



THE NUMBER ONE NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

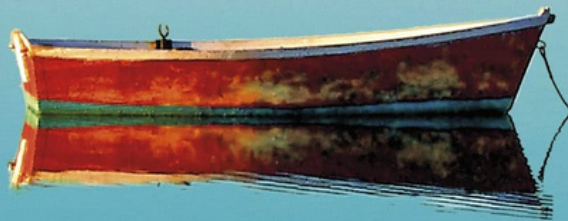


'Earthy, intoxicating, shimmering' *Sunday Times*

# THE PAPER PALACE

'Glorious and gorgeous'  
Marian Keyes

'I was totally immersed'  
Reese Witherspoon



MIRANDA COWLEY HELLER

BOOK CLUB  
QUESTIONS

[www.brunchbookclub.com](http://www.brunchbookclub.com)

# Discussion Questions

## *The Paper Palace*

by Miranda Cowley Heller



1. *The Paper Palace* unfolds over twenty-four hours, and fifty years: one day in Elle's life, and the moments that lead to this day. What do we gain through these multiple timelines? Do you think it was done well?
2. What were your first impressions of Elle? Did your feelings about Elle change over the course of the novel?
3. In the multigenerational story, we see the reverberations of the choices made by grandparents and parents, and the scars they have left on Elle herself. In what way do those scars reveal themselves, and is it possible to break the cycle?
4. The novel is set in Cape Cod, a setting the author describes with vivid intimacy. How has this place grounded and shaped the lives of the Bishops?
5. This is a book filled with complex characters and we see flaws in each as we move through the story. Are there any characters you feel are poorly characterised or treated unfairly by other characters and/or the author's representation?
6. In *The Paper Palace*, desire and duty are put to the test when Elle has to choose between the life she always believed she was meant to have, and the life she has with Peter. Compare and contrast Elle's relationship with both. What does she get from each?
7. Do you think Wallace would have reacted differently if she knew that Conrad was Elle's abuser, rather than assuming it was Leo?
8. This book is about choices, forks in the road 'right before everything changes; the randomness of the things that lead us to turn left, or right, or simply sit down on a dusty road and never move forward again.' How different do you think a character's life would have been if they had chosen differently? Are there any characters that you feel are refusing to move forward?
9. What do you think of Anna's character? How was she developed over the course of the book? She is absent for a lot of the book, is absence felt?
10. How did you interpret the ending? For you, was the major plot of the novel about Elle choosing between two men, or choosing different versions of herself?

