



Book Club in a Bag

Discussion Questions

Pick a Colour by Souvankham Thammavongsa

1. How thought-provoking did you find this book? Did the story change your perception of nail salons in any way?
2. Ning chose to have all staff wear name tags reading 'Susan' to spare the mispronunciation their actual names. What did you think about this idea?
3. The salon handles any dissatisfied clients by offering a service for \$10.00. Do you think this is an effective business strategy?
4. In what way do you think Ning's previous career as a boxer helped her navigate the nail salon business?
5. Were you disappointed the cause of Ning's missing finger was never revealed? Did you develop any theories about what happened?
6. How did the secondary characters impact or influence the main character(s) or story? Did you have a favourite 'Susan'?
7. The story was told over the course of a single day during which many customers visited the salon. Were there any that you found particularly memorable?
8. In what ways does the novel explore class and privilege between Ning and her clients?
9. What do you think happens between Rachel and Ning after the conclusion of the novel?

These questions were created by Clarington Library, Museums & Archives staff to enhance your discussion of the book.

Author Biography

Souvankham Thammavongsa is the author of four poetry books and the short story collection, *How to Pronounce Knife*, winner of the 2020 Giller Prize and 2021 Trillium Book Award. Her stories have won an O. Henry Prize and appeared in *The New Yorker*, *Harper's Magazine*, *The Atlantic*, *The Paris Review*, and *Granta*. *Pick a Colour* is her first novel. (Penguin Random House Biography)

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