

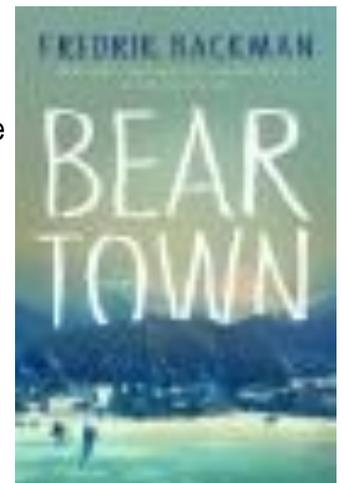


Beartown: A Novel

Frederik Backman

Discussion Questions

1. What does hockey mean to the people of Beartown? What does winning the semifinal mean for the town's future?
2. The town and the parents of the Beartown junior hockey team place great expectations on the shoulders of seventeen-year-old boys. How does this pressure affect the boys? Have the club's leaders (David, Sune, Peter, and the others) prepared the boys to deal with this pressure? Have the boys' parents?
3. How do issues related to social class affect the people of Beartown and the hockey club? Do those who live in the Hollow have a different world view from those who live in the Heights? Does hockey cut through class distinctions or reinforce them?
4. How do Peter and Kira complement each other in their relationship? How does he make up for her weaknesses, and vice versa? Do you think they have a solid marriage? A happy one?
5. Peter loves hockey because it demands his all, his everything. What does hockey demand from each of the characters in the book? What does it take from them?
6. There are many different parents and styles of parenting portrayed in the book. Which parents do you think are the most successful at preparing their children for the real world? Why?
7. There are many different parents and styles of parenting portrayed in the book. Which parents do you think are the most successful at preparing their children for the real world? Why?
8. Consider this sentiment echoed throughout the book: "What is a community? It is the sum total of our choices." (p. 312) By this definition, how do the townspeople of Beartown ultimately measure up? What kind of community have they built?





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9. Several characters must find the courage to go against the grain of the tight-knit Beartown community. What is at stake for each character who does so, and is it worth it for them in the end?
10. Discuss the difference between male and female roles in the small village of Beartown. What is expected of the girls and women vs. the boys and men? Which characters break these expectations, and what are the consequences of doing so?
11. How does Maya's final act shape her future? How does it shape Kevin's? Do you think a form of justice is achieved? Why or why not?
12. At the end of the novel, do you think the tradition of the Beartown Hockey Club continues? Has its fundamental character changed? How do you think it will change going forward?

About the Author

Fredrik Backman is the #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of *A Man Called Ove* (soon to be a major motion picture starring Tom Hanks), *My Grandmother Asked Me to Tell You She's Sorry*, *Britt-Marie Was Here*, *Beartown*, *Us Against You*, as well as two novellas, *And Every Morning the Way Home Gets Longer and Longer* and *The Deal of a Lifetime*. His books are published in more than forty countries. He lives in Stockholm, Sweden, with his wife and two children.

This book is available for download as an eBook. For more information, please visit lpl.overdrive.com or call 519-661-4600.