



Week 1 Questions:

Chapter 1:

Lauren's story begins with a dream. In this dream we are introduced to fire as a distinction between old life and new. **Question: How does the role of the fire in the dream shape our journey with Lauren?**

Chapter 2:

On page 14-16, Lauren describes her ideas about God and ends with the question, "what if God is something else all together?"

Question: What are your initial thoughts on Lauren's approach to God and religion?

Chapter 3: End of 2024

By the end of chapter, the community has a new President Elect, Christopher Morpeth Donner.

Q: What are your thoughts on our upcoming election? How does this election in the story resonate with your own questions and thoughts about our political future?

Miss Sims suicide upsets Lauren and gets tangled up in her thoughts of the astronaut killed and returned home, essentially being "expelled from heaven." (pg 24)

Q: What does this interpretation of the beyond/heaven/space/etc have to do with the political turns and realities Lauren and her community face?

Chapter 4:

Lauren is forced to kill in order to save herself the pain of sharing the suffering with a dog that's been shot. Everyone is shocked by her direct action (especially her boyfriend Curtis) but only her father knows what she is really feeling.

Q: What are your thoughts on Lauren's hyperempathy? Do you think her father is right to keep it a secret from everyone?

Chapter 5:

Lauren shares her thoughts about survival for the first time to her best friend Joanne. Joanne isn't quite convinced but Lauren insists that they must be prepared to survive should the violence get too close to home.

Q: Did Lauren act too soon on sharing her ideas with Joanne? What do you think of how Lauren describes “telling the future?”

Chapter 6:

Lauren loses trust in Joanne after she tells her mom what Lauren said. This leads to an important lesson for Lauren as she is learning to balance the roles of prophet and teacher. Her father teaches her an important lesson on how teaching survival can move people to action as opposed to scaring them and losing their trust.

Q: Do you agree with Rev. Olamina's advice to Lauren about teaching vs. frightening people?

Additional questions for week one:

In what way is the environment (fire, storm, rain) a character in the story? What role(s) does it play?

Do you agree with the way Lauren sees the world? Would you view her as a realist? Pessimist? Something else?

Based on the world we have been introduced to in Butler's 2024, does she come close to our current reality? Why or why not? If yes, how did we get here?