



## Reading Group Guide

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1. In the opening scene, Jade struggles with sending a wedding invitation to her mother. A deep wound has distanced them. Have you or anyone you've been close to struggled with inviting a parent to a personal and family-oriented event? Is there ever any benefit to not inviting a parent to a child's wedding? Is there a benefit to putting the hurt aside for the day?
2. In the opening scene, Mama—Beryl—struggles to open the back door of her parents old farm home because her arms are full. What does this symbolize? Are there physical things in your life that symbolize your emotional or spiritual life? Are they positive or negative? Can you change them?
3. In the pastor's office, Jade has an odd experience. What did you think of this experience? Have you ever had something similar happen? How long did it last? How did you respond?

4. Jade and Max decide to let their pasts stay in the past. Is there wisdom here? How can letting the past stay out of the present benefit your heart and relationships? How might it hinder? When is it right to talk about the past? When is it best to let issues of the past go?
5. Beryl is a product of the '60s and "Summer of Love" generation. How did the philosophy of the day impact her life while growing from teenager to adult? Was there a significant event that began her spiritual journey? Did you have moment like this? How has it impacted you over the years?
6. When Jade was eight, her father Harlan left the family. How did this event shadow her through life? What is the significance of a father's presence on a son's/daughter's life? How has your life been impacted by the presence or absence of a parent?
7. Jade met Dustin in high school. How did this relationship impact her? What does he bring to her? Did you have a significant relationship as a teen? Think how such a relationship can help or hinder you. Would you do what Jade and Dustin did?
8. As an adult, Jade runs a vintage shop? What does this symbolize? How does her physical and external life reflect her emotional, internal life?
9. When Jade takes Beryl with her to Nashville, what is symbolized by the truck breaking down? As you read the story, did you sense the significance of the moment for mother and daughter? Share an event from your life that permanently affected you.
10. What created the wedge between Jade and Beryl? Do you and someone you care about have an unresolved issue? Do you want to resolve it?
11. Why didn't Jade want to admit her part in the abortion? Do you have issues you are hesitant to face because you don't want to take responsibility for the part you played? If you've lived through and overcome a hard situation like abortion or addiction, can you share your success with the group?

*The Sweet By and By*

12. When Jade is on the porch at Miss Linda's, she senses a presence manifested by wind and heat. Have you ever had a supernatural encounter? How did it impact you? Did Jade understand in this moment that God loved her and forgave her? Do you realize this?
13. Why does Harlan show up at the wedding? What do you think of Jade's response?
14. It is important to remember the good years. In the epilogue, Jade wants to hang a calendar on the shop wall that represents a good year she had. Consider setting up a monument in your heart (on a wall in your home) to note the blessings you've received. If you are in a group, talk about the kind of year you're having.