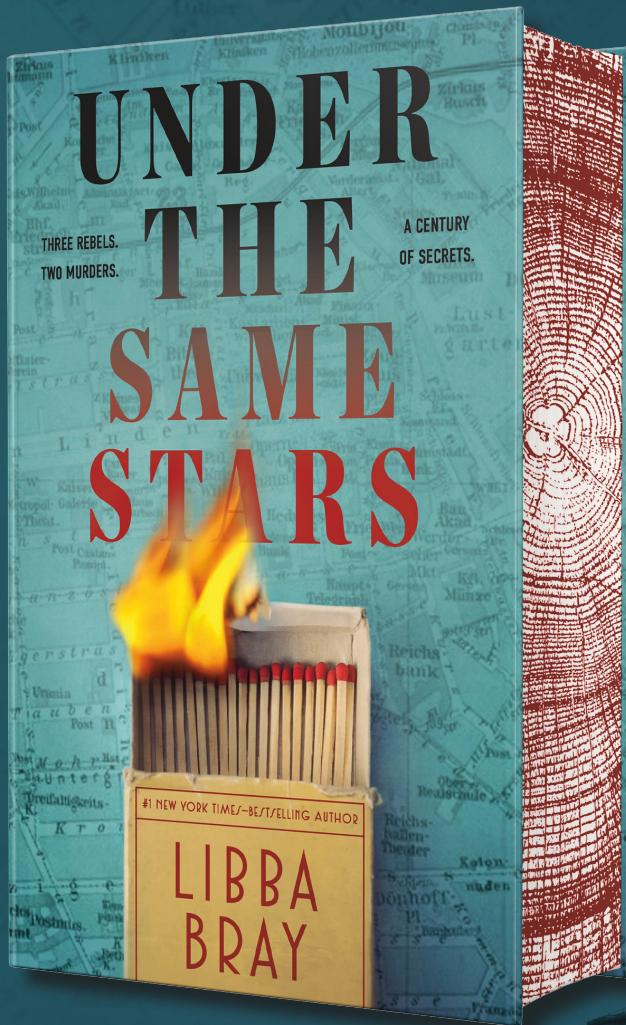


UNDER THE SAME STARS

DISCUSSION GUIDE



From *New York Times* bestselling author Libba Bray comes an evocative and groundbreaking young adult historical mystery that examines truth, rebellion, reconciliation, and what must be sacrificed for a better world.

It was said that if you write to the Bridegroom's Oak, the love of your life will answer back. Now, the tree is giving up its secrets at last.

In 1940s Germany, Sophie is excited to discover a message waiting for her in the Bridegroom's Oak from a mysterious suitor. Meanwhile, her best friend, Hanna, is sending messages too—but not to find love. As World War II unfolds in their small town of Kleinwald, the oak may hold the key to resistance against the Nazis.

In 1980s West Germany, American teen transplant Jenny feels suffocated by her strict parents and is struggling to fit in. Until she finds herself falling for Lena, a punk-rock girl hell-bent on tearing down the wall separating West Germany from East Germany, and meeting Frau Hermann, a kind old lady with secrets of her own.

In Spring 2020, New York City, best friends Miles and Chloe are in the first weeks of COVID lockdown and hating Zoom school, when an unexpected package from Chloe's grandmother leads them to investigate a cold case about two unidentified teenagers who went missing under the Bridegroom's Oak eighty years ago.



About the Author

LIBBA BRAY is the *New York Times* bestselling author of the Gemma Doyle trilogy (*A Great and Terrible Beauty*, *Rebel Angels*, *The Sweet Far Thing*); *Going Bovine*, winner of the Michael L. Printz Award; *Beauty Queens*, an L.A. Times Book Prize finalist; and the Diviners series. She is originally from Texas but makes her home in New York City.

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. *Under the Same Stars* takes place in three different time periods. How does the author utilize the three different historical settings of *Under the Same Stars* to enhance the story? Discuss how the historical context influences the characters' beliefs, actions, and relationships.
2. There is one central mystery that spans across all three time periods in *Under the Same Stars*. How are the characters from each time period related and which, if any, reveal shocked you the most?
3. Choose a character from *Under the Same Stars* whose journey resonated with you the most. Discuss their development throughout the novel. What challenges do they face, and how do their experiences contribute to their growth?
4. *Under the Same Stars* explores themes of family and belonging. Discuss how these themes are portrayed through the relationships between characters. How do these relationships evolve, and what do they reveal about the characters' desires and motivations?
5. In *Under the Same Stars*, the acorn is returned to again and again. How does this symbol contribute to the novel's overall themes and messages? Discuss how specific symbols enhance the narrative and contribute to the readers' understanding of characters or themes.
6. "Love is resistance. Resistance is love." is an often repeated idea in *Under the Same Stars*. What does this phrase mean in the context of the book? What does it mean to you? How can this idea be implemented in your daily life?
7. Analyze the structure of the narrative and the perspectives presented in the novel. How does the author's choice of narrative perspective influence the story's development and the readers' empathy for the characters?
8. Discuss the balance between historical accuracy and artistic license in *Under the Same Stars*. How does the author incorporate real historical events and figures, and where does she use creative freedom?
9. Many characters in *Under the Same Stars* face significant adversities. Discuss how these adversities shape the characters and the story. What coping mechanisms do characters use, and what does this reveal about their personalities?
10. Reflect on the themes of destiny versus choice as presented in the novel. Do the characters have control over their destinies, or are they at the mercy of the time and place in which they live? Support your argument with examples from the book.
11. What did you personally take away from reading *Under the Same Stars*? Discuss how the novel impacted your understanding of the historical periods it depicts, or how it influenced your views on the themes explored.