

If I Stay

by Gayle Forman



About the Book

In the blink of an eye everything changes. Seventeen -year-old Mia has no memory of the accident; she can only recall what happened afterwards, watching her own damaged body being taken from the wreck. Little by little she struggles to put together the pieces- to figure out what she has lost, what she has left, and the very difficult choice she must make. Heartwrenchingly beautiful, this will change the way you look at life, love, and family. Now a major motion picture starring Chloe Grace Moretz, Mia's story will stay with you for a long, long time.

Audiobook available, narrated by Kirsten Potter.

Discussion Guide

1. The story opens with school being closed because of inclement weather and Mia's family deciding to take a trip to visit friends and relatives. Describe the mood of the morning? What role does this scene play when tragedy hits?
2. After the initialtragedy, the reader learns more about Mia's parents. What does Mia have in common with her father? Her mother? What type of role do Mia's grandparents play in her life?
3. Mia has two important peer relationships in the story --- with her best friend, Kim, and her boyfriend, Adam. Kim and Adam are distant with one another. Is Mia's reaction to their coolness toward one another natural?
4. Mia and Adam have different musical interests. Mia loves classical music and plays the cello. Adam plays guitar in a popular rock band. What draws them together?

5. Mia struggles to fit in with Adam's group. For Halloween Mia surprises him by dressing as a rocker chick. What is Adam's reaction? Explain.
6. Discuss the meanings of "sacrifice" and "choice." How are they different? How are they similar?
7. The themes of sacrifice and choice occur throughout the story and play out in several relationships. Is Mia's father giving up his own music because of his children a sacrifice or a choice?
8. Mia is pulled between wanting to die and wanting to live, so much so that she wishes for a "death proxy." What effect does Gramps's visit have on Mia?
9. How is Mia's father a symbol for one person transforming his or her life for another? How does Gramps view his decision? Do Henry and Willow understand why Mia's father wants to change? What decisions must Adam and Mia consider? Are these choices or sacrifices?
10. Kim says to Mia, "You still have a family." What does this mean to you? What is a family?
11. Adam goes to desperate measures to see Mia for the first time after the accident and then stays only a few minutes before racing out. He returns later with some classical music and a headset he puts on Mia. What does this act suggest about his relationship with Mia? Using examples from the story, make a case for Adam's unconditional love for Mia. Is it possible to make the opposite case?
12. How would your response to the story be different if Mia had died?
13. Music plays an important role in the story. Cite examples and explain.
14. Forman makes extended use of flashback to tell the story. Explain how the flashback scenes help us understand Mia's thoughts about living or dying.
15. IF I STAY is a strong example of internal conflict. Cite passages from the story that speak the strongest to Mia's struggle.
16. Could the story have been titled IF I LEAVE? Why or why not?

Author Bio

Gayle Forman is a bestselling, award-winning author of young adult novels. *LEAVE ME* is her first novel for adults. Her novel *IF I STAY* won the 2009 NAIBA Book of the Year Award and was a 2010 Indie Choice Honor Award winner. The film adaptation of *IF I STAY* was released in 2014. Forman is also a journalist whose articles have appeared in numerous publications, including *Seventeen*, *Cosmopolitan* and *Elle*. She has visited more than 40 countries and wrote a nonfiction book about her travels titled *YOU CAN'T GET THERE FROM HERE: A Year on the Fringes of a Shrinking World*. Forman lives in Brooklyn, New York, with her husband and two daughters.

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