



“The feminist update
to *Rosemary's Baby*
we all needed.”

—ANDREA BARTZ

DELICATE CONDITION

*Her body is
no longer her own...*

DANIELLE VALENTINE

READING GROUP GUIDE

1. Anna had been considering taking a break from work to focus on her health and IVF treatments when her career suddenly took off in a new way. Have you ever been in a position where one part of your life demanded more of you just as you had begun to shift your attention away? How did you handle juggling the competing priorities? What would you have done in Anna's situation?
2. Many child-bearing people struggle with the question of fertility and undergo difficult and expensive IVF treatments in order to conceive. Do you or anyone you know have a similar story? If so, do you feel you were treated any differently than friends or family who did not experience the same kind of struggle?
3. *Delicate Condition* is threaded through with interstitials from different points in history. What do you think the author's intentions were when including these interstitials? What did they tell you about pregnancy and childbirth through the ages?

4. When Anna's supposed stalker breaks into her Brooklyn brownstone, Anna no longer feels safe in her home. Instead, she flees to the ghost town that is the Hamptons in winter where she and Dex are all but alone. Do you agree with her decision to leave? In her position, would you feel safer in a relatively small space in the city or in a sprawling house with few neighbors around?
5. After her miscarriage, Anna is convinced she can still feel the fetus moving—but at first, nobody (including her doctors) believes her. Have you or anyone you've known been in a situation where your doctor either downplays or disbelieves your symptoms? What happened and how did you resolve the issue? What would you do now if you could go back and change how the interaction went?
6. As her pregnancy progresses, Anna experiences increasingly horrific physical and psychological symptoms—some of which she can't be sure ever truly happened. Which of her symptoms do you believe were real (the cravings, the raw meat, the roadkill, the tooth, the claw, the scarred legs) and which were a result of the spell making her believe something that wasn't truly there? What would you have done if you began experiencing similar symptoms? Would you tell someone, knowing what they might think?
7. Siobhan used the last of her power to help revive Anna's baby—but because Siobhan was immediately taken out of commission and Anna became so difficult to reach, nobody in the coven was able to warn Anna of the potential consequences. Did Siobhan make the right decision to help Anna even though Anna hadn't

been fully informed about what was being done to her? Would you have been able to forgive the coven for putting you through such an intense experience if it meant saving the life of your loved one?

8. Did Dex deserve what happened to him? How did you react when he met his ultimate fate? How do you think Anna felt about him after the initial rage and panic subsided?
9. Ultimately, Anna chooses to forgive the coven for what they unintentionally put her through and allow Siobhan to be reborn as her daughter. In the epilogue, it suggests that Anna is now a full member of the coven and has every intention of being reborn herself—giving her the “time” that always seems to be missing from our lives. What do you think of this decision? In Anna’s position, would you make the same call?