

Jodi  
Picoult

the  
book of  
two ways

**BOOK CLUB KIT**

# Letter from the Author

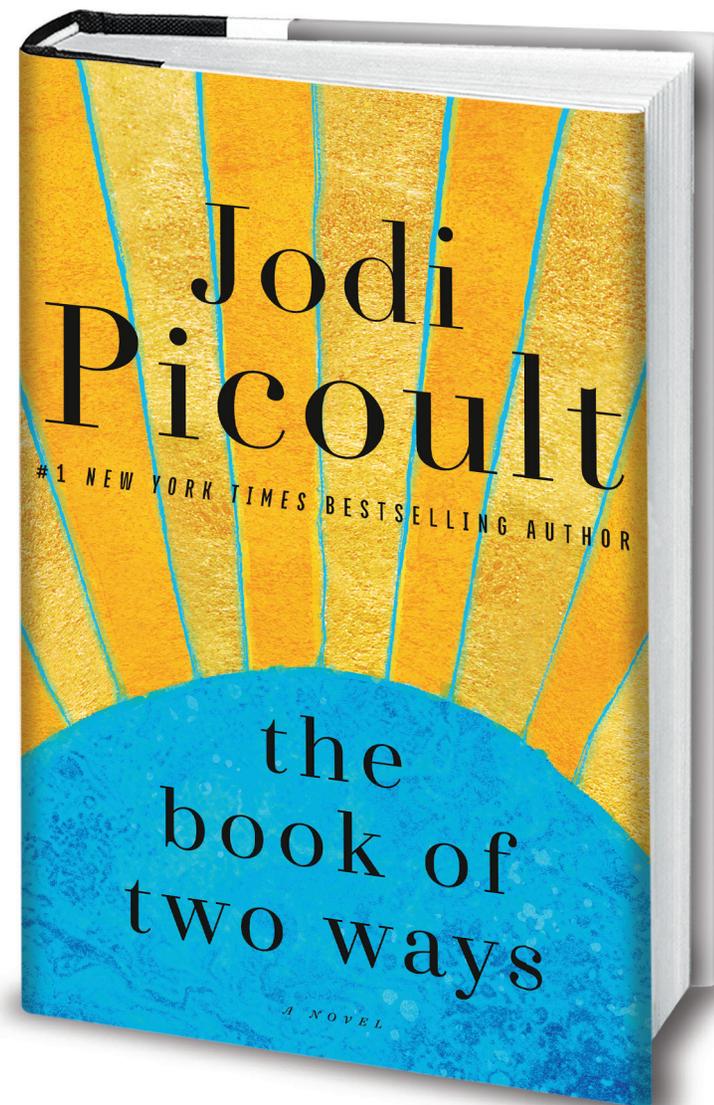
Dear Reader,

It feels strange to be releasing my latest novel during such unprecedented times, yet in some ways *The Book of Two Ways* feels more relevant than ever before.

I've been thinking a lot about what it would look like to live a different life (one that doesn't involve a global pandemic, for example). Dawn's story prompts some crucial questions that I think we've all been asking ourselves these past few months. When it feels like the world is ending, who do I want by my side? Am I fulfilled? Am I living a life that I'm proud of?

I hope that *The Book of Two Ways* has provided you with a means of escape, but also reflection. I'm thrilled you have decided to take a look at this kit, which includes discussion questions for your book club (or for you to ponder on your own!). Enjoy the photos from my trip to Egypt, and thanks for reading and sharing!

