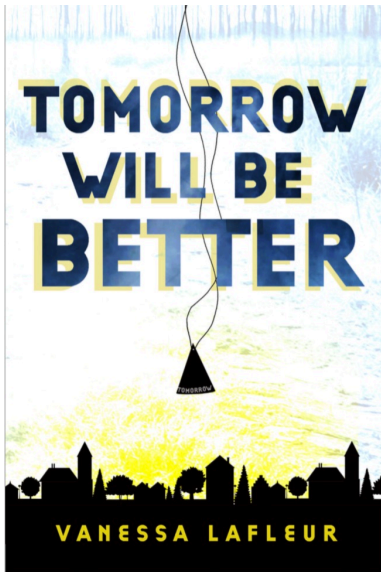


## Tomorrow Will Be Better Discussion Guide

### Tomorrow Will Be Better Vanessa Lafleur



The brand burned into Charlie's arm is a constant reminder that family doesn't exist, people only care about their own selfish interests, and a handful of pendants, if united, could lead to negative consequences for the entire world. All he wants is to escape his perilous past and the people who want him dead. By accident, he arrives in the small town of Maibe, Nebraska where he has the chance to change his life and start over.

Rochelle is trying to pick up the pieces and move forward after a year filled with loss and illness. She just wants to take care of her family, prevent her home from becoming a ghost town, and save the world if she has time. When an old friend shares secret information about pendants that could save millions of lives, she finds herself and everyone she loves plunged into a world more dangerous than she could ever imagine.

As it becomes clear that nothing happens by chance, Charlie and Rochelle must face the trauma of their pasts and work together to ensure tomorrow will be better for everyone.

### Discussion Questions

1. *Tomorrow Will Be Better* opens with Charlie Keppler desperately trying to escape his past. How does this shape the reader's understanding of the rest of the story?
2. Charlie is reluctant to trust anyone when he arrives in Maibe. What convinces him to stay with the Aumonts?

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3. When Rochelle meets Charlie, he is a complete stranger. Why does she feel so compelled to help him even after he pushes her away?
4. Through every challenge they've faced, Rochelle and Todd have remained best friends. What's unique about their relationship? Do you think anything could pull them apart?
5. Kinley tells Rochelle to think with her head instead of her heart. What does she mean by this? Is she right?
6. Charlie had to hide his love of writing from his dad and The Defiance, but that doesn't stop him. Why is writing so important to him? What does his method of reporting for the Maibe newspaper reveal about his character?
7. Rochelle, Kinley and Kat deal with loss and grief in different ways. Compare their strategies and the positive and negative impacts on each of their lives.
8. Rochelle and Molly haven't been friends since they were children. Why does Rochelle take the time to listen to and try to help Molly? Why is Molly so determined to bring Rochelle into the pendant project?
9. Max immediately welcomes Charlie to Maibe, even calling him his brother. How is Max's motivation different from Griff's?
10. Which candidate do you think is most qualified for Maibe's town council? Why?
11. From the beginning Molly is manipulating everyone around her without them fully understanding the impact she is having on their lives. What is Molly's ultimate goal and how do her actions move her closer to achieving it?
12. Kat questions Kinley's parenting style and motive for returning to Maibe after the fever. Does Kat have valid reasons to resent her cousin or is she being too hard on her?

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13. Charlie felt responsible for his younger sister and therefore empathizes with Kinley's concern for Rochelle and Kat. How does Charlie's situation with Isabelle compare to Kinley's situation with her cousins?
14. From his first meeting with Aunt Audrie, Charlie is suspicious of her. Is he justified in his judgment? Is Rochelle naïve to trust her? What is Audrie's real motivation for reaching out to her nieces?
15. At first Charlie believes Griff's plan is noble. What changes his mind? Is Griff sincere in his mission to help abandoned children or is he after something bigger? What is The Defiance really fighting for?
16. Which character(s) would you consider the villain of the story? Why?
17. Which character(s) would you consider the hero of the story? Why?
18. *Tomorrow Will Be Better* is told from alternating perspectives. How does each narrator set a different tone and how is each important in moving the plot forward? If one more character's perspective were included, who do you think would add the most valuable input?
19. Todd is described as being cautious and responsible. He did, however, put his own life and the lives of his family in danger to save Rochelle from the deadly fever. Was this a reckless decision or the right thing to do?
20. Charlie thinks Todd made a mistake to go looking for his mom who abandoned him. Does this reflect his own feelings about Isabelle, or would he go looking for her if he had a lead?
21. Rochelle and Charlie have different outlooks influenced by their life experiences. How does the past impact their opinions about family, the pendant, and their interpretation of the phrase, *nothing happens by chance*?

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22. How do Charlie and Rochelle each change from the beginning of the book to the end? Do these changes push their understanding of the world closer together or further apart?

23. In Charlie's last chapter, he feels everyone blames him for leaving Rochelle with Molly. How much of the blame does he deserve? Did he have another choice?

24. Rochelle decides to trade her own life for Todd's. Could anyone have changed her mind? Would she have done the same for Kinley? Kat? Charlie?

25. The definition of family is an important debate throughout *Tomorrow Will Be Better*. Based on the events of the novel, what is the definition of family? Which characters are best at living by this definition?

26. The town of Maibe, Nebraska is an important backdrop for the events of *Tomorrow Will Be Better*. How would the story be different if Maibe were a city instead of a small town?

27. What is the significance of the book's title? Why is it called *Tomorrow Will Be Better*?

### About The Author



Vanessa Lafleur is a high school English teacher. Her favorite part of teaching is helping her students discover their writing talents and hone their skills. She enjoys coaching volleyball and speech, spending time outside, and reading whenever she has time. Vanessa lives in Nebraska with her family.