic event from his past, and as he slips into a depression, his increasingly erratic behavior frightens his family. April stands beside Jonah when he's committed and diagnosed with schizophrenia. But as his health declines, she must make an impossible choice: stick with the boy she loves or let him go so they can both heal.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Leah Scheier works as a pediatrician and pens stories of romance and adventure. Her first novel, *Secret Letters*, was published in June 2012 (Hyperion/Disney) and received a starred review from *School Library Journal*, as well as glowing reviews from *Booklist*, *VOYA*, and *Publishers Weekly*. She lives in Maryland. Learn more at leahscheier.com.

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1. April's insecurity and shaky self-esteem is evident throughout the novel. How does her relationship with Jonah change how she views herself? What role does music play in her growth? Would she have gotten there on her own or did she really need Jonah as she claimed?
2. The stigma associated with mental illness is a major theme in the novel. How is this particularly true of schizophrenia? Discuss how your conception of the illness changed after reading the novel. How does fear add to the isolation that families feel?
3. How does April's mother's ultraorthodox religious upbringing influence her current decisions? Are echoes of her strict parents/childhood evident in her approach to raising April, or has she completely "broken free"?
4. Do you think April's mom's advice is correct? Should April break up with her boyfriend, or at least put some distance between them? Would you have advised your daughter differently? Would you have done the same in April's position?
5. April eventually decides to "betray" Jonah and show Dr. Hermann his private journal. Are her actions a betrayal or should she have done this much sooner?
6. How has the system failed Shawn? His diagnosis is never revealed in the novel. Do you think it matters?
7. What role do medications and cognitive behavioral therapy play in Jonah's recovery? How is Dr. Vardi's approach different than Dr. Hermann's?
8. Do you think April's mom ever reconciles with her family? How do her struggles affect her relationship with her daughter?
9. Why do you think Cora apologized to April? How does April's view of her classmates change throughout the novel?
10. Do you agree with Jonah's decision in the last chapter? Do you think his assessment of April's loyalty is correct? Would she really have stayed with him "no matter what"?
11. Do you think that April and Jonah will ever finish their first kiss? Do you see them together again or do you think that both have been through too much to find a way back to each other?