Devouring a Book

Book Club Discussion Questions, À la Carte

*Alert: Some questions may include “spoilers.”*

*Aperitif:*

1. Did the cover and back-cover text deliver on the promise they presented (in terms of mood/tone, genre, and plot)?

*Appetizers:*

1. In your opinion, was The Turning Point more plot-based or character-based? Or was it a combination?

2. How do you think this installment compares with The One and Only and The Tether, in terms of the represented genres (Fantasy, Science Fiction, and Horror)? For example, some readers found The One and Only to have more Science Fiction elements than The Tether which dove deeper into Fantasy. How about The Turning Point? Did the ratios of genres work for you in Book #3? Was the blend what you hoped for or expected?

3. How did you react to the introduction of intelligent animals as “talking” characters? Did you find their inclusion to be...interesting, exciting, fresh, awkward, bizarre, too unbelievable?

4. The author sprinkled humor throughout the story to reflect a character’s personality and/or to provide comic relief from the story’s intensity. Did the humor work?

5. Which two characters were your favorites and why?

6. Which character was your least favorite and why?
**Entrées (meatier, book-specific questions):**

1. (Page 8) Emory Bradshaw genetically spliced the genomes of a naked mole rat (immune to cancer) with the White House’s First Lady in order to heal her terminal ovarian cancer. The President believed that “life in any form is more humane than death” and therefore, he accepted the risk of genetic manipulation in an attempt to save his wife’s life. Sadly, the outcome was horrific, although the resulting hybrid was cancer free. If you have/had a loved one with a terminal disease and were offered an opportunity for experimental genetic manipulations, would you and your loved one take the risk? Why or why not?

2. Filtiarn is Lord of the Wolves. Aspiring to become King of the Animals, she led The Turning Point, an animal uprising against humans and vampires intended to shift the balance of power on all three planets. The shift would protect animals from mistreatment by “uprights.” However, when male wolves questioned Filtiarn’s ambition to become king, what did she do to them (Pages 34-35)? And when animals refused to join the war and became defectors, what fate did she bestow on them (Pages 126-131)? Can you think of any non-fiction examples in humankind’s history that mirror this type of warfare or societal hypocrisy?

3. (Page 213-215) Gabby’s parents had always taught her to “forgive people when they’ve admitted their mistakes and changed their behavior.” Gabby has accepted Zagan’s apologies for his wrongdoings and asks her parents to restore his life as an act of forgiveness. Ruby and Clay struggle with Gabby’s request, saying the situation is “complicated.” Do you think Zagan should’ve been forgiven? Have you ever known any morals or adages that sounded great when spoken, but turned out to be difficult to follow when the rhetorical became real? Think of morals/adages like: *When in Rome, do as the Romans do; Don’t judge a book by its cover; The truth sets you free; There’s no time like the present; and People who live in glass houses shouldn’t throw stones.* Any others?

4. (Pages 246-249) Clay is King of the Animals! In *The One and Only* and *The Tether*, Clay played a secondary role, mainly supporting his wife and daughter. How did you respond to his transformation as a leader?

5. (Page 300) After all the challenges Ruby has overcome with her family and friends, she debunks her title as *The One and Only*. She realizes all her friends, each with his/her own talents, became heroes right alongside her. She says: “Everyone can rise as a hero if they choose to become the best they can be. Everyone plays a role; everyone has gifts, even if they aren’t of the immortal variety.” Is she making a point with which you agree? How are you a hero?
6. (Page 300) In *The Turning Point*, the government adopts an Animal Bill of Rights. If you were going to be a co-author of this legislation (crafted to remedy societal injustices toward animals by adopting protective amendments), what might you include? Some potential areas to address: acts of neglect and abuse, using animals for scientific research, genetic engineering, livestock treatment, inhumane animal harvesting, oversight and enforcement. What boundaries, if any, might you seek? Or do you think, in general, animals are treated appropriately?

*Desserts:*

1. How did you feel about the ending? What did you like, or not like? And do you wish anything had happened differently?
2. Did the book cause you to change or consider something in a different light?

Thank you for taking the time to discuss THE TURNING POINT! Please consider leaving a star rating (with or without a brief written review) on:

- **Amazon.com** (search: *The Turning Point* by Julia Ash)
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Reviews can be posted anonymously from the book’s description page. Reviews help authors more than you may realize and are tremendously important!

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