



Best Book Club

Where We Talk About All Things Books and Book Club

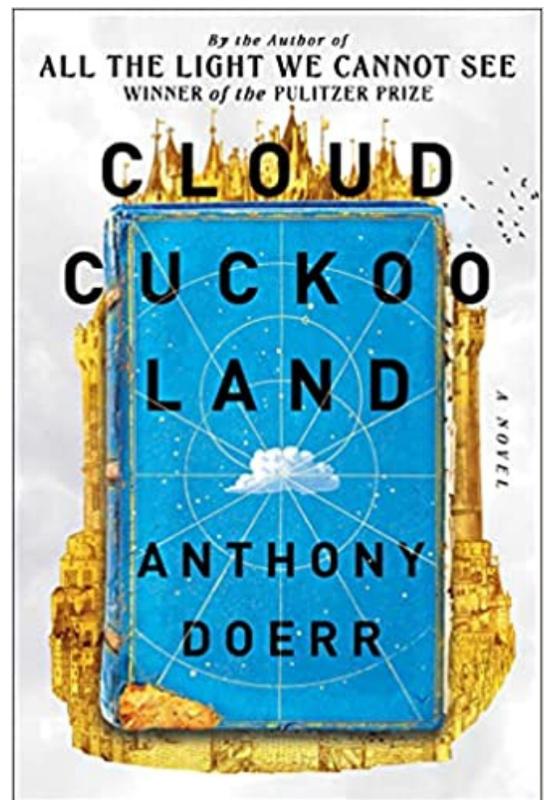
Author Bio- Anthony Doerr

Anthony Doerr is an award winning author. He won the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction for his book *All the Light We Cannot See* in 2015 which was his most notable work but he has other novels including *Cloud Cuckoo Land* and also some short story collections. He grew up in Cleveland, Ohio but now lives in Boise, Idaho with his wife and twin sons.

Synopsis

Thirteen-year-old Anna, an orphan, lives inside the formidable walls of Constantinople in a house of women who make their living embroidering the robes of priests. Restless, insatiably curious, Anna learns to read, and in this ancient city, famous for its libraries, she finds a book, the story of Aethon, who longs to be turned into a bird so that he can fly to a utopian paradise in the sky. This she reads to her ailing sister as the walls of the only place she has known are bombarded in the great siege of Constantinople. Outside the walls is Omeir, a village boy, miles from home, conscripted with his beloved oxen into the invading army. His path and Anna's will cross.

Five hundred years later, in a library in Idaho, octogenarian Zeno, who learned Greek as a prisoner of war, rehearses five children in a play adaptation of Aethon's story, preserved against all odds through centuries. Tucked among the library shelves is a bomb, planted by a troubled, idealistic teenager, Seymour. This is another siege. And in a not-so-distant future, on the interstellar ship *Argos*, Konstance is alone in a vault, copying on scraps of sacking the story of Aethon, told to her by her father. She has never set foot on our planet.



Discussion Questions

1. The story is told from the point of view of five very different protagonists. Which was your favorite and which was your least favorite point of view?
2. Why do you think Seymour started to rebel against Ilium and the “cleansing” of the Atlas?
3. Why do you think that Konstance was locked in vault one for so long and what did you think of the twist in her storyline?
4. All of the characters are linked together in some way. What did you think of these links and were they enough to bring the story together in the end?
5. The children in the library talk about what their Cloud Cuckoo Lands would look like. What would yours look like?
6. Discuss the importance of Cloud Cuckoo Land for each character.
7. Because the text seemed to be in the wrong order, the ending of the myth Cloud Cuckoo Land could either be that Aethon stayed in Cloud Cuckoo Land or that he decided to go home. Which do you think is the true ending?

General Questions

1. Did you race to the end, or was it more of a slow burn?
2. What did you think of the writing overall? Were there any standout sentences?
3. Which was your favorite part? What about your least favorite?
4. Did reading the book impact your mood? If yes, how so?