

READERS' / BOOK CLUB DISCUSSION GUIDE

Now is the Time of Monsters by A.G. Mock

1. **Setting as a Character:** San Francisco plays a significant role in the novel. How does the city's history and environment enhance the story's tension and atmosphere?
2. **Emotional Impact:** The author mentions that writing this book took an emotional toll. As readers, did you feel that intensity through the narrative? What scenes stood out as most emotionally charged?
3. **The Role of Trauma:** Trauma is a key element driving the characters. How do different characters cope with their traumas, and what does that say about them?
4. **The Concept of Evil:** The character of Gemini is described as an amalgam of several notorious serial killers. What are your thoughts on how the novel defines evil through Gemini?
5. **The Role of Solitude:** The protagonist often battles her inner demons in solitude. How do isolation and confinement contribute to the story's themes and mood?
6. **Morality and Identity:** Given Cassie's dissociation and dual identities, how does the novel explore the theme of morality? Is Cassie accountable for all her actions?
7. **Friendship Dynamics:** Cassie and Patty share a complex friendship. How do their interactions help develop Cassie's character and the plot?
8. **Portrayal of Law Enforcement:** Detectives Doug Ressler, Sid Younger and Psychiatrist Siobhan Jacobs play a critical role in pursuing the truth. How did you perceive the actions and motivations of the detectives? How do you feel their roles add to the plot layers?
9. **Role of Minor Characters:** Several secondary characters contribute significantly to the plot's advancement. Which minor character intrigued you the most, and why?
10. **Twists and Surprises:** Were you able to anticipate the plot twists? How did the revelations affect your reading experience, especially regarding Cassie's true nature?
11. **Mental Health Representation:** How effectively does the novel portray Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID)? Does it align with or challenge what you know about the condition?
12. **Character Complexity:** Cassie serves as both the protagonist and antagonist. How does this duality influence your perception of her actions throughout the story?
13. **Symbolism of the Dungeon:** The dungeon plays a central role in the climax. What does it symbolize in terms of both physical and psychological imprisonment?
14. **Victim and Perpetrator:** The novel touches on the cycle of abuse. How does the story blur the lines between victim and perpetrator, particularly with Cassie's journey?
15. **Ending Interpretation:** How did the ending leave you feeling? What do you think happens to the characters beyond the last page?