Of Women and Salt
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. The novel begins with this sentence: "Jeanette, tell me that you want to live." How did this intimate direct address from mother to daughter set the tone for some of the themes that we encounter in the following pages?

2. Maria Isabel loses two of the most important people in her life and gives birth to her daughter, Cecilia. In what way does the concept of loss continue to impact/inform the decisions these women make?

3. The story exposes the flaws and inequities in the immigration system. How did Gloria's deportation become a catalyst for this story?

4. Compare and contrast the mother-daughter relationships in this novel. What are some of the differences? And what are the similarities?

5. The first edition copy of *Les Miserables* appears in multiple scenes; the first time we see it is in Cuba in 1866 and the last time we see the book is in present-day Miami. What do you think the author is trying to say about the way stories transcend generations?

6. Which chapter surprised you the most? And why?

7. How did you feel about jumping through time and place in this novel? Discuss the importance of narratives that defies chronological/sequential order.

8. What is the significance of the recurring phrase, "We are force"?

9. Think about the sections where the character is speaking from

their first-person point of view. Why do you think the author allows certain characters--like Gloria and Maydelis--to tell us their stories in their own voices, instead of narrating from a distant third-person narrator?

10. What did you think of the novel's ending? Could things have turned out differently for Jeanette? How?