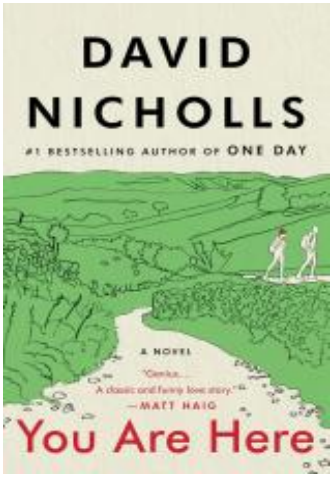
ReadingGroupGuides
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You Are Here

by David Nicholls



About the Book

From the internationally bestselling and Booker Prize-longlisted author of ONE DAY, one of the most enduring love stories of its generation, comes an uplifting and unputdownable love story about second chances.

Sometimes you need to get lost to find your way...

Michael is coming undone. Adrift after his wife's departure, he has begun taking himself on long, solitary walks across the English countryside. Becoming ever more reclusive, he?ll do anything to avoid his empty house.

Marnie, on the other hand, is stuck. Hiding alone in her London flat, she avoids old friends and any reminders of her rotten, selfish ex-husband. Curled up with a good book, she?s battling the long afternoons of a life that feels like it?s passing her by.

When a persistent mutual friend and some very unpredictable weather conspire to toss Michael and Marnie together on the most epic of 10-day hikes, neither of them can think of anything worse. Until, of course, they discover exactly what they?ve been looking for.

Michael and Marnie are on the precipice of a bright future...if they can survive the journey.

A hilarious, hopeful and heartwarming love story --- the novel beloved *New York Times* bestselling author David Nicholls calls ?my funniest book yet? --- YOU ARE HERE is a bittersweet and hopeful story of first encounters, second chances and finding the way home.

Discussion Guide

1. ?There is who we want to be?and there is who we are. As we get older the former gives way to the latter,? (page 5). Do you agree? Why or why not?

2. At this stage in their lives, Marnie and Michael both prefer to be left alone. How are their solitudes similar, and how are they different? How many different kinds of loneliness do you notice in the novel? And what is the difference between solitude and loneliness?

3. What do you think Marnie means when she talks about ?engag[ing] in the messy, confusing business of other people,? (page 21)? Discuss how this theme arises throughout the book.

4. The novel takes place in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. Marnie describes the time after the restrictions ease as an awkward one for her: ?It was as if she?d returned from a foreign country and not let anyone know.... Conversation required a warm-up now, time set aside to workshop smiles and responses, and she no longer trusted her face to do the right thing,? (page 38). Does this experience resonate for you? Why or why not?

5. How do the landscape and/or the act of walking itself play a role in the story? Would the same story have been possible if the characters had been thrown together in a different circumstance, like a cruise or a corporate conference?

6. How does Cleo?s ambition affect her relationship with Michael?

7. Discuss Michael?s observation that ?encounters with other men always seemed pre-loaded with rivalry and suspicion, the handshake tight, the smiles too, and he wondered if, after a certain age, men could ever really like each other,? (page 43). He wonders if the same also applies to female friendship: What do you think? Discuss the ways this observation relates to interactions between characters throughout the book.

8. David Nicholls has called this novel his ?funniest book yet.? Talk about the use of humor in the story and what it reveals about the characters.

9. What is the significance of the stones that Michael and Marnie carry? Do you find traditions like this meaningful?

10. Compare and contrast Michael?s relationship with Natasha versus his relationship with Marnie. Does one feel healthier, or more ?true? as a love? Why or why not? Do you think Michael made the right decision to be honest with Marnie about Natasha, at the door of his hotel room in Richmond?

11. Both characters are very reticent about their feelings. At what point do you think Michael fell for Marnie? When did Marnie fall for Michael? Why do you think that was the moment for each?

12. Do you think Michael and Marnie would have ended up feeling the same kind of connection they have now if they had met earlier in life, before their first marriages? Why or why not?

13. Do you think Marnie and Michael are soulmates? Think about how you might define the term ?soulmate? and if that definition changes over a person?s lifetime.

14. Why do you think the author chose to end the story where he did, rather than earlier or later? What do you think

might happen to the characters after the end of the novel?

Author Bio

David Nicholls' most recent novel, the *New York Times* bestseller ONE DAY, has sold more than two million copies and has been translated into 37 languages; the film adaptation starred Jim Sturgess and Anne Hathaway. Nicholls' previous novels include STARTER FOR TEN and THE UNDERSTUDY. He trained as an actor before making the switch to writing and has twice been nominated for BAFTA awards.

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