

LOVE & JUSTICE

A Journey of Empowerment, Activism, and Embracing Black Beauty

By Laetitia Ky

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Laetitia speaks about the African inferiority complex at the beginning of her book. How do you think her art can help African societies move away from centering Western culture and reclaim their heritage?
2. Systemic inequality in Ivory Coast and worldwide is evident, with some examples experienced by young Laetitia. What are some examples of white privilege you have seen or experienced?
3. In addition to her strong bond with her mother, what are some other vital factors/events/experiences you think helped Laetitia overcome harmful beauty standards and gain the strong confidence and self-love she now possesses?
4. Laetitia experiences Ivorian society as intensely misogynistic, with Ivorians expressing many outdated views on life. Why do you think her opinions differ so much from those of other Ivorian women she describes?
5. The book covers many shocking examples of how dangerous abortion is for Ivorian women, due to its illegality. What shocked you the most? Why does Laetitia understand the availability of abortion as so crucial?
6. In the third chapter, where Laetitia explores the topic of self-love and beauty affirmations, she states that "our bodies are a matrix of humanity." Discuss what she means by this quote.
7. Throughout her adolescence, Laetitia sought validation for the way she looked from the people around her. Though her feelings of inadequacy were shaped mainly by society's unattainable beauty norms, how do you think her own extended family contributed to her insecurities?
8. Laetitia writes, "For me, the goal of feminism is to free women and give them more choices." After reading this book, how would you define feminism and its goals?
9. What are your feelings about women's aging, especially its effects on beauty?
10. What do you think Laetitia's incident during college (page 117) reveals about rape culture – especially when she states, "I have to protect myself, even if that means putting my freedoms aside"?
11. What are some of the key practices and beliefs the writer describes that reinforce the taboos associated with women? How does she redefine them?
12. Which of Laetitia's list of recommended "tools" to help our journeys to higher confidence do you think could make a difference in your own everyday life?
13. How did the topics in this book and the writer's personal experiences relate to your own experiences? Did they make you feel empowered?