

Almost There, Almost Me

Ten questions and three ideas for your discussion.

For Your Book Club

1. Maria appears successful in many ways: a demanding career, international travel, and a relationship that spans continents. Why do you think these achievements still leave her feeling unsettled? Have you ever experienced a gap between how life looks from the outside and how it feels internally?
2. The title *Almost There, Almost Me* suggests a sense of being close to something without fully arriving. In what ways does Maria experience this feeling throughout the story? Do you think the “almost” is about career, relationships, identity, or something else?
3. Burnout develops gradually in Maria’s life. At what point did you begin to sense that something was wrong? Did her realization feel sudden or long overdue?
4. Travel plays an important role in Maria’s story. How do the different places she visits influence her thinking or her decisions? Do you think changing locations helps her understand herself differently?
5. Paragliding appears several times throughout the novel. What do you think draws Maria to it? How did you interpret its significance in the story?
6. Maria and Pete’s relationship unfolds across distance, complicated timing, and uncertainty. How did the long-distance dynamic shape their connection? Do you think their relationship would have developed differently if they had lived in the same place?
7. The novel explores the end of one marriage alongside the possibility of another relationship. How does the story portray the difference between commitment, habit, and genuine partnership?
8. Maria often feels pressure to meet expectations — professional, personal, and romantic. Which expectations seem self-imposed, and which come from the world around her?
9. Many readers in their thirties and forties face questions about ambition, stability, and personal fulfillment. Which aspects of Maria’s journey felt most familiar or relatable to you?
10. By the end of the story, Maria’s life is not perfect, but it is different. What do you think she understands about herself that she did not understand at the beginning?

Enhance Your Discussion

Map Maria's Journey

Look up a map and trace the locations Maria travels to throughout the novel, then discuss how her perspective shifts in each place. Consider where she seems most like her old self and where meaningful change begins, and whether that shift is driven by the location itself or by what she is finally ready to confront.

The “Almost There” Conversation (with a film lens)

The feeling of being “almost there” appears in many modern stories about identity and ambition. Think of a film that explores a similar emotional space—such as *Lost in Translation*, *Eat Pray Love*, or *Frances Ha*—and compare Maria's journey to the protagonist's. Does Maria move closer to resolution, or does she remain in that in-between state, and why do you think this theme resonates so strongly today?

What Does Success Mean Now?

At the beginning of the novel, Maria's life reflects a conventional idea of success, but that definition evolves over time. Compare her journey to characters in novels by Carley Fortune or Christina Lauren, considering whether fulfillment in those stories is tied more to romance, place, career, or self-discovery. Do those books offer a clearer or more optimistic resolution, and which portrayal feels more realistic to you?