

Full of Beans — Book Club Discussion Guide

1. Time-Travel, Mistakes, and Everyday Ethics

Phil uses time travel for pastries, chess, and even to undo mistakes. Is this harmless fun, or does it cheapen his choices and personal growth? Where would you draw the line between clever problem-solving and “cheating at life”?

2. Morality, Fidelity, and Public Shaming

Phil is driven to expose cheaters like Quinkle or his father, and society often enjoys public shaming (like the Coldplay kiss-cam fiasco). Do cheaters deserve exposure, or does the punishment outweigh the crime? Should Chianti and others like her be considered equally guilty, or are they collateral damage? What do these moments reveal about our shifting collective moral compass?

3. Identity, Roles, and Language

From Holly’s escort work and Havarti’s feelings of not fitting in, to Phil’s musings about gendered language—is society too rigid in assigning roles and labels, or too quick to judge people?

4. Feminism, Power, and Exploitation

Does Holly’s part-time job reinforce stereotypes of women as sex objects, or are the men responsible for their own attitudes? Who’s taking advantage of whom in Holly’s situation; is she being independent or exploited, or both? What answers does the novel provide for these questions?

5. Growth, Relationships, and Perspective

Phil saves lives, bends rules, and replays moments with Holly—sometimes for better, sometimes for worse. At one point Holly questions their new relationship; is feeling indebted (or having an advantage) an acceptable foundation for love, or destined for resentment? Is Phil learning and growing, or just manipulating outcomes?

6. Religion, Atheism, and Right vs. Wrong

Holly worries that society has lost its moral compass without religion, while Phil insists it’s possible to be a good atheist. What drives people to “do the right thing”—fear of being caught, empathy, or something deeper? If collective morality crumbles as religion declines, where does that leave us?