



WELCOME  
*to*  
LAST  
CHANCE

Reading Group Guide



## Discussion Questions

1. Have you ever lived in a small town? If so, what did you like and dislike about the experience? If not, do you think you'd like to live in a small town? Why? Why not?

2) WELCOME TO LAST CHANCE is a story about the power of positive thinking. Have you ever tried to manifest a better life for yourself just by changing the way you think about yourself? How does Clay's life change when he begins to look at the bright side of things? How does Jane use her optimism to hide from her unpleasant past?

3) WELCOME TO LAST CHANCE begins with the hero and heroine making a terrible mistake. Do you think the book could have as effectively told Jane and Clay's story and shown their growth as lovers without the two of them going to the Peach Blossom Motor Court at the end of Chapter 1?

4) In the scene at the Cut 'n Curl where Miriam Randall tells Jane's matrimonial fortune, she also comments that Jane needs to "ask for more." How is this advice important to Jane when you consider that she's already trying very hard to manifest a better reality for herself? What has Jane not been asking for that she needs in order to find a happy life? What in your own life have you been forgetting to ask for?

5) Why do you think Jane named her baby "Faith," given that she was not raised in a religious family? Did Jane's faith die when the baby died? If so, her faith in what? Do you agree with Miz Miriam who tells Clay that Jane, despite the fact that she is not a Christian, is still close to the Lord?



## Discussion Questions (continued)

- 6) Why do you think Stone is trying so hard to break up Clay's relationship with Jane? Is he just doing his job, or are his actions colored by his current state of mind? What will have to change in Stone's life before he can love again?
- 7) Clay and Jane both suffer from a form of survivor guilt. How has this guilt affected the decisions they've made about love and life? Do you think Clay and Jane would have been right for each other even if they had not each experienced a terrible tragedy in their respective pasts?
- 8) Do you think angels helped Haley and Jane escape from Woody West, or do you think a violent thunderstorm caused the mayhem at Golfing for God at the end of the book? Why do you think so many people believe in angels, even when there may be more rational explanations?
- 9) Clay finds a penny in Jane's purse at the beginning of the book. How is the penny used as a metaphor for Clay and Jane's relationship?
- 10) Ruby Rhodes believes in the power of prayer. How is Ruby's understanding of prayer different from Jane's efforts to create a better reality by "manifesting"? Is there any moment in the book when Jane actually prays? What happens when Jane asks the "higher powers" for help?



## Fun Facts About WELCOME TO LAST CHANCE

- Like Jane, the heroine in the story, Hope Ramsay once dreamed of being a professional musician. For a number of years, she was a member of an acoustic singing duet, called You and Me, that performed at restaurants and bars in the Washington, DC area. Hope plays guitar, flute, and dulcimer and still practices every day. Clay is a songwriter and the lyrics to Clay's songs are from songs that Hope wrote and performed in the 1980s, during her folkie musician stage.
- Last Chance is not a real place, but it was inspired by a the small town of Denmark, South Carolina, located in Bamberg, County. In building her world, Hope gave her town a history that was strongly influenced by the history of other small towns in the midlands of South Carolina. Like those towns, Last Chance started its life as a turnout on the cotton railway that linked the cotton plantations of the midlands with the port of Charleston.
- Hope wanted to give Clay's father, Elbert, an occupation that his sons and daughter would find embarrassing. While researching odd occupations she came across a link for Golgotha Bible Golf, located in Kentucky, and knew she had found the answer to her quest. Unfortunately, like a lot of independently-owned mini golf emporiums, Golgotha is no longer in operation, but you can read all about it at this link: <http://www.roadsideamerica.com/story/3342>.
- Hope makes liberal use of family names in creating her characters. Ruby Rhodes was Hope's grandmother's maiden name. Ruby Rhodes married Elbert Ramsay and lived her life in Hampton County, South Carolina.
- Hope was born in New York, but visited her extended family every summer in South Carolina. She settled in Northern Virginia directly after college, and has lived there for most of her life.