



## Discussion Guide

### *Body Heat*

by Susan Fox (a.k.a. Savanna Fox and Susan Lyons)

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These questions are available for download (in PDF format) from my website.

Thanks so much for reading *Body Heat*. I hope you enjoyed it and I'd love to hear from you. I'm happy to provide bookmarks and autographed bookplates. Just send me your name and address. Please visit my website for info on other titles, insights into how each book came about, excerpts, reviews, recipes, a monthly contest, and other fun stuff.

Now, let's talk about *Body Heat*. I suggest you skim through the questions and pick the ones that interest you the most.

1. *Who is Maura?* On the morning of her thirtieth birthday, who is Maura Mahoney? What are her personality characteristics? What does she value? What are her goals and dreams? Why are those things important to her? In what ways have her adoptive parents influenced her?
2. *Who is Jesse?* Who is the man who rides up on his Harley? What forces have shaped his character? What does he value? Does he have goals in life and, if so, what are they?
3. *Friends and family.* What's Maura's situation in terms of family and friends? What's Jesse's? Which one of them would you say has the healthiest situation in terms of relationships with loved ones and others who they care about?
4. *Maura's job.* What does she like about her job as an accountant at Cherry Lane? Why does she want a promotion? How do her career goals change over the course of the book, and why? In your own life, what are your career goals and how have they been shaped by your past and by others in your life?
5. *Jesse's job.* What does he like about his job on the construction crew? How do his career goals change over the course of the book, and why? Do you think he'll succeed with his new goals?
6. *Consuela.* What do you think of Consuela? Can you relate to her pattern of falling for the wrong men? Do you think she's on the right course now, or will she repeat past mistakes?
7. *Jesse and Consuela.* Describe their relationship. How has it evolved and why does it work for each of them? Do you think it's rare, or fairly common, for an attractive heterosexual man and woman of the same age to be "just friends"?
8. *Jesse's crime.* Maura is appalled by the idea of using violence to solve a problem. Jesse did what he believed he had to do in order to protect his best friend and her son. What do you think about Consuela's situation with her ex, Gord Pollan? If you'd been her, or Jesse, what course of action would you have taken? Do you think the lawyers and the judge reached the right resolution, in making Jesse do community service rather than send him to jail?

(please turn over)

9. *First impressions.* Both Maura and Jesse form first impressions of each other when they meet. Each is more than a little prejudiced. What are those initial impressions? Where do they come from, and how realistic are they? How do Maura's and Jesse's opinions of each other change over time, and why?
10. *Character arc.* Impressions change, but typically in a romance novel, the characters themselves also change. Usually, they become better, stronger, more "self-actualized" people for having met each other. Do you see that happening with Jesse and Maura?
11. *The attraction.* When Maura and Jesse first lay eyes on each other, each of them is physically attracted. Why? How does the physical attraction develop, and grow into a more meaningful attraction as they each find things to like and respect in each other?
12. *In their wildest dreams.* Fantasies and dreams play a large role in this book. Have you ever had that happen, where you meet someone who you're wildly attracted to, but there's a reason you can't act on, or don't want to act on, that attraction, and you find yourself fantasizing wildly about them? Do you think Maura or Jesse should have acted on their fantasies more quickly than they did? What would have happened if one of them had? Does the way their relationship develops ring true for you?
13. *Conflict.* In a romance, the reader knows the heroine and hero will end up together. But at the start of the book, the heroine and hero sure don't know that. They usually think it's pretty much impossible. What is it that keeps Maura and Jesse from getting serious about each other right away? Over the course of the book, what brings them together and what keeps them apart?
14. *Play by the rules.* In the beginning, Maura's a strong believer in following the rules. Jesse doesn't have much respect for rules. Discuss this, and how those views change.
15. *Compromise.* A valuable lesson for any couple is how to compromise. Discuss this in the context of Maura's and Jesse's relationship.
16. *Dyslexia.* Did you guess that Jesse was dyslexic? Have you known an adult with a learning disability who has kept that secret and functions well in the world? Do you think Jesse's foster parents or his teachers should have picked up on his problem when he was a child? Do you think Maura and Jesse handle the discovery realistically and sympathetically?
17. *Cherry Lane.* A seniors residential facility is an unusual setting for a romance novel. What role does the setting play in the story? What role do the seniors play?
18. *The other man.* What part does Maura's date, Edward, play in the story?
19. *The one-time friend.* What role does Maura's high-school friend, Sally, play in the story?
20. *Trust.* Trust is a key factor in a relationship. How does trust develop and how is it demonstrated in Maura and Jesse's relationship?
21. *Your favorite scene.* What was your favorite part of this book, or favorite scene? What made it special for you?
22. *A happy ending?* Do you think Maura and Jesse will have a "happy ever after" life together?

I'd love to hear your thoughts on some of these questions and issues! Email me at [susan@susanlyons.ca](mailto:susan@susanlyons.ca). And don't forget to drop by my website: [www.susanlyons.ca](http://www.susanlyons.ca). I'm also on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/SusanLyonsFox](http://www.facebook.com/SusanLyonsFox).