

## *I, Putin: A Novel* Reading Group Questions

- 1) How does Gosha's perspective influence your view of Vladimir Putin? Is his character necessary for the novel?
- 2) In some ways, Putin's and Gosha's lives are similar – and in many ways, they are very different. Why do you think Putin hires Gosha? What do you think they learn from each other?
- 3) Putin is seen as the father of two daughters, which is true to life, but it's a rare glimpse into his family life. Does this glance into Putin as a father change your view of him? Do you find the female characters strong or weak?
- 4) In the book, we see a young Putin who is raised in the Soviet Union. He holds certain values at heart that Americans may not. What are the values he lives by? Do they differ from American values or are they similar to either today's American values or yesterday's?
- 5) Why are Gosha's sections written in third person, while Putin's sections are written in first? How does this decision inform your reaction to the book? Did you find you connected more with either Gosha or Putin?
- 6) Having all the information Putin did at the time, what decision would you have made regarding the sailors in the *Kursk* disaster? Do you think Putin made the right decision? After examining the situation, was there an alternative solution to this crisis?
- 7) How is love represented in this book? What do the characters do for love? How does Putin show love? In your life, how do you show love and how do you expect love to be given to you?
- 8) How does the Putin in the book mirror or differ from the Putin we see on television, on the Internet, in magazines and newspapers? Did your view change of him? What do you think of Putin now?
- 9) Do you connect with the Bill Clinton character? Is he an imposing figure or a helpful one?
- 10) Do you think that Dima Kolesnikov is a hero or a tragic figure?

*Jennifer Ciotta is available for call-ins and group discussions. Please contact her in advance to arrange an appointment.*