

Reading Group Guide

Leap Second

1. What would you do if you woke up one day and discovered that you were invisible and incorporeal, with no way to communicate with others? What would be your first goal? What would your immediate concerns be? What if you were severely injured, as Tommen was injured?
2. Consider the Trackers. What was their role in the coup, and how does it compare to now? Do you believe them competent, sentient actors, or merely animals being trained and used by different masters? Why were they hidden away? What were they used for? Do you think using them to find Tommen is a good idea? What are the risks, and do you believe them justified?
3. What is known about Julianna? How does it compare to who and how she presents herself to Tommen? Does Tommen trust her? Does he have any reason not to? Would you find her initial story credible?
4. What would you do and where would you go if you were able to Walk? What if you could do some observational time travel?
5. Considering that Tommen was able to make sketchy contact within a day of being in the in-between dimension, what do you make of Julianna's doom and gloom? Does it change your opinion of her? The situation overall? What would your next step be?
6. From Walter's perspective, if you had access to virtually unlimited information from across the universe, what would you look for to help find Tommen? What kind of information would be most pertinent? What would you discard? Why?
7. What do you make of Julianna's riddle regarding Time and Energy? What are your thoughts?
8. Who do you believe is responsible for the death of Sarlon? Why is his death significant to the Akarin? Do you believe it to be an isolated incident? Could it be related to Trish's threats against Micaiah?
9. Do you believe Tommen's shadowing of the line workers and firefighters was productive? What did he learn, and how does it help him figure out how to escape?
10. Why does Walter lie to Laura? What does it say about his mental state, this coupled with his narcotic use? Why do you think Laura doesn't follow up on it? Do you think she might have, if she hadn't had to go to work? Would you have followed up, if you were in Laura's shoes?
11. Considering that Julianna proclaimed stealing things from the real world to be one of the most advanced things one can learn, how does your opinion of either Tommen or Julianna change when Tommen begins to steal food on his own? What do you think would be the reason for lying? Did she lie? What if she wasn't?

12. What do you make of Walter's spying in the Wheel? Was it a smart idea? Could it have been handled better? What other options could have been utilized? If you only had fifteen minutes to look for information, what would you have looked for?
13. What role does effective communication play in Tommen's rescue? Why does the first rescue attempt in his bedroom fail? What do you believe to be the problem? Why doesn't Julianna help more? If other civilizations are more technologically advanced than Earth, why isn't there more information about the in-between dimension and how to rescue people from it?
14. Why does Tommen refuse the second rescue attempt? Should he have taken it? If he had traded places with Walter, what do you think would have happened? How would events have changed? Do you think Walter would have been able to make it out? How do you think Julianna would have reacted?
15. How does Julianna's story change through the book? Does it become more or less trustworthy? Does she generate enough doubt to make Tommen want to help her still? Would you still help her? Has your opinion of the Akarin changed at all because of it, coupled with the other events going on?
16. What do you think of the idea to use the warehouse as a stepping stone? Do you think it could be done? Is it a wise idea on the part of Tommen and Walter?
17. How does Tommen try to stop Rifun from rescuing Julianna? Why? Do you think he should have let things play out and instead settled them in the corporeal world? How might things have changed? What changes because he tries to stop Rifun? Was it a wise idea to pull Julianna back in with him?
18. What has changed when Tommen and Julianna are in the Middle East? Why does Foyez sacrifice himself? Do you believe it was in vain? What might have happened if Tommen had not been able to get away? Does it matter, since he is not terribly creative and returns to familiar pastures almost immediately?
19. Who is Chandler? How is he portrayed? Is he different "in person" compared to the brief, more apparitional appearances he has made so far? What do you make of his story? What is his relationship to Julianna? To the Author? What is his role in the in-between dimension? How does he help Tommen escape?
20. Do you believe Micah when he says Micaiah is dead? What is your immediate reaction? Who do you believe could have been behind it?