

Discussion Questions

1. FBI Agent Kord Davidson seems initially reluctant to accept help from his CIA counterpart. Monica Alden, meanwhile, has her own hesitations about working with a partner. For what reasons do both Kord and Monica want to work alone? How do their skills complement each other? When given the option of working alone or with a team, what's your preference? What advantages and challenges are inherent with teamwork?
2. Kord has forged a strong bond with the Saudi men in the prince's detail, but Monica and Kord's superiors fear he might be blind to an inside threat. Is he able to look at this investigation objectively? Do you tend to err on the side of trusting those around you or being suspicious? What can you do to set aside your emotions and remain unbiased?
3. In joining the Saudi prince's security detail, Monica faces some cultural gender inequalities. How does she handle the discrimination? When encountering cultural differences, when is it appropriate to stand up for your perceived rights and when is it better to step back?
4. As a CIA agent, at times Monica feels forced to lie to her friends and family. How does this affect her relationships? Her emotional health? Are there situations where not revealing the truth is completely justified?
5. Kord's family history left him searching for answers in the Bible and the Quran, as well as Hindu and Buddhist teachings, and ultimately becoming an agnostic. What causes him to revisit his thoughts about the existence of God? How do you approach someone who's well-read or well-versed in world religions but doesn't see the truth?
6. After Monica catches Princess Yasmine meeting secretly with the prince's press secretary, she worries that telling Prince Omar the truth could have dire consequences. Is her concern justified? Does she do the right thing?
7. Ali is a rather passionate man—swinging from extremes of being bloodthirsty at the possible betrayal within the prince's inner circle to sharing a lighthearted moment with Monica. What was your favorite moment for this character? Do you think he was significantly changed after this trip to the States?
8. Monica struggles to forgive herself after Liam's betrayal. What happens to convince her to begin the process of forgiveness? Have you ever felt struck in a similar state of being unable to forgive yourself? What steps could you take to get unstuck?
9. When Monica shares her story about Liam with the princesses, she briefly worries that the prince might not approve of her words but rationalizes, "What good was her faith if she didn't stand for it?" Describe a time when you stood for your faith or when you could have taken a stand and didn't. What happened as a result?
10. Kord wonders why, if God is good and in control, innocent people suffer in the face of evil.

What would you tell him? What does he learn about grace?

11. In chapter 44, when Yasmine declines to learn self-defense techniques, Monica has some harsh words for the young woman. Does she go too far in what she says, essentially telling the princess to stop being selfish? How would you respond in that situation?
12. Monica's perfectionism becomes a barrier to her spiritual growth. What would you say to someone struggling to "let go and let God" work in their life?