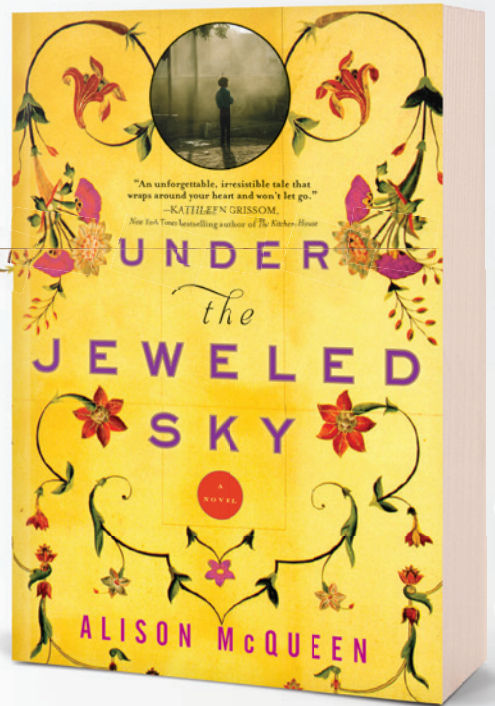


# *under the jeweled sky* READING GROUP GUIDE



1. Why would it have been considered unthinkable for Sophie to have kept her baby in 1948? What has changed since then?
2. Do you think Sophie's mother realizes her role in the destruction of her family?
3. Was George Schofield a weak man? Should he have done more to protect Sophie from her mother's rages?
4. Jagaan defies his father and rejects the ancient traditions regarding marriage in India. Do you think this contributed to his father's death?
5. As an adult, how has Sophie been affected by her relationship with her mother? Does this influence her choice of husband? Or do you think she married Lucien for other reasons? If yes, what were they?
6. How would the First Maharani and her retinue of ladies-in-waiting have felt about women like Mrs. Ripperton and Sophie?
7. Is it human nature to plaster over the cracks of an unsuccessful marriage rather than to admit defeat? Why stay in a bad marriage rather than divorce? Was it merely a trend of the times?
8. Race and religion are at the root of many of the conflicts in the story. Is it natural for different races to be suspicious of one another?
9. How would the diplomatic wives have reacted to modern views toward women's equality and the high-profile female politicians of today?
10. How did women handle postpartum depression in the days before its recognition and treatment? Did it carry a stigma?
11. Are there similarities between Jagaan and Lucien?
12. India's partition was implemented in August 1947. What has been the legacy of that decision?



13. Which is morally less acceptable: a philandering husband or an unfaithful wife?
14. By 1970, Sophie is living as a single woman in California. What is the likelihood that she would want to find love again? Would her experience with Lucien have put her off relationships all together?
15. Should Jagaan have been more forthright when he discovered Sophie was back in India? How did cultural differences affect his thinking?
16. What would it be like to live in *purdah*, in an all-female environment, shielded from the outside world? Did the women of the *zenana* mind?
17. Did Lucien deliberately misrepresent himself to Sophie prior to their marriage?
18. Was it selfish for Sophie to take her son away from his family in India to make a fresh start in America? Would you have done the same thing?



## **PRAISE** *for under the jeweled sky*

“An unforgettable, irresistible tale that wraps around your heart and won’t let go.”

—KATHLEEN GRISSOM, *NEW YORK TIMES* BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF *THE KITCHEN HOUSE*

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—BOOKLIST

