

Dear Reader,

Thank you so much for choosing *I Shouldn't Tell You This* for your reading group!

The story was born from a fascination with the secrets families keep and the sheer courage it takes for one generation to break the silences enforced by the last. Setting the heart of this story thousands of feet in the air, suspended between a hurried departure in Massachusetts and a shocking arrival in sun-drenched Barcelona, felt like the ultimate setting for confessions. In the quiet bubble of a night flight, away from the noise of expectations, truths finally have room to breathe.

I hope this book sparks vibrant debates in your living room about power, heritage, and what it truly means to claim your own voice.

Warmly,

Courtney Kuketz

Setting the Scene: Cabin Décor and Vibe

Transform your meeting space into an intimate, in-flight lounge where secrets are shared in quiet murmurs over tray tables.

- **Cabin lighting:** Turn off harsh overhead lights. Use warm amber lamps, dimmers, or battery-operated fairy lights to recreate the low, cozy glow of a night flight cruising through the clouds.
- **The “Tray Table” Experience:** Place small side tables or wooden placemats next to each guest, complete with an “In-Flight Menu” listing the evening’s drinks, snacks, and discussion schedule.
- **Textures and Tones:** Pair deep navy, slate gray, and foggy silver accents (reflecting the Massachusetts sky) with warm cranberry, terracotta, and polished glassware (hinting at the journey to Spain).
- **The Icebreaker (Baggage Claim):** Place a small envelope on each seat. Ask members to write down one non-spoilery family trait or expectation they had to “pack away” or break free from, then read them anonymously to kick off the night.

In-Flight Refreshments

Signature Cocktail: *The Mid-Air Confession*

A sophisticated mix of New England roots and Spanish sparkle.

- Ingredients
 - 1.5 oz Reposado Tequila
 - 0.75 oz Cold espresso
 - 0.5 oz Blueberry liqueur
 - 0.25 oz Maple syrup
 - 2-3 dashes Orange bitters
 - Pinch of sea salt
 - 1.5-2 oz Dry cava (or prosecco) to be added after shaking.
- Preparation: Shake vigorously with ice. Strain into a glass and top with the dry cava. Garnish with orange peel and a few blueberries on a pick.

Signature Mocktail: *The Barcelona Flight Plan*

Bright, botanical, and crisp—just like first class over the Mediterranean.

- Ingredients
 - 2 oz Blood Orange or Tart Cherry juice
 - 1 oz Fresh Lime Juice
 - 0.5 oz Cinnamon or Ginger syrup
 - Tonic Water to be added after stirring
- Preparation: Fill a tall glass with ice. Add juice and syrup, stir well, and top with tonic water for a crisp finish. Garnish with a dehydrated orange wheel.

Snack Pairing: *The Flight Tray*

Arrange a charcuterie board featuring sharp cheddar, sliced apples, and blueberry compote or jam on one side, transitioning into Spanish Manchego cheese, Marcona almonds, jamon serrano, and crusty bread on the other.

Reading Group Discussion Questions

1. **The Weight of the Title:** The phrase “I shouldn’t tell you this” implies hesitation and a boundary being crossed. At what point in the story do each of the protagonists seem to shift from keeping silent to taking the risk of sharing their secrets? Was there a specific catalyst?
2. **The Dynamics of Control:** How do different people exert control over the women in the story? Is that dominance overt, or is it disguised through subtle manipulation, emotional pressure, or societal expectations?
3. **Generational Mirrors:** In what ways did you see Betty’s experiences shock Olivia? Is it more surprising to see the ways society has progressed or to see the shared experiences?
4. **Secrets as Shields vs. Weapons:** Secrets play a central role in the narrative. Do you think keeping the secrets was done out of self-preservation, or did those silences ultimately cause more harm?
5. **The Turnaround Moment:** When Olivia and Betty push back against the powers that control them, were their actions surprising to you? Were the acts of defiance sudden, or had they been quietly building throughout their lives?
6. **Systemic vs. Personal Pressure:** Beyond the specific instances of experiencing life with domineering men, how do external factors make it harder for the women to assert their independence?

7. The Role of Matriarchs and Allies: Who serves as a true ally to each of the women when they began standing up for themselves more? How did female solidarity—or the lack thereof—impact their journeys?
8. Complicity and Forgiveness: Looking at Betty's generation, did you feel sympathy for the choices she made, or did you hold her accountable for allowing the dynamic to persist? Is forgiveness possible in this story?
9. Atmosphere and Mood: How did the setting, starting with grounded roots in Massachusetts and transitioning to the isolation of an airplane cabin, mirror the internal emotional tension of the characters as the truth slowly came to light?
10. The Aftermath of Truth: By the end of the novel, breaking the silence left both women with a lot to consider. Do you think either or both of the women achieved true freedom, or are some things impossible to erase?

Bonus question: Who do you believe they saw at baggage claim?

Invite the Author to Your Meeting!

I love dropping in on reading groups! I offer free 15-minute live virtual visits (Zoom) for clubs reading *I Shouldn't Tell You This* to answer questions about deleted scenes, character inspiration, and my upcoming standalone novel.

To schedule a visit or purchase discounted direct book bundles for your group, visit:

www.ishouldntellyouthis.com