

DEEP CUTS

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS HOLLY BRICKLEY



In order to provide reading groups with the most informed and thought-provoking questions possible, it is necessary to reveal certain aspects of the storyline of this book. If you have not finished reading *Deep Cuts*, we respectfully suggest that you do so before reviewing this guide.

1. What drives Percy's love for music? What does music give her? What does it give you?
2. Why do you think Joe doesn't welcome an intimate relationship with Percy early on in the novel? What did you think of their "promise" ?
3. Discuss the friendship triangle between Percy, Joe, and Zoe. What does each character get out of it?
4. How would you describe Percy's particular talent? What about your own talent(s)—do you have any unique skills that may be hard to identify or categorize? Have you ever wished for a different talent, and why do you think that is?
5. Percy has her own metrics for judging a great song. "How deep does it cut? How close to the bone? How long do you feel it?" What do you think of these metrics, relative to the way Percy's classmates view music? What are some songs that are "deep cuts" in your own life?
6. Percy's mom tells her that Percy "didn't get the music gene" and that it was a "relief" to her. What does she mean by that? In what ways does Percy's mom shape Percy's view of the world and herself?
7. Why do you think Percy turns to Zoe to tell her what to do?
8. Several people in her life, including Raj and Zoe, tell Percy that she's avoiding something with her actions. What is she avoiding? Why?
9. How do the men in *Deep Cuts* view music made by men versus music made by women? Why doesn't Joe initially give Percy her due as an artist? In what ways do you see this reflected in today's music opinions?
10. How are the times (2000–2008) and the places (Berkeley, New York, San Francisco, etc.) integral to the story?
11. How does each character in the novel find their own "voice"? How do they help each other to do so?
12. Throughout the novel, Percy struggles with an insecurity that might be called "imposter syndrome" today. In her moments of triumph, what factors, both internal and external, help her push past this insecurity?
13. What changes within Percy once she hears the "Bay Window" song performed live?
14. What did you think of Joe's reaction to Percy working on a song with his former bandmate?
15. How did the ending make you feel? What might the future look like for Percy and Joe?