

SOMEONE TO DAYDREAM ABOUT *DISCUSSION GUIDE*



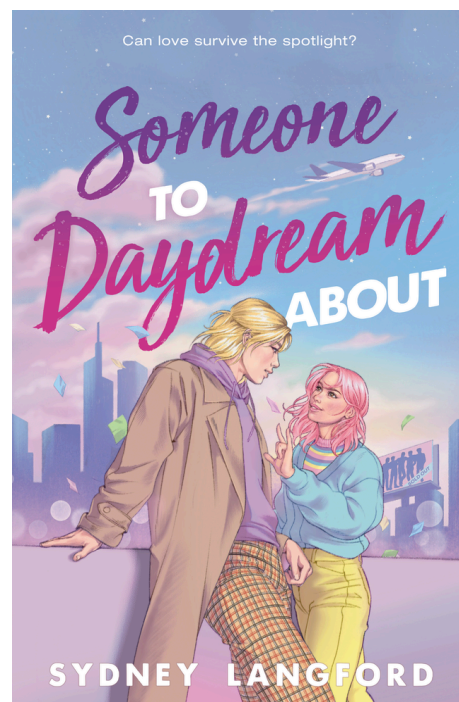
About the Book

This is what dreams are made of.

Every teenager in America knows eighteen-year-old Felix Song, the lead singer of the most popular boy band since One Direction. Unfortunately, Natalie Nielsen is no exception. Though she thinks of him more as an annoying rich kid from her hometown than a heartthrob.

Uninterested in stardom, Natalie dreams of honoring her late dad's legacy and making a positive impact on her beloved Deaf community by revamping her family's run-down Deaf Center. The issue? She has no money. When Felix's little sister's hearing loss begins to accelerate, he gives Natalie a generous job offer that would help secure the Center's future: but she must accompany him on tour this summer to teach him ASL.

What begins as a professional arrangement morphs into stolen kisses and late-night rendezvous. As their connection deepens, so do the risks—and when their relationship suddenly takes center stage, it's not only their hearts but Felix's career on the line. Amid relentless public scrutiny, contractual obligations, and meddling band members, Natalie must decide if their dreams can co-exist in the spotlight.



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About the Author



Sydney Langford (they/them) is a queer, Deaf, and physically disabled author who lives in Oregon. Their biggest passion in life is creating stories that reflect the diverse world we live in—whether that be rom-coms about quirky, disabled teens; or contemporaries that feature queer joy. When not writing, they can be found curled up with a book and their dogs, Rusty and Boss. Sydney is the author of *The Loudest Silence*, *Someone to Daydream About*, and *The Nature of Love*.

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Questions

1. How much knowledge did you have about deafness, the Deaf community and/or ASL before you read *StDA*? What is something you learned that you didn't know before, or that put things in a different perspective for you?
2. Where, physically, does the opening scene take place? What about the epilogue? Why do you think Langford made this choice?
3. Natalie identifies as Deaf, though she does have some hearing. Why? What is the difference between "Big D" Deaf and "little d" deaf?
4. Deafness is portrayed in several different ways in this novel. What are some of the differences in how three of the characters—Natalie, Natalie's Mom, and Ava—experience the world and interactions with others? How do you think this impacts their respective points of view? Do you think their respective ages/generations are a factor in this?
5. Why does Natalie dislike Felix? When, why and how does this change?
6. Why was it so much harder for Natalie to lipread what Felix was saying than the other *DAYDREAM* members? What other things do you think would make it harder for someone who relies on lipreading to fill in verbal blanks?
7. Natalie's dad was a very strong influence in her life. What do you think her life would have looked like if he hadn't died? How did she deal with the weight of responsibility for her family both before and after his death?
8. One of the elements in *StDA* is toxic fan culture. Have you seen something like this in real life? Do you think the price the celebrities pay for fame is fair, or do you think their private lives should remain off-limits for the media and fan bases? What are some of the other downsides, if any, of fame for the *DAYDREAM* members?
9. When Ava signs to Natalie that her hearing loss is progressing and that she'll be fully deaf within six months, Natalie responds, "I bet that's a hard development" instead of saying "I'm sorry"—for a specific reason. What was this? How would you respond to this news with someone you're close to?
10. Both Natalie and Felix have a challenging relationship with one of their parents. How does their learning about this impact how they view one another? Compare the dynamics they have with their respective families—what are the differences and what are the similarities?
11. Peppered throughout the novel are social media posts, wiki pages, interviews, and articles. What did these bring to the reading experience?
12. One of the topics in the novel is financial insecurity and societal class differences. How does the financial instability of Natalie's family impact her worldview? How does that compare to Felix's financial situation and worldview?

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13. A way Langford immerses readers in the experience of being deaf in this book is using double dashes to cut out words that Natalie can't hear. How did you, as a reader, feel about missing out on parts of the dialogue?
 - Experiment: put on noise-cancelling headsets (or play music on headsets) and stand 3-5 feet away from another person that speaks single words, then simple sentences, to you. Repeat, real-time, what you think they said. How did you do? How did you feel about that experience? Was it easier or more difficult than you thought it would be?
14. StDA touches on some hard issues that intersect with Natalie's Deaf identity. What are some of these and how do they impact her? What are some other examples of intersectionality in the novel?
15. When Natalie acknowledges Felix's dyslexia as a disability in the context of accommodating him during his ASL lessons, Felix balks and says he doesn't have a disability. Why does he feel that way? How does Natalie respond to that, both internally and with Felix? Explore the concept of internalized ableism and the idea that there's no disability that's more valid than another one.
16. What is Natalie's motivation for going on tour with the band? What were her other options, if any? What would you have done in her place?
17. What are some of the barriers, access challenges, and ableism that Natalie encounters in the novel? What are some of the strategies and tools she uses in a hearing-centric world? How did Felix and the band show up for her in terms of accommodations throughout?
18. What were some of the assumptions and/or misconceptions that characters in the book had about each other? What are some of the most important things the characters learned about each other, and themselves, throughout the book?
19. Pop culture often frames hearing people learning sign language as "inspiring" or "heroic". How does this novel subvert or challenge this audist savior narrative?
20. How do both Natalie and Felix grow throughout the narrative, both individually and as a couple? What do they learn about themselves and each other? How do they apply this knowledge?