


"A most unusual
and delightful book.
Deborah Install has created
a robot to remember!"

—ALEXANDER McCALL SMITH,
author of The No. 1
Ladies Detective Agency series

A
ROBOT
IN THE
GARDEN

A stylized illustration of a robot's hand holding a small green plant with a white and orange striped fruit. The robot's hand is dark grey and has a circular opening at the end, which is holding the plant. The plant has two green leaves and a small stem. The fruit is round and has a white and orange striped pattern, resembling a citrus fruit like an orange or grapefruit.

A NOVEL

DEBORAH
INSTALL

READING GROUP GUIDE

1. The book opens with Ben living at home, with not much purpose in life and not needing to work. What was your first reaction to his character, and how did your feelings change as you followed his story?
2. Was there ever a time in your life when you had to take a journey to appreciate what you had? If so, how did you relate to Ben's transformation?
3. Each relationship has two sides. What could Amy have done to salvage her marriage with Ben? Would it have changed anything, or was Tang really the only chance of a saving grace in their relationship?
4. If Tang were human, which family role, or combination of roles, would he play in Ben's life? In what moments did you see this relationship reflected back in the book?
5. During the course of the book, Ben is finally given the motivation to grow up. Even more so, his paternal instincts shine through. Were there any scenes in

A Robot in the Garden that struck you as particularly affecting in that respect?

6. There isn't much difference between our world and the world portrayed in the book, except for the robots! Would you consider *A Robot in the Garden* to be science fiction? Why or why not? Can you think of any other popular books that blend genres?
7. Explain how technology affects you today and how close you are to your own "Tang," be it a phone, a laptop, or even an online persona.
8. Would it be easy or hard for you to consider a piece of technology to be worth the same as a human life?
9. How far away do you think we are from having artificial intelligence? Does the idea make you excited or scared?
10. Was it satisfying to see how Ben and Amy's relationship resolved? Or did you wish the book had ended differently?