

Book Club Questions for *I See You've Called in Dead*

1. Life and death are intrinsically connected throughout this novel, as Bud's confrontations with death are what drive him to begin to truly live. Do you believe this is an extreme position? Must we confront death so head-on in order to appreciate our lives?
2. In many ways, this novel is an ode to male friendship. Bud himself remarks on the difference between male and female friendship: "Women talked close, staring at each other, close, touched, hugged, said what they felt, said I love you out loud. We sat staring straight ahead, never touching, speaking more in the pauses, and yet still, if you listened closely, said I love you." (47) Did you find the depictions of male friendship throughout this novel different from depictions of female friendship you have read? If so, in what ways?
3. Bud uses humor to get through difficult conversations and situations, as well as sometimes using it as a method of deflection. This novel as a whole also deals with difficult topics using humor. Do you believe that using humor is an effective way to deal with difficulty?
4. Despite being incredibly critical of himself, Bud seems to be well-liked by many of the people around him. Did Bud's self-perception make you question his trustworthiness as a narrator?
5. This book is, in part, about Bud's relationships and how they function during a difficult period of his life. Was there any particular friendship or relationship you found most moving?
6. "Rewriting your story" is a consistent theme throughout this book. Do you believe Bud successfully rewrites his story?
7. On page 203, Clara asks Bud if he believes in God. When he doesn't respond, Clara lists different things in the world that make her either believe in God or make her think there is no God. What makes you believe? If not in God, then in humanity, fate, love, etc.
8. In the introduction to the novel, Bud poses the following question: "What would you write if you had to write your obituary? Today, right now. What comes to mind? What memories, days, moments? What people and experiences?" How would you answer this question?

