

**SPOILER ALERT! DON'T READ
BEFORE FINISHING THE BOOK!**

Reporting Lives - BOOK GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

1. When we first encounter cameraman James Kim, we see him, through Sara's eyes, as being slightly naive, even dim. How does Sara's view of James change over time? When do we, the readers, start to see that there might be more to him?
2. What is it about Sara that makes her good at getting people to talk on camera? Does she, indeed, have a "gift" or is there just something about her that makes people want to tell sad stories around her? What, if anything, do her looks have to do with it? Are there people in your life like this, who seem to particularly attract people in crisis?
3. Vince tells Sara that, after meeting her for the first time in their building's elevator, he wanted to get to know her better because she "looked like a winner." Do you think he is sincere about this? Why does he seem to be so attached to her, while being so casual about his many other relationships with women?
4. Sara is completely overwhelmed by Nairobi's Mathare slum. What is it about the place that affects her so strongly? Why is the experience of doing her job there so different from doing it in, for example, a poor neighborhood in Chicago?
5. Sara had two close female friends: Carrie and Trisha. How are her relationships with them different? Why does she seek such a closer connection to Trisha so quickly, when she seems to hold a certain distance from Carrie, even after knowing her for many years? What is it about Trisha that leads Sara to confide in her so readily?
6. When she arrives at the Impala, Sara seems reluctant, at first, to tell people that she is a journalist. But, after the bombing, when the military arrives, she is quick to announce herself as an American television reporter. Why does she do this? Is she motivated primarily by a desire to help her fellow survivors, or has her professional ambition been re-ignited as well?
7. What is your initial impression of Jeff? Were you surprised that Sara wound up in bed with him? Do you think they would have been drawn to each other if they'd met under different circumstances?
8. What role does running play in Sara's life? How else does she cope with stress or other difficult emotions? Her eating habits change when she returns from Africa. Do you think this is part of a larger change within her?
9. Why does Sara decide to focus on reporting about the boys killed in the Chicago bus accident, rather than about the hotel bombing?
10. Once she gets back to Chicago, Sara settles quickly into a relationship with Vince. Do you think she truly intended to marry him? Why did she accept his proposal?
11. Were you surprised at Sara's decision to return to Africa? Do you think she is doing the right thing? When, in the book, did you begin to have the idea that she might stay in Kenya?
12. Do you think that Sara and Jeff will be a romantic couple? Where do you think their relationship will go?
13. Will Sara live her whole life in Kenya? What kind of work do you imagine her doing there?
14. Do you consider the ending of the book to be a happy one?
15. Did the book change your opinion of the media? Do you tend to think of today's journalists as "vultures," as they jokingly refer to themselves, or do you think there is genuine merit in their work, as Sara seems to want to demonstrate in her investigation of the corrupt charter school and the illegally licensed bus driver?

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