

Discussion Questions

1. Gwen received her sister's invitation to come to New York City at a pivotal moment, one when she was eager for change. But when she arrived at Bennett Place, the scenario she'd expected no longer existed, and she had to adapt quickly. Have you ever experienced a sudden major change in life plans? How did you respond?
2. Given her history with Russell Bennett, Gwen knew she was running a risk by living in his home. Do you think she was wise or unwise to accept the position Marion outlined? Should she have stayed once she learned Marion was in a sanatorium?
3. Why do you think Russell treated Alistair so poorly? Why did he favor Clara?
4. Mrs. Barrie and all those at Bennett Place took great care during months the Spanish flu raged, both for themselves and to protect Marion, who was made even more susceptible by tuberculosis. Did you feel they were overly cautious, or should they have done more? What similarities did you see between the Spanish flu and the Covid pandemic?

5. Malcolm McNeill lost his young daughter to diabetes when he was away from home, serving in Egypt during the Great War. How did that fuel his passion to help Alistair? Besides advocating for Dr. Allen's diet, what did Malcolm offer Alistair? What did he offer Gwen and Mrs. Barrie?
6. Gwen frequently closed her eyes to Russell's business dealings, even when she believed he was operating in something dangerous and illegal. Do you agree with her motivations? Given the time and place, could she have done something different? What did you imagine Russell was involved in?
7. Following Dr. Allen's protocol helped prolong Alistair's life in the hope that a cure for diabetes would be discovered, but the diet was grueling and many considered it cruel. What do you imagine you would've done in Gwen and Mrs. Barrie's position?
8. Dr. Callahan prohibited Malcolm from sharing information about Dr. Allen's program with Gwen, believing it would give the family false hope. Why did Malcolm go against the senior doctor's wishes? Do you agree with Dr. Callahan's reasoning, or do you think Gwen was right when she wondered, *How can hope of any kind be false?*
9. Gwen feared God as a great puppet master who might punish her—or worse, punish Alistair—for her doubt and unbelief. What did Gwen learn about the power and practice of lament in the Psalms? What did she ultimately learn about surrender to God?