




★ Discussion Questions ★


These suggested questions are to spark conversation and enhance your reading of *Escape Velocity*.

1. Why do you think the book is called *Escape Velocity*? What are each of the characters escaping from, and how do they attempt to do that?
2. The book has several point-of-view characters and captivating secondary characters as well. Which one is your favorite? Whom do you most relate to?
3. Stories about human expansion into the solar system have long been a sci-fi staple. What were your feelings about living on other planets prior to reading this book? Have your views changed after reading this book? If so, how?
4. Socioeconomic stratification is a recurring theme in *Escape Velocity*. Aside from the MERIT system, how else does the world of the book divide and classify



individuals and groups? How do these manners of stratification resonate with our world right now?

5. Cielo and the crew of the *Altaire* resort to extreme measures to achieve their goals. In the context of collective action, are there ever circumstances where these kinds of means would justify the group's ends? Given the state of the world that they live in, do you agree with the sentiment that their actions were a last resort? If not, what other options would you have preferred them to take?
6. The story is presented in two timelines, and most of the primary characters make questionable and pivotal decisions both as teenagers and as adults. How do their past choices inform the kind of people they eventually become? How does that, in turn, affect the choices they make in the present timeline?
7. What role does social mobility play in the book? Does it exist, for the members of either the one-percent or the economic underclass? To what extent and in what ways does this world allow its characters to change their circumstances, if at all?
8. The past few years have seen numerous class-conscious stories across all genres and media, such as *Knives Out*, *The Menu*, *Parasite*, *Squid Game*, *White Lotus*, *Ready or Not*, *Triangle of Sadness*, *The Inheritance Games*, *The Maid*, and *Land of Milk and Honey*. Why do you think readers



and viewers have been gravitating toward these kinds of stories as of late? How do these more recent stories differ from classic novels and films about class? How are they the same?

9. The point-of-view characters all make choices that cause harm to others and themselves, choices that may be considered immoral, unethical, or illegal. How do they justify these choices to themselves? How do they justify it to others? Which of these choices do you think are reasonable or defensible, if any?
10. Imagine the world one month after the events of the book. How do you think conditions would have changed? What about one year after? Ten years?