

BOOK CLUB QUESTIONS

1. Before reading the novel, what did you know about the Virgin Mary? What stories are told about her? Did the novel change the way you think about her? If so, in what ways?
2. How would you describe the relationship between Maryam and Herodias? How does it compare to Maryam's relationship with Elisheba?
3. How is female friendship described in the novel?
4. Over the course of the novel, Maryam travels across Herod's Kingdom and to Rome. How does she relate to these different places? How do her travels shape her identity as a Jewish woman from Nazareth?
5. What do you think happened during Maryam's year of wildness?
6. What do you picture when you think of angels? How do they act? Did Gabriel speak or act in any ways that were surprising to you?
7. How does the color blue appear throughout the story? Why is this color significant?
8. What do you think happened when Maryam joined Yosef and his men from the synagogue in Nazareth?
9. In the Christian tradition, the moment when Gabriel tells Mary that she will conceive and give birth to Jesus is known as the Annunciation. What happens during the Annunciation in the novel? How is it similar to and different from other depictions you have seen in art and literature? How would you react if Gabriel gave you this message?
10. How does Maryam's understanding of Hannah change? How does it shape Maryam's views of motherhood?
11. How have you seen the Nativity (the birth of Jesus) depicted? How does the one in the novel compare to the versions you have previously seen and read?
12. The action in this novel takes place from 7-4 B.C.E. How do its events and themes resonate with contemporary events?
13. How does marble imagery appear throughout the novel? Why do you think the author titled the novel *Marble*?
14. How does the cover design reflect the themes of the novel?



Cover design by Kimberly Glyder



Author photo by Carlyvous Photography

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