

# A BORROWING OF BONES

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1) Mercy and Elvis are both grieving Martinez and their former life in the military. They've lost their man and their mission. How does the nature of their grief change over the course of the story? How does the bond they share grow over time, and how do you think that bond affects the grieving process for them both?
- 2) Mercy needs to make a new life for herself. What does she do that makes you think she'll succeed at that—and what does she do that might sabotage her efforts?
- 3) One of the ways Mercy honors Martinez is by remembering the stories he tells. Which of these stories resonated most with you, and why?
- 4) Mercy's grandmother Patience is the person Mercy relies on most, especially now that Martinez is gone. Her relationship with her parents, on the other hand, is fraught with expectations on both sides that go unmet. How do you think these relationships will affect the future she chooses for herself now?
- 5) Mercy tells Troy that she loves Shakespeare's work because “it makes me feel better about being human.” Why do you think that is, and what does it say about her?
- 6) Vermont is a place of villages and woods, hunters and artists, woodchucks and flatlanders. How do these contrasts contribute to the character of Mercy and Troy, and to the story itself?

