

## Discussion Questions for *The Drowning Girls*

1. Why is Liz so concerned about fitting in with her neighbors at The Palms? How does this change, and why? Does Liz's desire to fit in to this fictional world resonate with real life?
2. As a parent, Liz is torn between wanting what's best for Danielle and wanting to control (or at least influence) certain aspects of her daughter's life—such as her friends and social contacts. Compare this to the approach other parents (such as the Jorgensens and the Sieverts) take toward their children. How much control can or should parents have over their teenagers' lives, especially when it comes to technology and social media?
3. Phil begins his narration by insisting that he isn't a pedophile, and is merely trapped in a "lose-lose" situation. Do you think he has an accurate understanding of the dilemma? Would problems have been avoided if he had tried to seek legal action such as a restraining order against Kelsey from the very beginning?
4. Kelsey is presented as deeply troubled in this book. What might be the cause of these problems? Why do her parents continue to believe and support her in the face of contrary evidence?
5. At the end of the book, Liz is unsure of the role Danielle has played in what happened to Kelsey, but seems determined to protect her daughter (and therefore her daughter's dark secrets). What motivates Liz at the end of the book? Is it the same thing that motivates the Jorgensens relating to their own daughter?
6. Phil tells Liz that he believes they're the same kind of awful, but Liz disagrees. Is Phil merely a helpless victim of circumstances brought on by his life at The Palms? Is Liz?