

Book club discussion questions for *Ordinary World*

1. In the context of the novel, what is an ordinary world? Why is it something for Andi to strive to live in, especially in the wake of her loss and grief? Was she living in an ordinary world before Sam's death?
2. How does the setting of Northampton, Massachusetts (as well as Rome, Italy and Lima, Peru), differ from that of New York in *Faking It*? What is its effect on the story, and on Andi's life?
3. Lorello includes comedic moments in what is mainly a tragic event in Andi's life. What are they? How are they effective in pushing the narrative forward? Are they appropriate moments? Why or why not?
4. Andi is a very different character from what we saw at the beginning of *Faking It*. In what ways has she evolved? In what ways has she regressed?
5. The return of Devin, now David, is a pivotal point in the story. In what ways has he changed since being Devin the Escort? Are David and Andi more or less compatible now? Why?
6. Do you think Andi would've eventually sought out David had they not unexpectedly reunited in Rome? If she had, would their relationship have worked out? Why or why not?
7. Andi's therapist Melody Greene says, "the response to loss is a response to whatever is unresolved in *us*, whatever losses are called up from our unconscious to be relived." What does she mean by this? How does Andi's response to the loss of Sam call up other losses: which ones, and when do they first appear? How does she handle them, and loss in general?
8. Despite his death, Sam retains a strong presence throughout the novel. If he were the narrator of this story, how do you think he would tell it? How would David?
9. In his article about Monet, David writes: "[the Impressionists] dared to harness the chaos of the world around them, and now invite us to witness the beauty of such chaos. And will you? Will you allow yourself to see how powerful and unerringly beautiful chaos really is?" How does this relate to the overall theme of the novel? Do you think he was really writing this to Andi?
10. How has Andi's relationship with her mother changed as the result of Sam's death? How has Andi's relationship with her brothers changed?
11. Do you think David was trying to "save" Andi? Why or why not?

12. In Italy, David commends Andi for “daring to reclaim [her] life.” Later, at the Trevi fountain, Andi wishes “to dare to envision a life without [Sam]. . . A different one from the life I wanted with you, I mean.” Does she succeed? Has David done the same thing since giving up life as Devin?
13. Forgiveness is one of the themes of this novel. What are some examples of forgiveness throughout the story?
14. One of the more powerful moments is when Andi offers to teach the incarcerated drunk driver about writing. Do you think she came to fully forgive him? Why or why not?
15. The last lines of the novel are: “Life with Sam was fabulous. Life with Sam was fabulous because Sam was fabulous. Life with and as Andi Vanzant was ordinary. So was life with Dev.” What do you think Andi (and Lorello) meant by this?