



READING GROUP GUIDE

Reading Group Discussion Guide for

Love Beyond Reasonable Doubt

by Swati Hegde

This reading group guide for **Love Beyond Reasonable Doubt** includes an introduction, discussion questions, ideas for enhancing your book club, and a Q&A with author Swati Hegde. The suggested questions are intended to help your reading group find new and interesting angles and topics for your discussion. We hope that these ideas will enrich your conversation and increase your enjoyment of the book.

Introduction

Two lawyers find themselves working in at the same office firm after a steamy vacation fling on the beaches of Goa, from the author of *Can't Help Faking in Love* and *Match Me if You Can*, a slow-burn, a second-chance desi romance for fans of Nisha Sharma and Abby Jimenez.

Naina Shetty is a proud workaholic, and she is gunning for a promotion at her law firm. No distractions will get in her way this time, not even the bad breakup that happened over a year ago. She brushed off her pain with a long vacation and a no-strings-attached fling with a handsome stranger, but now Naina is back to business.

Unlucky-in-love Tejas Rajput hasn't stopped thinking about the brown-eyed beauty he met on the beaches of Goa two summers ago. He'd been looking for a rebound to get over his ex, which is why he'd agreed to keep things strictly casual, use fake last names, and respond to all personal questions with "wrong answers only." But he didn't think he'd fall for her, hard, only for her to get on a plane and leave.

When they cross paths again—this time working at the same office—Naina is adamant that her no-relationships policy won't change, especially not for Tejas, whose disarming smile and easygoing charm could spell trouble. Her career will always come first.

But as they team up for a case that could make or break their firm's reputation, they discover that there's something more than just sparks between them—and it might turn out to be true love.



Questions for Discussion

1. What brings Naina and Tejas to Goa in 2025? What is similar about both of their situations? What is different? How does what they are both going through bring them together?
2. Why does Naina call Tejas “Prince Charming?” How does the meaning of this nickname change throughout their time in Goa, then in Bangalore, and beyond?
3. How do Naina’s relationships with her father and her mother, respectively, impact her romantic relationships?
4. How does the sexism and company culture at AKC impact Naina, her day-to-day in the office, and her career aspirations? How is sexism portrayed specifically in Preethi’s case for Naina, and also for Preethi?
5. How does Naina prioritize her career over other things in her life, including relationships, friendships, and family? Why does she do this? If you were in her position with her past, would you also prioritize your career over your relationships? Why or why not?
6. In *Love Beyond Reasonable Doubt*, it says: “Opposites made the best of friends sometimes.” How are Naina and Anil opposites? What makes them the best of friends? Do you agree that polar opposites make the best friends, and have you experienced it yourself?
7. Why does Naina stop herself from pursuing a relationship or following her heart after her breakup with Santhosh? What is she afraid of? If you were to give Naina advice, what would you say?
8. How does the celebrity murder case bring Naina and Tejas together? How does it push them apart?
9. At one point in the book, Tejas describes meeting Naina as fate. Do you believe Naina and Tejas meeting was fate? Why or why not? Do you believe in fate? Why or why not?
10. When does Naina realize she is in love with Tejas, and vice versa? What does this say about each of their personalities and what they’ve both been through?



A Conversation with the Author

Q: What inspired you to write *Love Beyond Reasonable Doubt*? What similarities or differences do you share or not share with Naina and Tejas?

A: I've wanted to set one of my books in Goa since 2022, when I went there on a trip and fell in love with how romanticized life feels in the midst of sunshiney skies and sandy beaches. I bounced between different ideas (a summer wedding romance? A romance between a tourist and a local Goan restaurant owner?) until settling on the summer fling plot that we see in *Love Beyond Reasonable Doubt*. I've also always wanted to write a workplace romance with a strong-willed, workaholic FMC, which is how I came up with the dual timeline concept and Naina's character for the book. Speaking of which: Naina and I are both fiercely stubborn, ambitious to a fault, and madly in love with our field of work. However, I'm definitely more like Tejas than Naina. I wear my heart on my sleeve, it's never taken me longer than a month to fall in love, and I'm a cat person too! The best way to put it is that I work like Naina and I love like Tejas.

