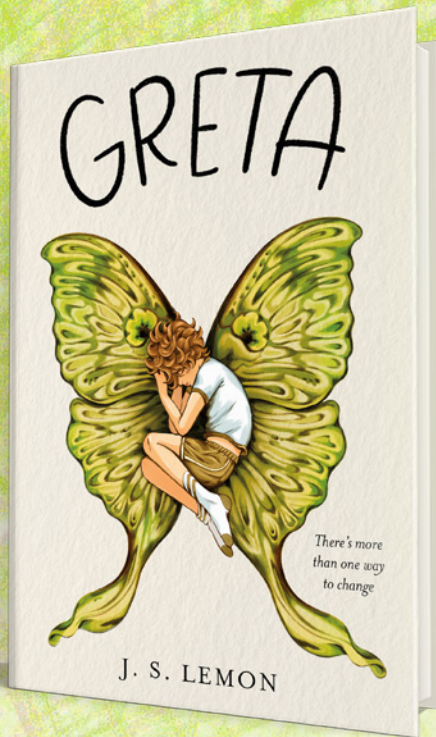


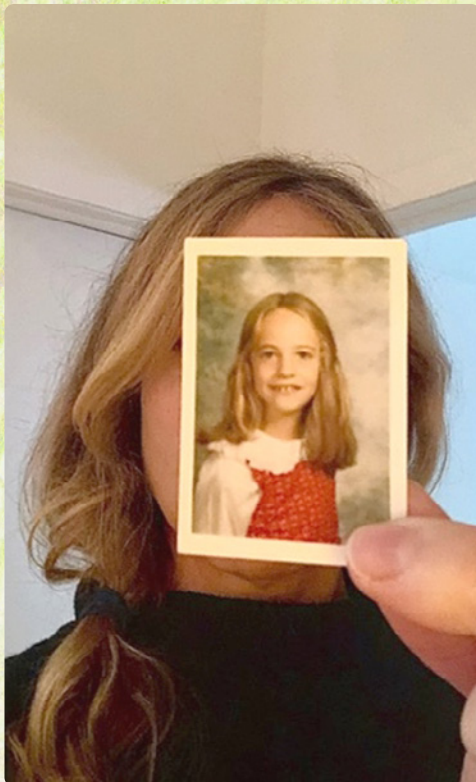
# GRETA

## DISCUSSION GUIDE



### ABOUT THE BOOK

*Greta*, J. S. Lemon's debut middle grade novel is a tender, thoughtful story about a girl starting middle school. Greta doesn't feel ready for everything her new life brings with it, including the attention of boys. When one of those boys starts paying attention to her at a party, it's okay at first—until it becomes very, very not okay. In the wake of this assault, Greta doesn't know who to turn to or how to talk about it. And then her body begins changing in unexpected ways, beginning a powerful transformation that Greta hopes will finally allow her to feel free.



### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**J. S. Lemon** grew up outside of Philadelphia, and chances are, so did you. She spent most of her childhood worrying about hair removal and trying to make people laugh. Even though middle school was quite a while ago, it still sits right beneath her skin. Lemon was the first girl, on both sides of her family, to graduate college, and she did so while wearing an “I’m with stupid” T-shirt under her gown. She has been an animal psychic, a mime coach, and a spokesperson for the Crocs Evening Wear Collection—all without leaving her home. Most days you can find her gossiping with her dog and writing until her thumbs ache. Her hobbies include doodling, listening to smooth ‘70s music, and dodging invitations to go hiking. She does a pretty good Cher impression.

# GRETA DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

THIS IS A BEAUTIFUL BOOK THAT DEALS THOUGHTFULLY WITH THEMES OF BODILY AUTONOMY, SEXUAL ASSAULT, AND TRAUMA, AS WELL AS FRIENDSHIP AND CHANGE.

USE THESE QUESTIONS TO HELP GUIDE YOUR DISCUSSIONS.

1. The novel opens with a short prologue told from the perspective of a moth. What do you think about Lemon's choice to begin the book this way, especially given the ending? Did it make you curious? Do you think it gave away the ending? Did your feelings about it change once you'd finished the book?
2. Greta deals with themes of sexual assault, consent, trauma, and healing. How did Lemon handle this complicated and challenging subject matter? What did the magical elements add to (or take away from) the story?
3. Transformation is another central theme in the novel. After experiencing a traumatic event, Greta's body starts changing in new and mysterious ways. What other kinds of transformation appear in the book? Does Greta transform in any other ways? Does her best friend Lotti?
4. Discuss Greta and Lotti's relationship. How does it change throughout the book? How does Greta's transformation affect Lotti?
5. How did you feel when Greta first showed signs of transformation? What did you think was happening? Did you agree with the reactions of her friends and family? Talk about the different ways the people in Greta's life approached and dealt with her change.
6. Moths undergo a dramatic metamorphosis, growing from caterpillars into pupa that then become adult moths. How does Greta's transformation mimic this metamorphosis? Why do you think Greta changes into a moth, and not another kind of creature?
7. A lot of Greta is very realistic. It's about all the ordinary ups and downs of moving to a new neighborhood and starting middle school. But it also includes elements of fabulism. Why do you think Lemon chose to include the magical parts? Do you think the blend worked well? Did you enjoy or relate to one part of the story more than the other?
8. The book has a complicated ending that can be interpreted in a lot of different ways. As a moth, Greta is free, but she can't interact with her family and friends the way she used to. What did you think of the ending? Do you think it was sad? Happy? A mix of both, or something else entirely?

