



# THE HINT OF LIGHT

## BOOK CLUB KIT

BY KRISTIN KISSKA |

In this heart-wrenching exploration of unconditional love, what a mother finds in the aftermath of her son's death could put her family back together—or tear them apart for good.

In the wake of her son's sudden death, Margaret Dobrescu struggles to keep it together in the face of her grief . . . and her guilt. She can't help but blame herself for Kyle's own lifelong struggles—namely, the alcoholism that plagued him.

But within mere days of his funeral, secrets and suspicions begin to surface, and Margaret's husband admits that Kyle once confessed to having a daughter. Clinging to the hope that some part of her son is still out there, Margaret embarks on a search to find her rumored granddaughter.

What Margaret hasn't prepared for, however, is the deluge of secrets that keep coming. And as she digs deeper and deeper into her son's life to find the truth, what she finds instead is that her own secrets can't stay buried forever

## Dear Book Club Friends,

Thank you for choosing to read and discuss *The Hint of Light* with your book club.

Once upon a time...a decade before I even thought about writing my first work of fiction, I moved to San Francisco—a new-to-me city—for a job. Since I didn't know many locals, I invited a few young women I'd met to a brew pub on The Embarcadero (Hello, Gordon Biersch!) for a pint. Little did we know, the six of us would bond over books and become fast friends. That night, we founded a book club that would meet monthly over the next several years. Though our roster shifted as club members came and left the Bay Area, two things never changed: comradery and engaging book discussions.

After I moved to Chicagoland (where *The Hint of Light* is set), I founded a new book club. And again, when my family relocated to Richmond, Virginia. My current fellow members joke that our book club is arguably a "Wine Club with a Book Problem"—no judging here! The common denominator for me is that book people are my tribe.

I hope you find the contents of this Book Club Kit a fun addition to your meeting. You'll find printable bookmarks and bonus discussion questions beyond what was included in the novel. Also, since Kyle, Ally, Margaret, and Hannah were all coffee enthusiasts, I added what I thought would be each character's favorite coffee order.

If schedules permit, I'm open to chatting with your book club by Zoom (or perhaps in person if your group meets in Central Virginia). You can reach me on the contact page of my website: [www.KristinKisska.com](http://www.KristinKisska.com).

I hope your book club enjoys a fun gathering with spirited conversation. Thank you for giving *The Hint of Light* a shot.

Happy reading!

Kristin

PS – If you tag me a photo of your book club with the novel, I'd love to share it on my social media pages. Also, please encourage all your members to share a review on Amazon & Goodreads...thank you!

## The Hint of Light

### Hannah's Coffee Order

Vanilla Iced Coffee  
With Nonfat Milk & No Classic



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### Margaret's Coffee Order

Skinny Vanilla Latte  
Half the pumps of syrup



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### Ally's Coffee Order

Chocolate Cream Cold Brew  
With Mocha Drizzle



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# What is your coffee order?

## The Hint of Light

### Kyle's Coffee Order

Drip ~ Bold Roast  
Black



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Kristin Kisska is a native of Virginia, where she currently resides with her family and their moody tabby, Boom. She holds a BS in commerce from the University of Virginia and an MBA from Northwestern University. She is the author of a dozen short stories published in anthologies. *The Hint of Light* is her debut novel.

Kristin loves hearing from friends and readers at [www.KristinKisska.com](http://www.KristinKisska.com).



THE HINT OF LIGHT by Kristin Kisska

## Discussion Questions included in the novel:

- 01 The Hint of Light is narrated by three characters: Margaret, Kyle, and Ally. How does each of these characters bring a unique perspective to the novel?
- 02 “Motherhood is not for the weak.” Several forms of parenting relationships are featured in the novel: mother-son, mother-daughter, father-daughter, and grandmother-granddaughter. How did the characters each approach their parental relationship? What did they do well, and what could they have improved upon?
- 03 Kyle suggested that battling his addiction is not just a day-to-day struggle but hour by hour. Given the unlimited availability of a legal drug such as alcohol, what are some ways a recovering addict might adjust their life and lifestyle to function within society?
- 04 After meeting Ally, Kyle was determined to overcome his addiction in order to be worthy of a relationship with his daughter. Do you believe in second chances?
- 05 After the loss of her son, Margaret obsessed over finding his secret daughter. How did searching for her granddaughter help her overcome her grief?
- 06 Do you think Hannah was justified in keeping Kyle out of Ally’s childhood?
- 07 Kimber’s last words to her brother were “I love you. Unconditionally.” How can family members support those with addiction while avoiding enabling them?
- 08 Margaret and Martin have a long-lasting but complicated relationship, fraught with secrets and conflicts. How would you characterize their marriage?
- 09 The priest told Margaret, “The secrets we bury deepest can hurt us the most.” Do you find this an accurate statement? How might Margaret’s and Kyle’s lives have differed had she not insisted they keep the attack secret?
- 10 Margaret realized “Kimber is judging me through today’s #MeToo standards, not yesterday’s reality. Back then I would’ve been blamed.” How fair is it to judge decisions made decades ago using the socially accepted standards of today?
- 11 Kyle was waiting for his birthday to introduce Ally to his parents. How might his fate have changed had they been introduced sooner?
- 12 “Our scars of grief are proof of having loved.” Each of the characters processed their grief differently. How else could they have supported each other to heal more completely?
- 13 As protective mothers, Margaret’s and Hannah’s parenting narratives paralleled each other. How did their choices—both good and bad—affect their respective children’s lives?
- 14 The novel’s title—The Hint of Light—alludes to an inflection point or an aha moment. For Margaret, the break in the clouds suggests newfound hope for a brighter future. In Hannah’s case, the interpretation was more ominous. How might someone’s unconditional love of another skew their perception of events?

## Bonus Discussion Questions:

- 15 Reimagine how the story might have unfolded had Kyle and/or Margaret received effective therapy after his trauma.
- 16 While Hannah seemingly avoided legal consequences for her actions, was justice served on some level?
- 17 What role did societal norms play in The Hint of Light? How were Kyle, Margaret, and Hannah’s choices dictated by expectations of others—those they knew and society in general?
- 18 After reading The Hint of Light, who do you feel was the true victim? Did your opinions shift while reading the novel?



# Bookmarks



*Believe in  
second chances!*



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*Do you  
believe in  
second chances!*



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