



12 August - 26 August, 2025

Book club discussion guide

1. What did you like about the book?
2. How does the wildfire-ravaged town of Jasper shape the atmosphere of the story? How does the setting contribute to the sense of isolation and corruption depicted in the novel?
3. Detective Alex Markov is driven by a personal connection to uncover the truth about a suspicious death. How does her background and her relationship with the town influence her actions throughout the investigation?
4. The novel delves into themes like small-town corruption, greed, and racism. How do these elements impact the development of the story? How does the author's background as a journalist enhance the portrayal of these themes?
5. The story is set against the backdrop of a wildfire, a reflection of real-world climate crises. How effectively does *Smoke* address environmental issues? What do you think the novel is trying to say about humanity's relationship with nature?
6. How does the town's collective trauma from the fire affect the way its residents respond to the investigation? What does this say about the nature of tight-knit communities dealing with tragedy?
7. The novel presents moral complexities as Alex seeks justice in the face of opposition from her own community. How does *Smoke* explore the difficulty of pursuing truth when it might harm those around you?
8. How does Brissenden maintain suspense throughout the novel? Were there any twists or turns that surprised you? How did the pacing affect your experience of the story?