

# Reading Group Guide

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1. Throughout the memoir, Kelly's grandfather tells her that it is important to remember who you are and where you come from. Think about where you come from, whether that be your family or the town or home where you were born. How has it shaped who you are today?
2. When Kelly is young she asks her grandfather questions to try and learn what her mother, Michele, was like. Imagine that you are in Kelly's shoes and have never met an important member of your family. What would you want to know about him or her? How would not having this person around affect your childhood?
3. Describe Kelly's relationship with Richard versus her relationship with Marilyn. Do you think Richard and Marilyn were capable guardians for Kelly?
4. Richard seems to be full of contradictions, sending Kelly to an expensive French school while also running a porn business. Overall, how would you describe Richard's character?
5. Many sections of *We Are All Shipwrecks* talk about Kelly's struggle coming to terms with her burgeoning sexuality, especially in regards to the violence and pornography she has come to associate with

sexuality. How do you think Kelly's grandfather owning a porn store affected her? Do you see any lasting effects of this association?

6. How would you feel if your family had decided to move on to a boat for the greater part of your childhood? Would you look at it as an adventure like Kelly did, or would you dread the move like Marilyn?
7. Describe the community down at the marina. Were there any characters you particularly liked? Any that you disliked? Why?
8. Why do you think Kelly found solace through swimming during high school? Have you ever had a hobby that has helped you escape the world? What was it?
9. If you could give high-school Kelly one piece of advice, what would it be? If you could give the high-school version of yourself one piece of advice, what would it be? Do you see any similarities between teenage you and teenage Kelly?
10. How did Kelly and Marilyn's relationship change over the course of the memoir? What caused those changes?
11. Why do you think Kelly seeks out Michele's new detective and pushes for the open case to be closed? Do you think she finds closure in the end?
12. Do you think it is important to remember where you come from? Why or why not? What's more important, where you come from or who you become in the end?