

The Dream Daughter – Discussion Questions

1. How does the prologue set the reader up for the rest of the novel? What did it leave you wondering about?
2. How does the dual perspective – Hunter’s narration in 1970 and Carly’s narration throughout her experiences – affect your reading experience? What are the primary differences between their voices? What do you like about having both sides of the story?
3. Throughout the novel, Carly and Hunter share a very special bond of trust and understanding. Where do you think that bond comes from? Is it simply because they are family? Do you have a similar bond with your family, either the one you were born with or the one you chose for yourself?
4. In *The Dream Daughter*, Carly has to take the ultimate leap of faith, both literally and metaphorically. Have you ever had to take a similar leap? What about it scared you? Was it ultimately worth it?
5. When Carly first travels to 2001, she is baffled by all of the technology and the changing social norms. What thing that Carly didn’t understand do you find most interesting? Were any of them funny? What do you think you would find if you traveled thirty years into the future?
6. Throughout the novel, the presence of water plays an important role in Carly’s life. She lives close to the ocean in North Carolina, she met her husband at the beach, and she feels much more comfortable stepping off over water whenever she can. What do you think water means to Carly? How does she find comfort in it, even in New York City?
7. On page 178, Patti says to Hunter, “It would be like you killed her. Maybe you have.” Why do you think Patti feels this way about her husband, whom she loves very much? How is Patti processing her grief and fear differently from Hunter? How do you think you would react in a similar situation?
8. The central question of *The Dream Daughter* is, “what would you do for your child?” How would you answer this question? Do you think Carly goes too far, or not far enough to try and be with her daughter?
9. On page 268, Carly thinks, “How did you steal a child away from the world that she knew to take her to the world where she belonged?” Carly faces a complicated moral dilemma when it comes to Joanna and her adoptive parents. Do you think she did the right thing? Is there a “right thing” in this scenario?
10. How did you feel about the end of the novel? Was it bittersweet? Joyful? Did it end the way you thought it would?