

The Sari Shop Widow

Book Club Guide

1. Anjali Kapadia is a Hindu widow from a conservative family. Is her life different compared to widows from other cultures? Discuss the uniqueness of her situation.
2. Is a sari and jewelry boutique a good backdrop for a book set in the United States? Could it have been a different background, something that could have given the story an entirely different twist?
3. Jeevan-kaka, her uncle from India, is an autocratic man with an agenda of his own. Discuss his entry into the lives of Anjali and her family, and the consequences.
4. What role does Anjali's brother Nilesh play in this story? What does he bring to the plot?
5. Discuss Anjali's lingering feelings for her dead husband and how they influence her actions and emotions throughout the book.
6. Why do you think Anjali has picked an unlikely man like Kip Rowling for a secret boyfriend? What kind of impact does he have on her life and the story?
7. Rishi Shah is the reluctant and unwelcome third party when he is introduced to Anjali. Do you think her overtly hostile reaction to him is justified?
8. What are some of the consequences of a widow falling in love with a man of mixed race, a man who does not even live in the same country?
9. Discuss Rishi's relationship and eventual breaking up with his girlfriend, Samantha. Compare and contrast that with Anjali's relationship with Kip.
10. Does the grand opening of the new *Silk & Sapphires* store offer any insights into the planning and running of a large and diverse ethnic business? What about the cultural elements introduced as part of the opening festivities?
11. Jeevan-kaka has a couple of deep secrets, which are revealed towards the end. What do you think of the motives behind his actions, and some of the ramifications of his disclosure?
12. Discuss the unique Hindu family structure as portrayed in this story. How is this domestic arrangement different than western cultures? How does it affect Anjali's present life and her potential future with Rishi?
13. Could the story have ended any other way? As a hopeless romantic, I naturally gravitate towards happy or hopeful endings, but you could discuss some other, highly interesting possibilities. And the possibilities are always endless.....