Mother/Daughter Book Club questions

1. The pieces of Calle's journal entries that begin each chapter center around her mother, some of them are arguments or places, and some of them are small details that help paint a picture of their relationship. How would you define their relationship? Where in the novel does their relationship shift and change? How does it grow and evolve?

2. In what way do Alyson's relationships with men impact or define Calle's relationship with Sam?

3. Setting is important in the novel, especially in relation to where the main characters – Calle, Cass, Sam, the drama students – feel safe. What role do the various settings – the theatre, the beach, the school, the Lucky's Bar – play in the novel? How do they provide the backdrop for what is happening to the characters?

4. Each chapter is a song title and snippet of Calle's journal – and thus – her past. With that in mind, why is the novel titled *Songs for a Teenage Nomad*?

5. At the end of Chapter 10, Calle finds the poem on the wall. She says, "I'm sitting in the night of this poem." What does she mean by that? Poetry becomes important in the novel, both through the song lyrics and also through the character of Cass. What role does poetry play?

6. Each of the three main teenagers --Sam, Calle, and Cass--deal with complicated relationships with their mothers and fathers? What do you as a reader learn? How does each teenager process their own situation? Do they make peace with it?

7. How do adults in the story – Alyson, Rob , Jake, Mr. Ericson, Mr. Atkins – though often secondary, provide contrast to the teenagers and their own personal stories and journeys?

8. How does the first person narrator (Calle's voice) shape your understanding as reader of the events in the novel?

9. Several themes stand out – betrayal, love, fear, loss- what was one of the most important themes in the novel for you and why?

10. What is at stake for Calle in this novel? What is at stake for Alyson? In what ways are their goals and obstacles the same? In what ways are they different?