Q: You have written primarily in the adult romance genre, including *Love Beyond Reasonable Doubt*, *Match Me If You Can*, and *Can't Help Faking in Love*. You recently came out with your first Young Adult romance novel, *As Long as You Loathe Me*. What were the biggest differences in writing for a young adult audience vs an adult romance audience?

A: So, unlike most teens, I actually never dated in high school. I didn't go to parties or get drunk. I didn't even have my first kiss until my senior year of college! As much as I love writing adult romance featuring characters with different occupations and backstories from different walks of life, writing YA romance has been so cathartic. It's like I'm reliving my high school life and finding closure for the moments when I was bullied, rejected by a crush, or unsure about where I would end up in life. The process of writing is always fulfilling for me, regardless of genre or age category, but writing adult romance feels like coming home, and writing young adult romance feels like daydreaming. And I never want to stop writing either of them.

Q: What do you love about writing romance? How do you feel about HEAs?

A: I firmly believe romance novels can change the world. They teach people (but especially women) to set higher standards in relationships, to not settle for the bare minimum, to realize that everyone is deserving of healthy, joyful love regardless of gender, race, career, identity, or even personality (hence why I love writing 'unlikeable' female main characters). The only thing I love more than actually being in love is writing about being in love, and if I can help show healthy relationships that inspire people to love better and love harder, my job as an author is done.

I'm all for happily-ever-afters! I'm the kind of anxious person who takes a break from a TV show or a book if something unexpectedly shocking happens, so the tropey, familiar nature of the romance genre and the guaranteed HEAs calm my nerves. I think we need more hope and promised happiness in fiction, especially when the world is a dumpster fire of uncertainty, negativity, and tragedy (like it is right now, sigh).

Q: What do you want your readers to get out of reading *Love Beyond Reasonable Doubt*?

A: *Love Beyond Reasonable Doubt* is my most ambitious project yet, combining tropes I've never written before like second-chance romance, no-strings-attached romance, and workplace romance. And it's my first open-door romance! AND it involves a murder mystery subplot!!! I hope readers will appreciate the work I put into wrapping it all together and making it fit like puzzle pieces. But none of that matters as much as the underlying lessons my characters learn throughout the book. You can have the career of your dreams *and* the romantic love you deserve. You can and should be brave and tell people you love them regardless of the risks, because even if you get rejected in the process, you listened to your heart, and that counts for a lot. And finally, that time will heal most wounds, but for everything else...there's karaoke.

Q: Like Naina, you also love singing karaoke. What are your go-to karaoke songs, and why?

A: A great segue to this question! I'm a Swiftie through and through, but besides her popular songs "Shake It Off" and "Enchanted," I also love singing "Tik Tok" by Ke\$ha because it gets the millennial crowd going. Unlike Naina, though, I am decidedly not a good singer (although my boyfriend and my mom would disagree).

Enhance Your Book Club

1. In *Love Beyond Reasonable Doubt*, Naina creates an Anti-Honeymoon Checklist-aka, a bucket list for her trip to Goa that was supposed to be her honeymoon. Put yourself in Naina's shoes, and create your own Anti-Honeymoon Checklist of 10 activities you would do to put yourself in a better mindset after going through something tough. Discuss and compare the activities you picked in your book club, and talk about which ones you might be more inclined to do, and which ones you'd leave off your own list!
2. *Legally Blonde* (2001) is a rom-com about Elle Woods, an aspiring lawyer who stays true to herself and defies stereotypes by proving that femininity and intelligence are not mutually exclusive, similar to Naina in her career as a lawyer at AKC. As a follow-up to *Love Beyond Reasonable Doubt*, watch *Legally Blonde* and compare and contrast the themes and takeaways from each.
3. Go to a karaoke bar or club and sing your heart out, just like Naina and Tejas! You might even want to sing any of the songs below that they both sang in the book.
 - a. "We Don't Talk Anymore" by Charlie Puth and Selena Gomez
 - b. "Boulevard of Broken Dreams" by Green Day
 - c. "good 4 u" by Olivia Rodrigo
 - d. "Don't Go Breaking My Heart" by Elton John and Kiki Dee

