

Discussion Guide: *How to Live on the Edge*

1. Why has Cayenne created Lorelei, and how does her relationship with Lorelei change over the course of the novel?
2. How are Cayenne and Saffron different? In what ways are they similar?
3. Cayenne initially wonders if losing her breasts and/or her ovaries would make her less of a woman. However, she comes to realize that “there are so many ways to be a woman...We come in a million flavors.” What are some examples of the variety of womanhood, as shown or alluded to in the novel?
4. How does the car accident change Cayenne’s perspective on her approach to risk?
5. If you were Cayenne, would you want to know whether you had the BRCA gene mutation? Why or why not?
6. Saffron says she believes that “everyone should be in charge of their own bodies.” But Cayenne feels that when it comes to her, Saffron doesn’t put this belief into practice. Why do you think that is?
7. How does Cayenne’s perception of her breasts change over the course of the novel? How might it continue to evolve?
8. Why does Cayenne decide to cut off contact with Axel for good?
9. What do you think of Cayenne’s mom’s advice to her daughters in the videos she’s left behind? Is there anything you disagree with? Anything you consider especially helpful?
10. How does the final scene of the story illustrate what has changed for Cayenne in her relationships and her approach to life? How does it show what has remained the same about her?