



PEACHTREE

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



## The Girl Who Stole an Elephant

Written by Nizrana Farook

### ABOUT THE BOOK

Chaya, a nobleman's rebellious, outspoken, no-nonsense daughter, just can't resist the shiny temptations the king's palace has to offer. But playing Robin Hood for her impoverished community doesn't come without risks, and when Chaya steals the queen's jewels from a bedside table—a messy getaway jeopardizes the life of a close friend. After an equally haphazard prison break, Chaya barely escapes on the king's prized elephant! With leeches and revolution lurking in the jungle, Chaya leads her companions on a thrilling adventure. After leaving her village as a thief, can she return as a hero? Or will Chaya's sticky fingers be the beginning—or the end—of everything for the intrepid gang?

Debut author Nizrana Farook spins an exciting, page-turning tale in a lush, vibrant, fictional Sri Lankan setting and featuring themes of friendship and loyalty, risk and reward, and heroism.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. After reading, reread the first sentence of the book. What significance does this hold for the rest of the story?
2. How did you react when you learned Chaya only steals to help others?
3. When thieving, Chaya prefers to wear ragged old clothes to avoid standing out. "It was surprising how invisible poor people were," Chaya observes (page 30). "Nobody ever noticed Chaya when she was dressed like this." What does this say about Chaya's community?
4. What is your first impression of Nour? How does this change throughout the story?
5. Why do you think Chaya is so reluctant to accept help from Nour?
6. Describe Chaya in three words. Find examples from the book to support your answers.
7. How does Chaya's bold, no-nonsense personality affect your perception of her?
8. A "cliffhanger" is a plot device used in writing which features a character in a tense, frightening, or exciting situation, meant to create a strong sense of suspense to encourage the reader to keep reading. Discuss how the author uses cliffhangers in *The Girl Who Stole an Elephant*.
9. Why do you think Chaya ultimately decides to trust Nour?
10. When Chaya, Nour, and Neel meet with the bandits, Gamage turns to Neel and says, "And you must be the mastermind. Tell me, boy, how did you do it?" (page 172). Why do you think Gamage assumes Neel is the brains of the group?
11. How did you react when you discovered Sena wasn't Prince Sena but Princess Leela after all?
12. What is the importance of setting in this story?
13. How do you think the story would differ if it was told from Neel's point of view? Nour's?
14. When the trio faces punishment for their crimes, Neel steps up to try and take the blame. Why do you think he continues to defend Chaya?
15. Think back to when you first meet Chaya as she's stealing the queen's jewels. What was your first impression of her, and how do you feel about her at the end of the story?