

Marlborough Public Library Adult Book Club

May 14 or 16, 2024

*The Codebreaker's Secret* by Sara Ackerman

Questions from:

<https://www.bookclubbish.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/CodebreakersSecretReaders-Guide-1.pdf>

1. Were you aware of the critical role that women played in codebreaking during WWII? Not only were they codebreakers, but mechanics, radar plotters, pilots ferrying planes, flight medics and so much more. What role do you think you would have played had you been alive (or of working age) back then?
2. Had you heard about Operation Vengeance before reading this novel? What are your thoughts surrounding the decision the United States made about Admiral Yamamoto?
3. How do you think Isabel handled working with all the men in the Dungeon? Have you been in a similar situation where you were the only woman in a group of men, or somehow the odd person out?
4. So many servicemen faced survivors' guilt during the war. What were your thoughts on Matteo Russi and his fateful choice on the night of December 6? Was he in any way to blame?
5. What constitutes a traitor? During the war, if you were of German, Italian or Japanese ancestry, but living in the United States, where would your loyalties lie?
6. Matteo Russi developed a phobia of the water after his plane went down in China. Have you ever encountered anything like that in your own life? How did you deal with it? Do you think men and women handle trauma differently?
7. Men in positions of power have been known to flaunt that power. What are some other examples of men like Senator Fuchs? Anyone you know personally?
8. What were your thoughts on Matteo Russi's reasons for not wanting to get involved? Selfish? Noble? Scared? Something else entirely?
9. Were you hoping that Isabel and Russi would end up together at the end of the novel? Were you surprised by the ending?
10. Are you a fan of dual timeline novels? Why or why not? Did you find yourself more invested in one of the timelines in this story? Which character do you identify more with, Lu or Isabel?
11. Have you ever been to the Mauna Kea Beach Hotel? Or to Hawai'i? Did reading this novel make you want to visit?