

Before I Leave Discussion Questions

1. Which chapter/story did you like the most? What made it the most compelling?
2. Which woman or situation could you relate to most easily? What, specifically, could you relate to?
3. Who outside of your own generation have you gone to for advice? Typically, we ask for guidance from people our own age or older; what advice might you need or value from women who belong to a generation younger than your own?

Maude

- Whose story about Maude's birth mother do you think is most likely true—Maude's or Beth's?
- What did you admire most about Maude?

Irene

- How would you describe the author's relationship with Irene?
- How did that relationship make you feel about Irene? About the author?

Sadie

- Sadie made it clear she didn't want to talk about ethnic discrimination she may or may not have experienced because of her Lebanese/Middle Eastern heritage. Why do you think she might have felt that way?
- Sadie had a quietly powerful impact on others—what did you notice about her character that you think other people may have gravitated to?

Ruthie

- What did you think about Ruthie's approach to the discrimination she and her family experienced after their release from the internment camp?
- What did you think about the advice Ruthie offered in relation to the author's daughter?

Hallie

- What did you think about Hallie's responses to racism in her own life? About her advice to others who encounter racism?
- Hallie was a powerful, outspoken woman. Where do you think she got that strength?

Edith

- What surprised you most about this chapter?
- Why do you think the author included her own mother? How did reading about Edith make you feel about the author?