Best,  
Jodi Picoult



# Discussion Questions

1. The book asks: “Who would you be, if you hadn’t turned out to be the person you are right now?” If you had to pinpoint the one person or thing you left behind, what or who would it be? Do you wonder: *What if?* How might your life be different if you had taken that different route?
2. Had you ever heard of a death doula before reading *The Book of Two Ways*? What did you think of this care practice and the way it is incorporated in the novel?
3. Both Egyptian mythology and quantum physics are explored in the book, and they are often presented as two opposites in Dawn’s life. Do you think they’re as different as Dawn perceives them to be, or are there ways in which they actually overlap?
4. In what ways do Dawn’s two potential careers mirror each other?
5. Do you think Dawn’s decision not to return to Egypt after her mother passes away is ultimately a selfish or a selfless choice?
6. Dawn and her daughter, Meret, have a close but challenging relationship. What do you think causes them to clash so often? What do they learn from one another by the end of the book?
7. Picoult plays with the idea of parallel universes and alternate timelines as we see Dawn’s narrative unravel in both Boston and in Egypt. Were you surprised when it became clear which timeline Dawn truly exists in?
8. What responsibility do you think Brian and Wyatt each hold for how Dawn’s path in life progressed?
9. Do you think it’s possible to experience multiple loves, as Dawn and Win both describe?
10. What did you think of Dawn’s decision to deliver Win’s painting to Thane Bernard?
11. The novel also explores the concept of fate versus free will. Do you think we determine our own destiny through our choices, or are we always heading toward the same fate no matter which path we take to get there (as *The Book of Two Ways* suggests)?
12. If you were in Dawn’s shoes, would you choose to stay with Brian or to pursue a life with Wyatt? Or is there another path you would take instead?
13. What do you think makes for a good legacy? Are certain things—like one’s career, contributions to science or culture, or family—weighed more heavily than others when considering what constitutes a “good life”?

# Cocktails



## The Land Cocktail

### Ingredients:

- 1 oz. vodka
- 1 oz. coffee liqueur
- 1 oz. Baileys Irish Cream
- 1 ½ oz. heavy cream
- Garnish: chocolate shavings

### Directions:

1. Add all ingredients into a shaker with ice.
2. Shake until well chilled.
3. Strain into a chilled Fizz glass.
4. Garnish with chocolate shavings.

[liquor.com/recipes/mudslide/](http://liquor.com/recipes/mudslide/)



## The Water Cocktail

### Ingredients:

- 1 shot vodka (1.5 oz.)
- 1 shot coconut rum (1.5 oz.)
- 1 cup coconut water
- 1 tbsp. blue curacao
- 1 tbsp. cream of coconut
- ¼ cup pineapple juice
- Garnish: Pineapple wedge and maraschino cherry

### Directions:

1. In a shaker with ice, pour vodka, coconut rum, coconut water, blue curacao, and cream of coconut.
2. Cover shaker, shake vigorously. Pour into a glass.
3. Top with pineapple juice.
4. Garnish with pineapple wedge and/or a cherry.

[theblondcook.com/bluewater-breeze-cocktail/](http://theblondcook.com/bluewater-breeze-cocktail/)

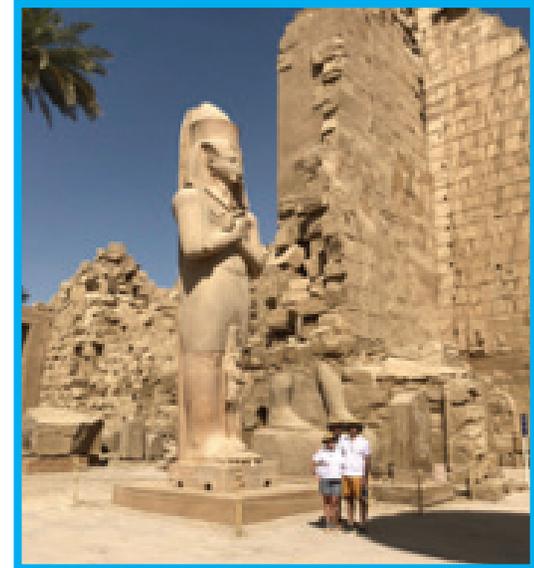
# Photos



Crawling out of a tomb in Egypt.



Walking near Beni Hassan with Egyptologist Dr. Colleen Darnell and my son Kyle and a local guide.



Tim, Kyle, and I at Karnak Temple.



Middle Kingdom Coffin from the Cairo Museum.



Art inside a tomb at Beni Hassan.

# Photos



At Saqqara, Djoser's step pyramid.



At Tuna el-Gebel, near the tomb of Isadora's mummy.



Deir el-Medina – the worker's village, with the remains of the homes of those who built the tombs in the Valley of the Kings.



With Kyle at Saqqara, Djoser's pyramid.