



W. BRUCE CAMERON

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1. Ello is a young girl struggling through the early teenage years and navigating her emotions. If you could sit down with Ello and have a conversation, what would you choose to say to her? What advice would you give her to remind her she's not alone?
2. Seeing death through a dog's eyes gives us a perspective of innocence. When Winstead recounts the death of Barbara he, sadly, does not fully grasp what happened to her. Where is this type of innocent confusion seen elsewhere in the book? In what specific scenarios do the human characters' emotions parallel Winstead's in this instance?
3. Loneliness and inefficient communication are common themes throughout the book. Why does the Goss family have such a hard time communicating with one another? What is the root of their strained relationships?
4. A few of the characters each face depression in different ways, yet they don't address their feelings with one another. What are their coping mechanisms? Are these coping mechanisms successful or destructive?
5. There are underlying tensions between each of the family members: Juliana and Hunter, Ello and her parents, Sander and Hunter, and even Juliana and the twins. How do the divides between each of them get smaller and smaller over time?
6. Hunter's big make-it-or-break-it project at work involves dismantling the office and putting it back together to be a new and improved version that will allow the employees to effectively collaborate with one another. Do you think this reconstruction is a metaphor for what's going on within his family? In what way? What are the key components to the family being pulled back together?
7. When Juliana gets sick, the rest of the family is spurred into stepping up and coming together. Do you think their long-standing isolation from each other prevents them from being an effective support system for one another, or does this unexpected pressure force them to get past their communication barriers in a way where they actually bond? How so?
8. "Sometimes I think the choices we make early on can have an effect on how things turn out later," a poignant quote by Claire, gives us pause to think about how decisions dictate outcomes. What decisions have the Goss family made in the book? What do you think they could have done differently, and why?
9. At the heart of the novel is the importance of family and maintaining good communication with one another. How does their perspective on family change throughout the book, and what is the significance of this story taking place during the holiday season?
10. The title, *A Dog's Perfect Christmas*, is a perfect fit for Ruby and Winstead's experience living in the Goss home. What does a perfect holiday look like to you?