

A Portrait of Emily Price: Book Club Questions

Questions

1. Emily believes all “can be fixed” at the beginning of her story. Whether you believe it’s true or not, can you see yourself acting in this way or have you seen others? Is it a common belief? Do we have kind of control over anything/everything or is Emily deceiving herself?
2. At Ammazza, Emily looks at Ben and realizes he might “find a sense of wonder, a sense of wholeness or delight” in her. Why do you think she finds that disconcerting? Would you?
3. Everything Emily touches she tries to fix. What drives that? Have you ever felt such compulsion? Are we naturally wired that way or is it fairly unique?
4. Emily states “What if I’m trying to be someone I can be?” Have you ever felt like that? More comfortable in a new aspect of you, while afraid it may not be real?
5. Amy tells Emily that marriage within two weeks is “for lust, not love.” She then withdraws the statement. Was she right the first or the second time? Can someone find “true love” in only a matter of weeks? What does “true love” even mean?
6. At her wedding, fears plague Emily? Do you feel she’s stepped too far too fast? How realistic is it that someone could find something so special she is ready to leap that fast? Have you ever done something so bold?
7. Francesca calls Emily an “Emma.” Is Emily meddling or innocently helping a friend? Or asked another way... Is she helping Francesca or herself?
8. We all have a lens through which we see the world. What are some of them you see in these characters? Do you see any within yourself?
9. In watching Donata, how easy or hard is it to become trapped in one’s mistakes or what others tell us about ourselves?
10. Lucio teaches and shares through books. Do you think he was trying to teach Emily about herself through his choices or sharing something about himself?
11. The changes in Emily’s art surprises her as it develops from “freaky” eyes to capturing the essence of the person she paints. What does she discover within it her art and what brought about that change?
12. Why did Emily ask Ben not to come with her to Atlanta? Was she running to or away from something? Can they be the same thing?
13. Do you think Lucio gave Emily *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* as an escape hatch like Emily thought or could he have had another purpose in mind? Or no purpose at all?
14. The author brings Emily and Donata together before Emily finds Ben. Why do you think that was important to her?
15. In finishing the mural, what was Emily chasing? Did she find it?
Do you feel Joseph will “stay,” emotionally if not physically? Why or why not?