

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. The author chooses to weave together two storylines: that of the princess and that of the author herself. How do these stories work together? Why do you think the author chose to portray these distinct experiences of pregnancy and motherhood in this way?
2. Both the princess and the narrator struggle with the notion of fitting into societal expectations of motherhood. How does this book explore the pressure to live up to these expectations? In what ways do they resist or internalize those expectations?
3. Both of these women have aspirations beyond just being a mother—the narrator with her dream of being an author and the princess with her determination to get her realtor license. How do each of their pursuits of these goals play into the tension between personal ambition and the demands of motherhood?
4. Why do you think the author chose not to name her characters? What impact does this have on the story?
5. How do the relationships between the princess and prince, and the narrator and her partner change following the birth of their children? How have your relationships changed following life-altering events?
6. There is a theme of finding community within this novel: the narrator finding her community with the women in the park and the support group for parents of children with autism. What is your community? How do you find an outlet for everyday stressors?
7. How did you feel when the princess and the narrator finally interacted? Were you surprised about their friendship?
8. At the end of the novel, the narrator creates a list of ways that she can improve her life. What would be on your list?
9. What does the title *I Wanted to Be Wonderful* mean to you after finishing this novel? How does each character embody this yearning?

