

# LILIANA'S INVINCIBLE SUMMER

## CRISTINA RIVERA GARZA

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. First, a show of hands: Who among you was already in the know about the definition and/or prevalence of femicide before reading *Liliana's Invincible Summer*? How, if at all, did this book affect your understanding of this troubling issue?
2. Talk about how Cristina Rivera Garza brought her dearly departed sister to life in these pages. What storytelling techniques did Cristina use to bring us closer to Liliana? You may wish to compare/contrast Cristina's narrative with *La Prensa's* journalistic account as well.
3. Cristina chose to let Liliana "speak for herself here in these pages . . . as the author of her own life." What was it like to read Liliana in first-person? How did Liliana's voice "speak" to you in her journal entries, letters, and other printed matter—did it deepen your sense of identification with her? What were the most surprising, compelling, or heartbreaking, things you learned about Liliana in her own words?
4. *Liliana's Invincible Summer* also includes the voices of Liliana's family and friends, neighbors and classmates, among others. How did these outside characters' recollections about her shape your ideas about who Liliana "really" was? What about Ángel?
5. Foreshadowing is a literary device in which the author offers hints about the action yet to come. Talk about Ángel's early appearance in the narrative—and what he portends.
6. *What do we want? Justice. When do we want it? Now.* Such chants, Cristina writes, "vary little around the world, rumbling from mouth to mouth, from fist to fist, against a common sky." How, in your opinion, have women come so far only to end up (in 2023, with the publication of this book) having to fight for independence—even over their own bodies—all over again?
7. How can one woman's story, such as Liliana's, speak for all women—victims of femicide among them? Do you believe that books, in general, have the power to change the world? Which is mightier: the pen or the sword?
8. "Grief is a double-edged sword," writes Cristina, "for those who have lost loved ones, loved women, due to acts of intimate partner terrorism." *Liliana's Invincible Summer* is the culmination of thirty years of Cristina's fight for justice. How did she channel her grief into action? Do you feel inspired to take action after having read this book? And if so, how?
9. Let's say you had the chance to invite Cristina to your book club. What kind of questions would you ask her about her sister or herself?
10. Cristina uncovers a quote scrawled into one of Liliana's notebooks: a phrase with which she used to console a heartbroken friend: *In the worst of winter I finally learned that there was, within me, an invincible summer.* Talk about the title of this book—why it's significant, and why the author might have chosen it.

