

Christy
Miller



DEPARTURES

Two Rediscovered Stories by Robin Jones Gunn



SIERRA
JENSEN



Departures Discussion Questions
By Robin Jones Gunn

Story 1: *Now Boarding at Gate 10* (a Christy Miller novella)

- 1) Christy's little brother tags along with her while she walks through the airport and embarrasses her on the airplane. Christy feels frustrated with him many times during the story. How have you felt when your brother or sister acted the way David was acting? What did you do in the moment? What do you now wish you would have done in that moment?
- 2) When Christy sees the Todd look-alike at the airport, she is flooded with emotions. Have you ever experienced strong emotions when you see, smell, hear or do something that reminds you of someone? What helps you process these emotions? Here are a few great verses on what to do when you feel overwhelmed: Psalm 55:16-18, 22.
- 3) In chapter three, Christy notices that it's strange that her mom rings the doorbell at her own parents' house and wonders if she will do the same when she's older. How has your relationship with your parents changed as you've become older? How can you work to make your relationship with your parents stronger?
- 4) Christy knows that her grandfather loves her even though he doesn't come right out and say it. How do you express love without words? Who could you *show* your love to today?
- 5) In Chapter 5, Christy doesn't hesitate to share about her commitment to Christ. Have you made a commitment to Jesus? Is it hard for you to talk about it with others? Please read this verse: Romans 10:9
- 6) At the end of chapter two, Christy thinks it will be a "God-thing" if she sees Matthew Kingsley over the weekend. Her time with Matthew doesn't turn out to be the start of a new romance, but it was still a "God-thing" for both of them. How did Christy grow through this experience? How did Matthew benefit from the time with Christy?
- 7) Christy was still feeling somewhat upset over a comment Matthew made to her when they were eleven years old. She is able to clear it up with him. Are you holding on to anything from the past that you should let go of? How can you take steps toward letting go of past hurts?
- 8) In chapter thirteen, Christy journals about what she has learned from her grandparents about marriage. The two words she latches on to are "commitment" and "intimacy." What qualities do you think are important for a marriage? Write down a list and pray for those qualities in your future marriage.
- 9) How can you strengthen your commitment and intimacy with God?
- 10) What was your favorite part of the story about Christy? What was it that you liked about that part?

Story Two: *In The Event of a Water Landing* (a Sierra Jensen novella)

- 1) Like Jana, we often feel insecure when things don't go according to plan and we must trust that God knows what He's doing. When in your life have you seen God help you through unplanned events?
- 2) Gregg comments sarcastically about Sierra's "tie-skirt" and Sierra isn't bothered by the remark because she's happy with her style. When someone comments on your style, what do you do? When you evaluate your style do you see yourself as reflecting accurately on the outside the person you are on the inside?
- 3) If you were in the group with Sierra, Tim, Gregg and Jana at the Mall of America what would you have suggested be done to satisfy everyone's hopes for the time there while still following the rules?
- 4) Throughout this story, Sierra comes across as more free-spirited while Jana is more reserved. What are the pros and cons of both personalities? Who are you most like?
- 5) Sierra and Jana's friendship becomes a competition when Jana starts to try to win Tim's affection. Why do you think it's so easy to become competitive with close friends? How can you stop this from happening in your own friendships? Here are a few favorite verses on friendship. Proverbs 17:9, 14, & 17, John 15:13.
- 6) What do you think Sierra *should* have done when she ran into Danny at night? Should she have been outside alone in the first place? Why or why not?
- 7) Sierra often feels a connection to God when she's in nature. Share or journal about one of the times you've experienced the same thing.
- 8) Jana believes she's ready to move ahead in her dating life. Sierra isn't ready to make that decision. What qualities do think are important for a young woman to consider before she starts dating?
- 9) Sierra decides to enjoy her time as a "freckle-faced tomboy." How do you live comfortably as yourself? When do you feel pressured to "grow up"?
- 10) What was your favorite part of the story about Sierra? What was it that you liked about that part?