



# BOOK CLUB QUESTIONS FOR

## ANXIOUS PEOPLE BY FREDRIK BACKMAN

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**NAME:**

**DATE:**

**MY RATING:** ☆☆☆☆☆

One of the themes of *Anxious People* was that we all, to some extent, only pretend that "we have it all together". Do you think that is true and how can you relate to this idea?

None of the characters of *Anxious People* are "normal" in the strict meaning of the word. They all have their quirks, secrets, anxieties. Do you think Fredrik Backman accentuated these traits for the benefit of the story? Whose story did you engage with the most? And who do you think was most impacted or changed by the events of the book?

There is a running theme of "found family" in the *Anxious People* - that if you are alone by birth or circumstances, you can still find your own. What do you think this theme brought to the story? What did it make you feel when you realized a bunch of the most mismatched people were about to defend a stranger as their own?

How long did it take you to see through the twists to understand what really happened? Did you get baited on who the robber was, and did you first misunderstand the situation of who owns which apartment? What do you think this deliberate confusion brought to the story?

What did you think of the bank robber's family situation? What would you have done differently in their shoes?

There are quite a few growth stories in *Anxious People*, but Zara's particularly shines through. Zara starts out as a callous character, convinced she is better than everyone. We are almost pushed to dislike her at first. But as the story progresses, we find out WHY Zara is the way she is, and we also see her growth. Did you feel compassion for Zara's character? Discuss the reasons she was the way she was and what made her change, and even search for change.

The young policeman, Jack, has to make a tough decision - he has to decide which thing is more moral - abiding by the law, or protecting someone in a dire situation. How do you think his past history (the stranger at the bridge) impacted his decision? Do you think the backstory of his mother's and sister's lives impact it too, and how?

There are many instances where the characters lie, but they do it for vastly different reasons (e.g. Estelle lies about her husband parking the car, Anna-Lena lies about the rabbit, Jack and Jim lie about what happened at the hostage situation, Zara lies about why she is there, etc.) Discuss the different instances and reasons people lied, and why do you think it was the way it was in the story?

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