



Book Club in a Bag

Discussion Questions

The Push by Ashley Audrain

1. In the book, Blythe struggles with feelings of inadequacy as she fails to live up to the perfect ideal of motherhood. How do societal pressures contribute to those feelings? How do you think society views motherhood – what it should look like, how it should feel, even who should be a mother – and what kind of burden does that place?
2. Nature versus nurture is a big theme in *The Push*. Are we born, or are we made? And, especially, when children turn out to be violent or dangerous, how much blame lies with the way they are raised?
3. Blythe says of her early relationship with Fox: “I had nothing when I met you, and you effortlessly became my everything.” What did you think about the quality of their relationship from the outset? Is there something dangerous about a love so all-consuming and addictive?
4. What are your thoughts about Blythe as a mother? Did she fail Violet? Sam? What could or should she have done differently?
5. Do you think Fox ever lied about not believing Blythe in order to protect Violet? If so, do you think trying to protect his daughter was a good enough reason to doubt his wife?
6. Were you surprised by the nature of Blythe and Gemma’s relationship? Even though it was based on a lie, do you think there was a real friendship and understanding there?
7. Does being a “good mother” always require selflessness and unconditional love? How much of ourselves do we owe our children?

The above questions were taken from
<https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/625327/the-push-by-ashley-audrain/9781984881663/readers-guide/>
for your discussion of the book.

Author Biography

Ashley Audrain previously worked as the publicity director of Penguin Books Canada. Prior to Penguin, she worked in public relations. She is a graduate of the Media, Information & Technoculture program at Western University. She lives in Toronto, where she and her partner are raising their two young children. *The Push* is her first novel.

From the author's website: <https://ashleyaudrain.com/about/>

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