

Discussion Questions for *The Weight of Night*:

- 1 Like all of the author's books thus far, *The Weight of Night* has a strong sense of place – of Glacier National Park and the small towns surrounding it. How do you think this wild setting influences the mood of the novel? How does it affect each of the main characters, directly and indirectly?
- 2 Not only is the wilderness setting that the boy has been kidnapped in vast and unforgiving, it is being consumed by fires? How do the fires in such an idyllic setting like Glacier affect you as a reader? Did it make you think about other aspects of nature or did it only serve to heighten the suspense in the novel?
- 3 Gretchen's sentencing of herself to a life without a close partner might seem like a little drastic. But, given her part and her on-going sleep disorder, do you think she's being logical and reasonable? Did you sympathize with her situation? Why might Gretchen want to live in a place like Montana? Is the west or states with vast amounts of wilderness places of personal reinvention or simply places to escape? Do you think the west is over-romanticized as a place to find oneself? And if not, what is it about living in a place like Montana that allows for people to discover themselves and find personal healing?
- 4 Redemption is a strong theme in the novel, especially for Gretchen. What do you think motivates her to her to investigate the disappearance of the boy on her own? Were her actions heroic or foolish? Do you feel she is transformed enough by the end of the story so that she can live a more complete life in the future?
- 5 Nathan's parents made a decision not to pursue an opportunity to find out the fate of their son. Why do you think they made that decision?
- 6 Wendy and Kyle lived with a psychopath for most of their lives. Do you think it's possible that they were oblivious to that fact or do you think that, on some level, they knew?
- 7 The author has mentioned that this story is more of a "why-dunnit" than a "who-dunnit" in some ways because she anticipated that readers might not be surprised by the antagonist. Did the ending of the book work for you? Would you have liked to see the story resolved differently?