

discussion questions

1. What's the significance of the first line of the book ("Waiting is a complicated longing")? In what way does waiting become a large part of Julia's life? Have you ever felt this way in your life?
2. How would you describe Julia at the beginning of the story? How do you think she changes by the end?
3. Which character did you most relate to? Which character did you like the most? Why?
4. Do you think Julia was really in love with Thomas? What do you think she loved about him? What was different about Parker that attracted Julia to him?
5. What do you think Julia was hoping to find when she went to college? Why do you think she chose engineering as her major?
6. What is the importance of the chick story? What do you think Julia finally takes away from it?
7. Even though she doesn't always know it, Julia is on a spiritual journey throughout most of the book. Have you ever felt far from God? What brought you back to Him?
8. What do you think ultimately turned Julia's heart toward God?
9. This story is rich with metaphors. For instance, on p. 112, Julia says her life became "a cautious mosaic, slowly taking the form of a shabby mixed media." When Julia returns home for Christmas, she describes her grandmother's farmhouse as "a lighthouse on the whitecapped sea of a prairie" (p. 290). In the final chapter, Julia describes her fledgling faith as "a two steps forward, one step back dance" (p. 337). How does each metaphor apply to Julia's life at the time?
10. Both the setting and season play a large part in the story. How are they metaphors for Julia's life?