

- Sports-related concussions are a central theme in BRUTALITY. Can you think of other ways in which the title BRUTALITY applies to the story?
- Before her death, Liz Barone was considering filing a lawsuit against New England University (NEU). She blamed them, in part, for her brain injury. Do you think the school was responsible?
- Fina very quickly feels protective of Bobbi Barone, Liz's mom. Why do think that is?
- Fina's father, Carl, suggests that he planted incendiary information about Rand so that she would find it and act on it. Do you think that is true? Did he use her to do his dirty work?
- When BRUTALITY opens, Cristian is in an exclusive relationship with a speech pathologist named Cindy. Do you think he and Fina belong together? Will it ever be possible for law enforcement officer and a law breaking P.I. to have a serious relationship?
- Liz, Kelly, and Tasha all played on the women's soccer team at NEU. Kelly comments at one point that she felt left out by the other two women. Is it possible to have a successful friendship consisting of three people?
- Gus Sibley is the team doctor for the women's soccer team at NEU. Do you think his role of clearing players to return to the game conflicts with the Hippocratic oath of "first do no harm"?
- Many of the characters in the book are keeping secrets including Jamie, Kelly, Kevin, and Pamela. Do you think their secrets are all equally damaging?
- On page 296, Fina has harsh words for a man who is encroaching upon another woman's space. How does Fina, as a character, fit into the #metoo climate?
- Kevin Lafferty has strong ties to his alma mater, NEU. Why is that relationship so important to him?
- Sports boosters play a critical role in supporting college sports programs. Do you think too much emphasis is put on college sports? Do you think that "student athletes" really get good educations?
- Fina is very comfortable operating in a world dominated by men, but she also has strong ties to women in the story including Patty, Risa, and Peg. Why do you think she values those relationships? What does she bring to those friendships?

- One of my favorite scenes in the book is the car fire on the Tobin Bridge. Do you have a favorite scene? Why?
- Some members of the Ludlow family are in denial about Rand and his crimes. Why do you think they are so quick to side with Rand and not Fina and Haley?
- Risa is struggling with the possibility of donating an organ to long-lost relative. Do you think she should make the donation? Do you think that Greta's previous lack of interest in having a relationship with Risa should play a role in that decision?
- At the end of the book, Fina makes a call that sets her brother, Rand, on the war path. Do you think she should have made the call? If not, what should she have done?
- How did the death of Fina's older sibling, Josephine, shape Fina and the rest of the Ludlow family? Would Carl and Elaine's parenting be different if their first daughter had survived?
- Who is your favorite character in the book? Why? Who do you think is the most principled member of the Ludlow family?
- Why do you think Fina and her mother Elaine have such a strained relationship? Could Fina do anything to improve it?
- Carl doesn't seem particularly concerned about Fina's wellbeing. Do you think he doesn't care or just has a funny way of showing it?
- How would Fina have turned out differently if she were born a boy rather than a girl? Would she be so physically tough and fearless?
- Why is the relationship between Fina and Frank important?
- Do you think that Fina could be an effective private investigator if she didn't occasionally bend the rules?
- Do you think Fina goes looking for trouble in terms of physical altercations? Is she reckless or brave?