



Book Club in a Bag

Discussion Questions

The Lion Women of Tehran by Marjan Kamali

1. The book opens from Ellie's point of view in 1980s New York City. What are some observations she has about the city? What does this tell you about how she sees herself there? Discuss her description of New York in the first chapter compared to how she describes Tehran in Part 5. What are the differences?
2. How would you describe the city of Tehran during Ellie and Homa's childhoods? What feelings does it invoke? How was Tehran different for both girls before they lived in the same neighborhood?
3. Ellie's mother is obsessed with the evil eye. Where do you believe this originates? What effect do you think this has on Ellie's mother's outlook on life, and how might it affect Ellie as she grows up?
4. How would you describe how Ellie's mother thinks of Homa? Why do you think she feels this way? How does this foreshadow what happens later in the book?
5. Seven years pass between Part 1 and Part 2, where we find Ellie at an upscale school in a nice neighborhood with a new group of friends. How has her life changed, and how have her relationships changed, or stayed the same?
6. Homa's experience in prison devastated her plans and changed the trajectory of her life. What might have happened if she was not imprisoned and raped? How might her life have turned out differently? Would Homa and Ellie have remained friends?
7. In the final chapter and epilogue, Homa has remained in Iran to fight for women's freedoms, and Ellie followed her dream of opening an Iranian café in America. How do these two women embody what it means to be Lion Women? How do they reflect on their pasts and what do you think their hopes are for the future?

The above questions were taken from
<https://marjankamali.com/books/the-lion-women-of-tehran/#book-club-guide>
to enhance your discussion of the book.

Author Biography

Marjan Kamali holds a bachelor's degree in English literature from the University of California, Berkeley, a Master of Business Administration from Columbia University, and a Master of Fine Arts in creative writing from New York University. Born in Turkey to Iranian parents, she spent her childhood in Turkey, Iran, Germany, Kenya, and the U.S. Kamali's novels are published in translation in more than 25 languages (22 languages for *The Stationery Shop* and 10 languages for *Together Tea*). Her essays have appeared in *The Wall Street Journal*, *Literary Hub*, and *The Los Angeles Review of Books*.

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