

Reading Guide

Last of Her Kind

Secondary

- 1.** The premise of the story stands on the theme of human fertility as a gift, a gift that could be taken away. What do you think about this concept? Is fertility a gift given by a higher power or is a naturally endowed right? Or something else?
- 2.** The character of Anne goes through many changes throughout the story. The alien character of Cerulean notices that she has changed since the last time he saw her, ten years previous. What kind of changes stood out to you? Were there other characters who changed as dramatically? Do you think of yourself as having changed through your life time, or are you much the same person throughout the stages of your life so far?
- 3.** The Luxonian world is suffering through its own fertility crisis. Is it reasonable that an alien world could experience similar emotional responses as humans? What do you believe about the possibility of advanced alien life existing and how similar might they be to humans?
- 4.** Dr. Mitchel and Dr. Peterson manage a challenging relationship. What is the crux of their difficulty? How do they appear to make their relationship work? When Dr. Peterson fails, what role does Dr. Mitchel play in his life? Have you ever been a support person to someone who has failed you?
- 5.** The story has many ending passages and several new beginnings. Were there any endings or beginnings that felt familiar to you? What elements made them familiar? Are there some impactful endings you have had to face in your life? Do endings sometime pave the way to a new beginning that couldn't happen any other way?

Adult/Book Clubs

- 1.** Anne's relationship with her husband becomes strained to the breaking point. Is it his or her fault? Was there any way they could have saved their marriage? Did the world crisis cause the breakup or might it have happened anyway?
- 2.** Anne's relationship with her mother develops when her mother reveals her own weakness and is honest about unanswered questions. Yet Anne's relationship with her husband's parents never really grows despite their mutual concern for the baby growing inside Anne. Why is that? What is

fundamentally different or dysfunctional about Anne's relationship with her in-laws?

3. Anne's relationships with her sister, her sister-in-law, and her daughter change dramatically through the story. How are these relationships altered by personal choices vs the crisis environment?

4. Cerulean admits that he loves Anne, yet is it understood that Anne loves Cerulean in the same way? Their relationship never becomes sexual, which can make their relationship feel incomplete. Does the lack of a sexual aspect in the relationship stand as a barrier between Cerulean and Anne's intimate love?

5. The story has many endings and several new beginnings. What are some of the endings and beginnings that meant something to you? Are there some impactful endings you have had to face in your life? Do endings sometime pave the way to something better, a new beginning that couldn't happen any other way?

Paperback/Journal Reflections

- What do I believe about aliens? Are they possible? Would they likely be intelligent?
- What might an alien race think about humanity? Would their judgement have any value?
- How do I feel about human fertility as it is presented in the story?
- Is human reproduction a personal right or a gift to all of humanity?
- What character do I most identify with? Why?
- What conflict stirred the most emotion in me? Why?
- Who did I dislike in the story? Does he or she remind me of anyone in my real life?
- Anne stayed on Earth out of a sense of loyalty? Was she expressing sacrificial love or was she fooling herself?
- What does Cerulean's love for Anne remind you of? Is such a love possible?
- Have you ever wished you could leave Earth to live on an alien world? How might that world seem?
- After all the endings, there is a new beginning at the end of the story? Where do you hope it will lead?
- Do you have any endings in your life that need to happen to make way for a new beginning?