

BOOK CLUB GUIDE PART 3

*There I Am*

VIRTUAL BOOK CLUB

# SECTION 3

Ch 12 What Screams the Loudest

Ch 13 CDiff is Not a Rapper

Ch 14 Red Ants

Ch 15 Operation Sunset

Ch 16 Sex, Drums, and Lawyers



CHAPTER

*Twelve*

# THEMES

- The pain continues getting worse.
- Once again the hope ends in disappointment.

# FAVORITE QUOTES

*Managing pain isn't the same as healing it.*

*If you smile big, people will like you. If you lose God, he'll come find you. If you take your medicine, it will make you better.*

*I wonder if it worked, if I'm all better now. I wonder if we've been delivered back to our happy, hopeful dreams.*

*We prayed for a new beginning, but we forgot that beginnings are work. They're nasty, struggling, treacherous things.*

# QUESTIONS

Jot down a time when no one could travel through darkness with you?

Rerouting the spinal fluid breaks Ruthie in a new way. Are there moments in your life where there is such a clear before and after and you're not sure if you will ever be the same?

# JOURNAL PROMPTS

Ruthie writes, “We prayed for a new beginning, but we forgot that beginnings are work. They can be nasty, struggling, treacherous things.” Write about one of your beginnings. What was that experience like for you?

CHAPTER

*Thirteen*



# THEMES

- Ruthie and Jack struggle with infertility.
- Hope is gone.

# FAVORITE QUOTES

*As a child, I knew it [baby] was something that I would need to be whole as a woman.*

*Motherhood feels like the only thing left for me.*

*It [disintegrating marriage] happens slowly and I miss things. I miss the moment Jack starts touching me the way a doctor touches a patient, I miss the moment I stop aching for him when he's gone, I miss the page on which I begin to write him out of my story.*

*It's been such a long time since I've been anything other than a thing to pity, a collection of sickness and scars.*

# QUESTIONS

Children bring out a lot of emotions for all of us. Our thoughts go to the kids we dreamt about and never had, others mourn children we lost, some long for kids to sleep through the night while others would go back to those sleepless nights.

What emotions are coming up for you?

Our deepest desires can drive wedges in our relationships. What are the things you have wanted most in life and how did it affect those around you?

In this chapter something snaps in Ruthie. Have there been times in your life when it was just too much? How did the people around you show up?

# JOURNAL PROMPTS

Women can often believe motherhood is the only thing for them. (No shade to motherhood - we literally wouldn't be here without it). But women are more. What are other titles and descriptions you would use or desire to use for yourself, your partner or the other women in your life?

CHAPTER

*Fourteen*

# THEMES

- Ruthie goes home.
- It feels like the pain has won.

# FAVORITE QUOTES

*Laura recites me something from the Bible with her hands on her chest and I wonder where God is. She seems to find him in every passage, but I can't see him anywhere.*

*She didn't grow up with much, but though she learned to love with little, she learned to love well.*

*Back then, all I ever wanted was to be the center of it all, to be seen and doted on, but today, in the middle, holding every eye and heart in the room, all I want is to disappear.*

*You can live there and hurt or you can live your life and hurt. You can love people and experience things and hurt at the same time.*

# QUESTIONS

Have there been times in your life where the pain is too much and you leave your body, completely disassociate?

We all have limiting voices in our heads. What are some ugly stories your mind tried to tell you are true that you can speak actual loving truth to?

Ruthie has to decide to live. What is it that gets you out of bed in the morning?  
What are you most excited about living for right now?



# JOURNAL PROMPTS

We all have times in our lives where we feel like a burden. Talk to yourself for a second. Remind she/him of all the joy you bring into the world. Remind she/him of the goodness inside that has nothing to do with achievement and performance. Remind she/him they are love.

CHAPTER

*Fifteen*

# THEMES

- Ruthie forces herself to start living.
- Jack comes back into the picture.

# FAVORITE QUOTES

*Joy isn't going to just land on me: I have to find it, learn it, on my own.*

*What I need is to learn to access the remedy that's already inside me, the desire to be better, the deservedness of love.*

*It's easy to say, 'Once I'm better, I'll go dancing again. Once I'm better, I'll watch the sunset again,' but if you don't ever take action, find enough trust in the possibility of joy to risk the possibility of pain, you stay exactly as you are.*

*Joy doesn't come to me quickly the way I beg it to. Joy is something that I need to cultivate. It takes time to grow, it must be nourished carefully and lovingly.*

*I make myself a promise: every time I see something beautiful, I will speak it, declare it to myself and to the rest of the world.*

# QUESTIONS

When is a time in your life when you had to go through the motions before your feelings could follow?

What are things in your world that have brought you back to life?

“It doesn’t cross my mind that some of the boxes will never be unpacked.”  
Unpacked boxes. What does that mean to you personally? Where have you known and lived unpacked boxes?

# JOURNAL PROMPTS

Healing and change can be so slow and often we cast judgement over ourselves in the process. Would you stop and speak love over yourself on any journey you may be on. Celebrate every victory that comes to mind and everyday you keep going.

CHAPTER

*Sixteen*

# THEMES

- Ruthie moves back to Nashville.
- There is one final push before the marriage ends.



# FAVORITE QUOTES

*Attempting to rescue someone else from their pain just distracts me from my own.*

*Faith is different for me: my God gives graciously, forgives freely, and teaches endlessly. She asks for nothing in return but love.*

*Looking outside myself to be the answer to somebody else's problems is easier than looking inside to find the answers to my own.*

*I try my best, balancing the pain inside me, the relentless burn, with the beauty that exists outside of it.*

# QUESTIONS

In what ways have your faith and beliefs changed over the years? What has shaped them the most?

It is so easy to distract ourselves from our own pain with other people's pain. How do you fight this urge in your own life?

How often have you changed your environment to make a new beginning instead of making the changes within?

# JOURNAL PROMPTS

Jack walks out the door. Think about a scenario that has ended that you worked really hard for?  
Would you let yourself grieve that loss right now?



THANK YOU

***We are so excited to read **THERE I AM**  
with all of you during this wild season.***



HAVE A  
QUESTION?

DON'T HESITATE TO REACH OUT!

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