ReadingGroupGuides
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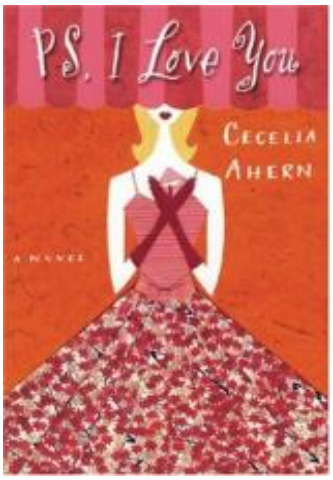
PS, I Love You

by Cecelia Ahern



About the Book

Holly couldn't live without her husband Gerry, until the day she had to. They were the kind of young couple who could finish each other's sentences. When Gerry succumbs to a terminal illness and dies, 30-year-old Holly is set adrift, unable to pick up the pieces. But with the help of a series of letters her husband left her before he died and a little nudging from an eccentric assortment of family and friends, she learns to laugh, overcome her fears, and discover a world she never knew existed.

The kind of enchanting novel with cross-generational appeal that comes along once in a great while, **PS, I Love You** is a captivating love letter to the world!

Discussion Guide

1. Who is narrating **PS, I Love You**? Where is the story located? What affect, if any, does location make to the story? Why?

2. At what point does the book hook you? What makes you keep reading? What is your favorite part?

3. Keeping in mind that Ahern was 21 when she wrote **PS, I Love You**, discuss her strengths as a storyteller. How effective is she at describing Holly's experiences? If you have lost a loved one, or know someone who has, discuss how much you relate to Holly's mourning process.

4. Look at the first two paragraphs of Chapter One. What is going on? What information does Cecelia Ahern provide at this early stage to set up the story that follows?

5. Thinking about the book's early dialogue, like Holly's wedding preparation in Chapter Two, explore Ahern's word choices. How does she convey about the story? Read aloud the long paragraph on page 8. What does Ahern reveal about the characters?

6. Briefly describe Holly's family and friends. Which characters do you like most? Why?

7. How does the idea of "a list" come about? What is so compelling about a list left by a loved one who has died? How does the list help Holly? Talk about which item was the most difficult for her, and why. If you know anyone who has been left such a list, share how it affected them.

8. Consider the last two paragraphs of Chapter Four, beginning with "Her stomach did a little dance . . ." Discuss your response. What is the author sharing with the reader? How successful is she? Why?

9. Looking at Gerry's letter to Holly in the package with the envelopes/list, discuss what you feel while reading it. Why does Holly feel both sad and relieved?

10. Overall, which item or items on the list move you the most? Why?

11. Think about Holly's reaction to Gerry's karaoke instruction. How does the experience help her? What happens to her when she learns her name had been placed on the list for karaoke months earlier?

12. Even though Gerry is dead, how does he come alive in the book? At what point in the book do we learn the most about Gerry? Describe him both physically and mentally.

13. In Chapter Five, what does Holly mean when she says she knew that she needed Gerry more than he needed her (when he was sick)? Why does she say that the list is the best thing that could have happened right now, three months after Gerry's death?

14. Look at Chapter Ten and discuss Richard's interaction with Holly. Share your opinions of him -- both the beginning of the book and at the end. What do you think of Richard?

15. Discuss who experiences a transformation in **PS, I Love You**. Why is it important that we see the characters moving on? Who is Holly at the book's start, and at the book's end?

16. What is some of the evidence that shows Holly moving on? Why does Holly cool towards Jack? How do Sharon's pregnancy and Denise's marriage help Holly?

17. How does Ahern set up Holly's relationship with Daniel? Did you think Holly was going to hook up with Daniel? Why? Discuss what happens in Daniel's love life, and why he makes the choice he does.

18. Consider Declan's film about the girls, "Girls and the City". Does it remind you of anything else? What do you think of it? Why does it strike a chord with its audience?

19. Who did you think the secret gardener was? Are you surprised that it is Richard? The garden is one of many metaphors that Ahern uses in **PS, I Love You**. What are some others? How do these metaphors enrich the story? How do

they amplify Holly's journey?

20. What affect does the vacation to Spain have on Holly? How does the magazine job change her?

21. When the film of the book is made, what actors might make the story come alive for you?

22. Share how **PS, I Love You** has affected you? Has it had any impact on your close relationships? How?

Author Bio

Cecelia Ahern is the author of the international bestsellers PS, I LOVE YOU; LOVE, ROSIE; IF YOU COULD SEE ME NOW; THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HERE; and THE GIFT. Her novels have been translated into 35 languages and have sold more than 25 million copies in over 50 countries. Two of her books have been adapted as major films, and she has created several TV series in the US and Germany. She lives in Dublin with her family.

Critical Praise

"Sweet and sad and funny: a charming journey from grief to hope."

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