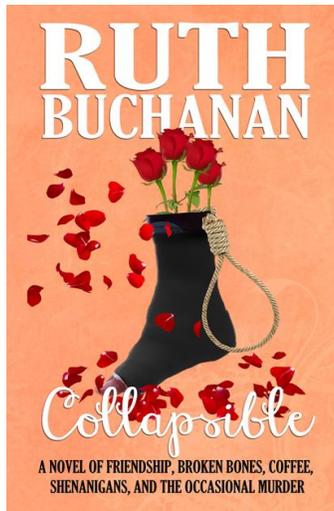


Discussion Questions



COLLAPSIBLE

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About the Book

Rachel Cooper has life under control: good job, good friends, and good plans for the future. All of that collapses one early morning when she falls and breaks her ankle. Now she must face the horrors of preparing for an upcoming move and handling her tenth year of teaching while clomping around on crutches.

Worse, somewhere in the shadows, the Memento Killer lurks—a serial murderer who stalks women with four anonymous gifts before moving in for the kill. When unexpected presents begin arriving on Rachel's doorstep, she fears that she'll soon be crutching for her life.

Collapsible. A novel of friendship, broken bones, coffee, shenanigans, and the occasional murder.

TITLE: Collapsible
Discussion:

Question 1: With which character in the story do you most identify?

Answer 1: Answers will vary.

Question 2: Rachel draws great strength from her friendships. How might this story have turned out differently if not for the influence of Ann and Lynn?

Answer 2: Without Ann and Lynn, Rachel would have had no words of wisdom. She would have acted on instinct at every turn. Given the questionable nature of Rachel's instincts, this would only bring disaster.

Question 3: What spiritual lesson could most benefit Rachel?

Answer 3: Answers will vary, but discernment should certainly appear near the top of the list.

Question 4: How do Rachel's interactions with her students help to reveal her to us fully?

Answer 4: Despite Rachel's personal failings, she's chosen a profession in which she shines. She takes her responsibilities seriously, handles her students well, earns their respect, and demonstrates a strong working knowledge of her subject matter. Almost exclusively in the classroom does Rachel appear as an adult. Without these scenes, Rachel would seem almost completely at a disadvantage.

Question 5: Do you believe Rachel to be a reliable narrator?

Answer 5: Due to her highly opinionated nature, lack of discernment, and tendency to trust snap judgments, Rachel is an unreliable narrator.

Question 6: Discuss Rachel's treatment of Sharon Day. Do you believe Rachel is fair to her?

Answer 6: Answers will vary, but Rachel's weaknesses are most apparent in her unkind treatment of Sharon Day. Although she's perfectly polite to Sharon on the surface, she's constantly judging her and mentally discrediting her without ever having made an effort to know Sharon as a person.

Question 7: School administrator Yolanda Martinez appears only as a shadowy figure. What are we able to infer about Rachel's opinions of her?

Answer 7: Rachel obviously has a high respect for Ms. Martinez's abilities, although she doesn't seem to hold any personal affection for her.

Question 8: Throughout the story, Rachel and her students muse over the nature of irony and coincidence. How do both elements play into the story of Collapsible?

Answer 8: At several points in the narrative, readers are invited to wonder whether or not Rachel's chance meetings are ironic or coincidental: meeting Matt is a primary example. Only at the end are readers able to look back and determine what was irony and what was coincidence.

Question 9: Do you find hints at a potential romantic relationship between Rachel and Lee problematic? Why or why not?

Answer 9 Answers will vary.

Question 10: How does Rachel's final conversation with Detective Smith reveal a change in her character?

Answer 10: For the first time, she acknowledges that she might not be able to trust her own judgment.

