

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR

WE CAST A SHADOW

1. The narrator of *We Cast a Shadow* is trying to protect his son Nigel at all costs. Where does protection end and harm begin? How does this ultimately affect Nigel's relationship with his father?
2. Discuss Dr. Nzinga's promise: "You can be beautiful, even more beautiful than before." Do you see this messaging in society? How are these messages similar to or different from the promises Dr. Nzinga makes?
3. How does the narrator's relationship with his wife, Penny, shift as the measures he takes to protect his son become more extreme?
4. How do the narrator's experiences with racism affect his feelings about Nigel's birthmark?
5. Why do you think Ruffin chose to keep the narrator unnamed?
6. The narrator muses, "I sometimes questioned the plausibility of two people so deeply in love ending up as mortal enemies. Maybe love was just the larval stage of hate, the comely caterpillar in advance of the hideous butterfly." Do you agree with this concept?
7. *We Cast a Shadow* was set in near-future America when it originally published in 2019. Do you see this fictional world reflected in life today? If so, what are some examples?
8. Discuss Nigel's interaction with his father at the end of the novel. What are your thoughts on where they both end up?

