

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What do you think Owl represents in the book?
2. Why did Delpha reject Emilie instead of cherishing her as the only surviving child of the family?
3. What do you think about the phenomenon commonly called the Sight? Have you ever met anyone who possessed it to any degree?
4. Why didn't Emilie run for help when her mother drowned?
5. What drove Emilie to work in the stables as a child despite social disapproval and her mother's insistence that she give up horses for embroidery?
6. What social conventions did Emilie defy throughout her life?
7. What were some of the milestones in Emilie's journey to independence?
8. Compare Emilie's marriages. How much control did she have over either?
9. Given the stereotype of Arkansas being backward and redneck, were you surprised to learn that many well-educated, cultured people settled in the state?
10. How do the rising tensions about slavery impact the relationship between the McCains and Cathcarts?
11. What role did traumatic loss play in Emilie's relationships with Keller and Walker? Do you think she'd have taken up with either man without that catalyst?
12. How did Star's return help Emilie recover from the traumatic events surrounding Rose's birth?

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13. Discuss Emilie's decision to exchange babies. Was it a good decision? Would she have made it had she not been caught by postpartum depression?
14. Why did Emilie choose Miranda over Walker?
15. Consider the relationship between Emilie and Caleb. Did his revelation startle you? Why or why not?
16. Will Caleb ever follow Emilie to Texas?
17. Were any of the killings in the book justified? Why or why not?