

The Good Stranger

By Dete Meserve



SPOILER ALERTS. Book Club Questions contain spoilers for the mystery.
Read after you've read the novel.

1. When Kate discovers the balloons, flowers, and gift cards all around Manhattan, colleagues think it's a scam, a marketing gimmick, etc. Kate thinks people are afraid of seeming naïve if they lean toward the positive. What do you think of Kate's belief?
2. When people in New York start fighting over the gift cards left all around the city, news media grabs hold of the story and makes it seem as though there is an "epidemic of bad people everywhere." How does the media's portrayal of the bad things people do affect how you perceive others?
3. When Kate confronts Raymond about his shouting in the hallway, she wonders if "beneath his shark persona, a goldfish might be underneath." Do you think it's true that "many people are reeling in pain, disappointment, and loss and hiding that beneath tough exteriors?"
4. When someone breaks into and trashes Kate's apartment, the event tests her belief that people are inherently good. Have you ever experienced a negative event that made you more suspicious and less trusting of others?
5. After Kate hears Jordan's concern for Marie, she lets him go and doesn't call the police, even though he had been stalking her and sending her threatening notes. Do you think she was right to have compassion for him here?
6. All of the Secret Four talk about a leap they took with Marie. Marie defines the leap as "something you do whether knowing the outcome will be bad or good." Have you ever taken a leap in your life? What

happened? Were you surprised by the outcome?

7. When Marie's flight was canceled and she looked at the stranded passengers, she thought "everyone here has it better than me," but learns she's wrong about that. Have you ever assumed someone is better off than you, only to realize they're actually struggling?
8. Marie asks the others to "take a leap into a larger life." What do you think she means by "a larger life"?
9. Marie doesn't want anyone to know who's been behind all the good things happening around the city. She tells Kate, "Let them think it could be anyone. It could be the stranger they pass on their way to work. Or the woman behind the counter at their favorite store. Or the taxi driver who's driving them home." Why do you think Marie gives these examples instead of letting people know she and others are behind it?
10. Why do you think Kate calls The Secret Four "the richest people in the world?"