



**Book Club Questions**  
**The Forgotten Midwife by Laura Antony**

1. Do you think Grammy did the right thing by revealing the birth certificate to Riley in the months leading up to her wedding? Why or why not?
2. In Chapter 3, Sam asks Riley whether her mother, Stacey (Mary-Kate), knew she was adopted, and Riley realises she doesn't know the answer. Do you think Derek and Betty ever told Stacey the truth? Why might they have guarded this information?
3. On the night Margaret is sent to the convent, her father is drunk and consumed by grief. If her parents had lived, do you believe Margaret's mother would have managed to convince her father to let Margaret come home, or was the decision inevitable regardless?
4. At the start of their friendship, Margaret loans Sister Joyce her beloved copy of *Little Women* to comfort her while she's missing her family. Have you ever read a book that brought you comfort during a difficult time, or helped you better understand your own life journey? What books have served as sources of solace in your own life?
5. When Margaret first enters the home for "fallen girls," Tee tells her the best way to help the girls is to keep quiet. Do you think Tee's advice comes more from a desire to comply, or a fear of the consequence if she doesn't? Given the circumstances, do you think her advice was helpful? Have you ever found that staying silent is a more powerful tool than speaking up? If so, when?
6. After Rosie's baby is born, her parents never come to take her home. Lucy faces the same fate and only leaves when her younger brother turns eighteen and comes for her. Do you believe their parents were aware of the conditions inside the Laundry? If so, why do you think they sent their daughters there anyway?
7. In Chapter 13, Riley and Sam stay at the Ballyvale Abbey Hotel—the former Laundry building now converted into a luxury hotel. If it were a real place, would you choose to stay there? Why or why not? Have you ever visited sites with dark historical significance? How did they make you feel? Describe the experience(s).



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8. When Derek Carmichael visits Ballyvale to collect baby Mary-Kate, he comes alone. He is unaware that the adoptions are forced, and he cannot bear the thought of breaking Betty's heart if they return home without a child. If he had known how desperately Delia wanted to keep her baby, do you think he would still have taken Mary-Kate? Or would that knowledge have changed his decision? Would it have changed your decision, if you were in his shoes?

9. Both Mr. Dolan and Doctor Henry want to help the girls. Mr. Dolan risks his livelihood to help them escape in his van, and Doctor Henry delivers Delia's baby without seeking payment, even insisting he be called for future births. Yet neither man publicly exposes the atrocities at Ballyvale Abbey. Why do you think they remained silent? And how do you imagine carrying that secret affected them personally?

10. Over many months, Margaret, Mr. Dolan, and Delia secretly help several girls escape the Laundry. If you were one of the "fallen girls," do you think you would have risked getting into the van, or would fear of the unknown—or worse punishment—have held you back?

11. In Chapter 63, Riley and Margaret meet for the first time. Although they are not related by blood, how is their connection as meaningful as Riley's newfound relationship with her aunts and uncles and cousins? What do you imagine meeting Delia's granddaughter meant to Margaret after all those years?

12. In 1976, Margaret leaves Ballyvale for the first time in twenty years and is shocked by how much the world has changed: "Everyone seems to have a car now. Women wear...skirts so short I can see halfway up their thighs." When she leaves Ballyvale for good four years later, do you think she would have thrived in the modern world? Or struggled to adapt after so many years of confinement?

Book club questions from the publisher's [book club kit](#).