

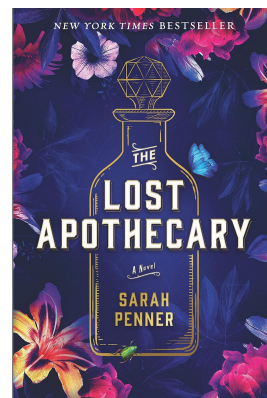


## Discussion Questions

# *The Lost Apothecary*

Sarah Penner

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1. What did you think about Nella's choice to start offering poison to women to kill the men who have wronged them?
  2. Were you familiar with mudlarking (scavenging in river mud for items of value) prior to reading this novel? Would you ever try it out?
  3. The story features two timelines—one follows Nella and Eliza in eighteenth century London, while the other follows Caroline in present day London. Do you like the dual timeline format? How did it help slowly reveal the mystery?
  4. Caroline planned a big trip to London to celebrate her 10th anniversary. But she finds out her husband had an affair right before the trip. So she leaves behind home to take the trip herself. What would you have done if you were Caroline?
  5. Nella and Eliza develop an unlikely friendship. Why did the two of them have such a strong bond?
  6. While Nella doesn't flinch to make poisons that will be delivered to men, she initially declines making one that is targeted for a woman. Why do you think Nella drew the line at making poisons that would kill women?
  7. Caroline sidelined her own career plans when she got swept up in marriage and trying for a baby. But after her husband cheats, she begins to see that she sidelined her own goals for a more comfortable life. How did coming to London and investigating the apothecary help give her direction?
  8. Despite her husband James coming to London and making a bit of a dramatic act to win her back, Caroline realizes they need a separation. Do you think their marriage is done for good?
  9. Were you surprised when it turned out that Eliza lived? Do you think the author was trying to say magic was involved or was it pure luck that she survived?
  10. What did you think about the ending? What happens next for Caroline?
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