

No Gods West of Here

A Book Club Discussion Guide

Thank you for choosing *No Gods West of Here* for your book club. These questions offer a range of themes, pick the ones that work best for your group.

A note before you start: This is a dark romantasy and it explores some sensitive topics. A full list of potential triggers are available at hannagaard.com/content-warnings, be sure to share this with folks before asking them to read.

The Questions

1. Talia has spent her life giving people what they want before they ask. When did you first notice her saying yes when she meant no? Have you ever caught yourself doing the same?
2. Some readers want to shake Talia. For all her intelligence, she walks into dangerous situations even after being warned. Is she naive or optimistic? Is there a difference? What would you have done differently in her position?
3. Valta promises a fresh start—flux, land, a life you couldn't have back in Sovana. Does the book believe that promise? What does the frontier landscape represent?
4. Each chapter opens with an epigraph. What do these fragments add to the story? Did any of them change how you read the chapter that followed?
5. Is Lore a villain, a victim, or something else? Defend your answer.
6. Faerie tales and religion run through the book as competing versions of history. What did Talia believe was true at the start, and what does she believe by the end?
7. The book is told in tight third person—we only see through the POV characters' eyes. Are Talia and Dawn reliable narrators? How does each distort the story she tells? What would you look for on a reread?
8. Three men, three different versions of who Talia could be. How does she change with Lore, with Riven, with Holloway? Which version felt most like the real her, and which relationship felt most real to you?
9. Do you need to like a character to be invested in their story? Who were your favorite and least favorite characters? Did anyone win you over (or lose you) along the way?
10. Talk about Talia and Dawn. What does their friendship give each of them? Was their arc more compelling than the romances? Why do you think Dawn is so many readers' favorite?
11. Compare notes: what ends up being true about the gods? Where do your theories differ?
12. If you could read a standalone story set anywhere in this world—a prequel, a side character, a legend the book only mentions—what would you pick, and why?

The Questions (spoilers)

13. THAT Dawn reveal. Did you figure it out, and if so, when? Looking back, what clues were hiding in plain sight?
14. Lore claims he's never lied, but he certainly manipulates. What makes someone susceptible to a figure like him? When do you think Holloway started falling under his influence?
15. Talk about the ending. Which twists did you see coming? What caught you by surprise? What does it set up for *No Saints Left Standing*?
16. By the final chapters, has Talia broken her people-pleasing pattern or just found new people to please? What would you need to see in her relationship with Riven to convince you that she's really changed?
17. Where do you think Lore and Holloway go from here? Can a character like Lore be redeemed—and would you want him to be? If the next book ends with a happily ever after, what would that look like for them?

Bonus round 🎲

If the crew was a D&D adventuring party, what class would each character be?

Make it a night 🍷

Lean into the gold rush saloon of it all: whiskey cocktails or a smoky mocktail, cornbread with honey butter, a candle or two, and someone reading their favorite epigraph aloud. Bonus points for wanted posters and cowboy hats.

A note from Hanna

If you saw a little of yourself in Talia—if you've ever said yes when you meant no or apologized for something that wasn't your fault—this book was for you. I'm a recovering people-pleaser myself, and letting Talia make mistakes without fixing them for her was the hardest and most healing part of writing this story.

One more thing to argue about at your meeting: everyone in this book believes their version of events. And they all think they're doing the right thing, even Lore. I wanted to explore how stories turn into “truth” or “fiction” depending on who's telling them. I hope parts of this story rang true and other parts made you skeptical.

Mostly, though, I hope it was a darn good adventure.

Want more of the story behind the story? Join my newsletter at hannagaard.com/subscribe

Is your club reading *No Gods West of Here*? I'd love to send you bookmarks and character art! Tag @hannagaard on Insta or shoot me an email: hanna@hannagaard.com. I'm also happy to join virtually for a Q&A with select clubs!

Getting the book - *No Gods West of Here* is available in paperback wherever books are sold (indie bookstore partners listed at hannagaard.com/where-to-buy). The ebook is on Kindle, Kobo, and Apple Books.

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NO GODS WEST OF HERE by Hanna Gaard

Paperback ISBN: 979-8-9949780-0-9

Ebook ISBN: 979-8-9949780-1-6