A L L I A N C E

JOLINA PETERSHEIM

a novel

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. Have you ever given much thought to the dangers of an EMP? How likely do you think it is that something like this might really happen? Is it something you should prepare for, and if so, how might you prepare? How do you balance being prepared with being controlled by fear?
- 2. How do Leora's beliefs change throughout the story? Was this progression portrayed realistically? Do you think Leora will ever come back around to her pacifist beliefs? Why or why not? Have your own convictions changed from childhood to adulthood? What caused them to change?
- 3. Moses feels anger toward God, believing that God has spared him while letting others around him suffer and die. Has there ever been a time in your life when

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- God's plan felt like a punishment? How would you encourage Moses to move past his anger?
- 4. How does Moses's faith change throughout the book? How do you think he will continue to grow or change spiritually in the next book?
- 5. Describe Leora's feelings toward Anna. Is Leora right to feel guilty about Anna's accident? Have you ever struggled with a similar situation? How did—or might—it affect your outlook and decisions?
- 6. How do Leora's feelings toward her father shift over the course of the story? How do you think Leora should have reacted to her father's return?
- 7. Were you surprised by the identity of the person stealing food from the community? What did you think of the way Leora reacted? Where would you like to see this thread go in the next book?
- 8. When Moses and Jabil go into town in search of a tractor, Moses vacillates on how the community views their plan. Though they do not plan to pillage or harm anyone, they are prepared to steal to better themselves and the community. If placed in the same position, would you be willing to break the law in order to save yourself or your family? Why or why not?

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- 9. In what ways are Moses and Jabil similar? In what ways are they different? If placed in Leora's position, which man would you find it easier to trust with your heart? Why?
- 10. Leora admits, "I yearn to be with Moses, as if he is my North Star in this black hole of madness, but my duty to my family forces me to remain lost." Could the two coexist, or must Leora make a choice? Faced with a choice between love and a responsibility to your family, how would you decide?
- 11. Why does Leora think her grandmother might not be as anxious as everyone else despite the upheaval they're experiencing? How have you seen this illustrated (or contradicted) in people you know? In general, why do you think we are so fearful for our lives and those of the people we love?
- 12. Which characters, if any, would you like to know more about? What would you like to see happen to them as the story concludes in the next book?