

The Fragile World by Paula Treick DeBoard  
Discussion questions for book clubs.

1. Was it surprising that Kathleen was able to move on with her life while Curtis couldn't seem to move past his anger? What causes parents to react differently to tragedies in their family?
2. Would you be able to forgive a person who caused serious injury or death to a loved one—even if that act was unintentional?
3. Robert Saenz, although a fictional character, could be all too real. Curtis believes the judicial system has failed where Robert Saenz is concerned. What might be an appropriate punishment for an action—however unintentional—that has such deadly consequences?
4. Curtis doesn't seem to believe he could ever cause harm to Olivia or Kathleen, although of course, his actions could have a devastating effect on their lives, as well. Does this lack of awareness come from a callousness or insensitivity to others, or is he simply blind to everything but his desire for revenge?
5. Consider Olivia's many fears throughout the book. Do these fears seem like a natural reaction to her circumstances, or a sign of a more serious issue? In what ways can fear affect a person?
6. Why does Kathleen take more responsibility than she deserves for what happens at the end of the book? Why doesn't Curtis intervene and publicly take responsibility?
7. When Curtis and Olivia say "Love... Eventually" at the end of the book, do you believe them? Can things work out for the Kaufmans, moving forward?