



## Before I Let Go

By Darren Coleman  
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### Introduction

We hope that you enjoyed **Darren Coleman's** debut novel, **Before I Let Go**. The following questions are intended to facilitate your group's discussion of this engaging and provocative book.

### Questions for Discussion

1. Nate and Brendan have conflicting philosophies on their relationships with women. Nate views women purely as a means for physical satisfaction, while Brendan is more focused on emotional attachments. How do the attitudes of Cory's two best friends affect his personal dealings with the women in his own life? Are his friends positive influences on him? What lessons do they teach him about life and love?
2. As the title suggests, many of the characters in the book are holding onto something of which they cannot let go. What are these hang-ups for Cory, Nate and Brendan? Are there other characters who have something that they can't seem to let go? What are some reasons people hold onto things that have negative consequences on their lives?
3. In the first chapter, Cory describes the events and details of his original break-up with Shelly. In the last chapter, it is several years later and he has just married her. Does this represent a regression to his past, or has Cory changed? How have his experiences with other women brought him back to Shelly? Is his commitment to her based solely on a sense of responsibility to his child, or is there something more to it?
4. Throughout the novel, characters in serious relationships rationalize sleeping with other people. Nate maintains relationships with Sahleen and India at the same time, Cory cheats on Nina with Darlene when he goes to Atlanta, and even Brendan starts sleeping with Trina again while he is still seeing Laney. How does each character rationalize his indiscretions? Are any of them justified in their exploits? Are there any situations when it is okay to cheat?
5. Cory's relationship with Paula is a very formative element in his love life. In many ways, she is his introduction to adult relationships. How does Paula's decision to work things out with her husband affect Cory's decision to marry Shelly? What does she teach him about love and commitment?
6. Upon returning to his hotel room, Nate discovers Sahleen in bed with Shawn Simmons. Though upset, he is easily convinced to join in by his model girlfriend and the R&B diva. The incident ends up destroying Nate's relationship with Sahleen. Would Cory have reacted similarly under the same circumstances? How about Brendan? Are all men slaves to their urges and impulses?
7. Cory's father died when he was a child and his sister Brenda is a single mother of two. He has had a lot of exposure to the hardships women endure in raising children by themselves. If not for these factors, would Cory have ended up marrying Shelly? Does Nate's absent mother have anything to do with the way he treats women? How much does a man's relationship with his mother and other women in his family affect his attitudes toward women?
8. The ultimate consequence of Nate's player lifestyle is the suicide of his fall back girlfriend, Kim. Brendan's forgiving nature leads to reconciliation with the woman who has betrayed him most severely. Who is worse off at the end of the book? Do Brendan and Nate have the same outlook on women and relationships as they did at the beginning of the book? Can experience transform long held beliefs? Do people ever truly change?

### About the author

Darren Coleman graduated from Bowie State University, where he majored in elementary education and minored in communications. For the past several years, he has worked as a second-grade teacher and a freelance writer for his local newspapers. Coleman is the founder of NVision Publishing. He writes full-time and lives in Prince George's County, Maryland.