



across a star-swept sea

BY DIANA PETERFREUND

ABOUT THE BOOK

Centuries after wars nearly destroyed civilization, the two islands of New Pacifica stand alone, a paradise where even the Reduction—the devastating brain disorder that sparked the wars—is a distant memory. Yet on the isle of Galatea, an uprising against the aristocracy has turned deadly, and the only hope is rescue by a mysterious spy known as the Wild Poppy. No one suspects that the Wild Poppy is actually famously frivolous teenage aristocrat Persis Blake, or that her well-publicized new romance with handsome Galatean medic Justen Helo is her most dangerous mission ever. Meanwhile, Justen harbors secrets of his own—secrets that could plunge New Pacifica into another dark age.

Inspired by *The Scarlet Pimpernel*, *Across a Star-Swept Sea* is a thrilling adventure in which nothing is as it seems and two teens from different worlds must fight for a future only *they* dare to imagine.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Persis believes that “Humans had been attempting to perfect themselves since the dawn of time” (p. 8). Do you agree with this statement? How is it relevant to today’s world?
2. How do the alternating perspectives of multiple characters affect the story? What does it add to the narrative that you wouldn’t get from having only one narrator?
3. Persis discusses “the carefully cultivated ‘Persis Flake’ narrative” and how Justen Helo will fit into that story (p. 74). How does Persis construct this frivolous personality? Why is it important that everyone believe she has changed? How does she not lose her sense of self when she is constructing separate identities?
4. Do you think Persis ever enjoys playing the “Persis Flake” character? What would be appealing about putting on a different personality? What would be annoying about it?
5. Justen is caught off guard by the feeling that he must defer to the aristos. He believed he could resist these social constructs but instead notes that the instinct must run deep. How do such notions become ingrained in us? Why is it so hard to resist such notions, even when we don’t agree with them?
6. Why do Persis and Isla eventually trust Remy? What does this say about each girl’s character? Have you ever put your faith in someone despite evidence that you shouldn’t trust him or her? Why did you trust that person?
7. At the refugee center, Persis ponders the possibility that Galateans don’t know the full effects of the punishments on regs. Does that excuse their behavior? What does it say about Persis’s personality that she is willing to give them the benefit of the doubt?
8. Lord Lacan says, “sometimes it’s only the young ones who are crazy enough to change the world” (p. 166). Do you agree with him? Why or why not?
9. Compare the way the two cultures responded to the cure. How does this reflect the distinct lifestyles of each community?
10. How does the use of genetic engineering contrast with the lush natural landscapes and focus on renewable energy? If genetemps and genetically engineered animals were available to you, would you use them? What about this book resonates with current issues surrounding biological engineering and renewable energy?
11. Why is it significant that visitors arrive in Albion? Beyond the knowledge of other survivors, and other lands, what do the visitors teach Persis, Justen, and the others?
12. Persis’s parents respect her decision not to get genetic testing to see if she will Darken. Why does she prefer not to know what the future holds? What would you choose?
13. Why does Persis miss the Wild Poppy? What about her secret identity gave her freedom? How can she use these experiences in the future?

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