

The Official Book Club & Reader's Guide for *Auto Antenna*

Section 1: Welcome Note (The Author's Invitation)

"Dear Reader, Welcome to a vague blueprint of the cosmos and an enchanted tour of a place built as much upon mindwaves as the sun-dried clay of its famous architectural dwellings. This guide is not a test of comprehension, but an open highway. *Auto Antenna* was written as an invitation to look at the costumes we perform, the crutches we lean on, and the loose threads that make up the beautiful, unfinished tapestries of our lives. As you discuss this book, I encourage you to leave your seatbelts behind, turn up the transistor radio of your subconscious, and see what informational signals your own antenna is receiving. Extend your pinky finger. Let the good times begin."

Art, Personhood, and the Inside Job of Freedom

Introduction: Tuning the Antenna

Auto Antenna is a hip, metaphysical novella that functions as both a love letter to the "City Different" and a psychological toolkit for the soul. Cybilline—our free-spirited, Ford-Galaxie-driving guide—serves as a therapist to local artists, demystifying the illusions of perceived success, self-construction, and creative blocks.

This guide is designed to help your book club move past the surface chaparral and dive into the rich, atmospheric highs of Santa Fe, the ways we use our imagination to construct our lives, and the process of truly "becoming a person."

Section 2: General & Overarching Discussion Questions

Perfect for getting the whole group talking immediately after finishing the book.

1. **The Architecture of Place:** The book frames Santa Fe ("Fanta Se") not just as a literal city, but as a living landscape that calls specific individuals to it. Do you believe certain places hold a specific "talisman" or energetic frequency that alters our destiny? Have you ever felt a "prescient directive" to move toward a specific landscape?

2. **The "Transistor Radio" of Mind:** Cybilline suggests that consciousness doesn't originate inside our brains, but is a free-flowing signal our minds simply tap into, like a cheap transistor radio. Whether the psyche is produced by our brains or is a universal force we have the cellular tools to interact with and shape, how does considering this perspective inform how you view your own sudden "a-ha" ideas, our human limitations in grasping data, the "mind-body problem," or moments of intense synchronicity—such as saying something at the exact same time as a close friend, or thinking of someone just before you encounter them?
3. **The Mirror of Identity:** A major psychological thread in the book is that we spend our early lives performing external scripts—borrowing "totems of belonging" to please our parents or fit into a specific social circle. If you stripped away the roles you perform (profession, age, social routine, achievements), what core individual sensibilities remain? Which values, passions, and unique ways of seeing the world are genuinely your own?
4. **Art as a Way of Being:** Cybilline reflects on the Japanese etymology of *Geisha* as an "art person" and argues that "Being Your Own Highest Artform" is an important key to understanding your purpose, far outliving anything we physically leave behind. What does it look like to treat your daily life, your wardrobe, and your presence as a masterwork of art? What would you add or discard in your life or home to bring you closer to that state of being?

Section 3: Sequence-by-Sequence Deep Dives

To help book clubs trace the narrative's evolution and specific milestone moments.

Sequences 1–3: The Call and the Costume

- **The Anchor:** We meet Cybilline driving Esmerelda (the sky-blue 1959 Ford Galaxie), embodying a visual portrait of a radically autonomous woman—a "girl as a free man"—with her solar creative forces fully intact.
- **Discussion Prompt:** Cybilline wears a yellow skirt with loose red threads dangling, noting that our personalities are always unfinished and in motion. What are the "visible loose threads" in your life right now? How does it help or hinder us to present ourselves as perfectly stitched, completed products to society?
- **The Concept Spark:** We are introduced to Babette, Cybilline's strangely advanced Siamese cat, who broke the evolutionary code by understanding symbols rather than just "eating the menu." In what ways does the human community mistakenly "eat the menu" of life—focusing on labels, words, or social titles instead of the deeper realities they represent?

Sequences 4–8: Ruts, Realism, and Shifting Gears

- **The Anchor:** While many transient characters appear briefly and vanish, their conversational dynamics stitch the story together. They anchor the novella's core questions about human connection, transience, and the cyclic nature of time.
- **Discussion Prompt:** Cybilline proposes that humanity isn't distinguishably improving, but is rather in a "back and forth shifting of gears with history" like a car transmission.
 - Do you agree with this cyclic view, or do you see human development as a steady, upward ladder?
 - When looking at culture (fashion, music, film) or societal freedoms, do we lose essential things in the name of "progress"? Why are we so desperate to perceive history as always moving forward?
- **The Concept Spark:** To treat psychological ruts, Cybilline suggests "wiggling the invisible strings our habits attach to" by shopping a grocery store from the opposite aisle or changing our daily routine. If you were to intentionally break a mundane routine tomorrow to invite energetic change, what small, physical action would you choose?

Sequences 9–14: Fireflies and Dreaming Life into Being

- **The Anchor:** The surreal, magical sequences featuring fireflies highlight a major philosophical heartbeat of the novella: the deeply fluid nature of human consciousness.
- **Discussion Prompt:** The firefly scenes evoke the mystery of where we go when we sleep—into a highly imaginative, fluid, and sometimes predictive state of mind. If our minds are capable of creating entire worlds while we sleep, how much of our waking, working reality are we also unknowingly "dreaming into being"? How do our beliefs and expectations shape that ability?
- **The Concept Spark:** Cybilline's philosophy suggests that life doesn't happen *to* us, but *for* us—and that we guide our experiences through how we choose to interpret external circumstances. How does adopting the belief that "reality is magic too" change the way you view your possibilities and your ability to actively author your life?

Section 4: Targeted Thematic Masterclasses

Deep-dive inquiries into the core psychological and visionary themes that won "Auto Antenna" its multiple Grand-Prize Gold Medal awards.

Theme A: The Psychology of Art & Creative Blocks

Cybilline acts as a psychological mirror for artists, helping them clarify the illusions that keep them blocked, confused, or resentful. She teaches that imagination isn't just for making art—it's for building a self.

1. **The Trap of Status:** Many creators experience deep resentment when their immense commitment to production doesn't automatically grant them public status or financial validation. What is the function of "accomplishment measuring" in our internal creative endeavors, and how might that actually stunt core goals of self-exploration? How can a creator protect their grace and inner peace from the pressures of the marketplace?
2. **The Anatomy of a Block:** Cybilline helps artists see that a creative block is often an illusion—a psychological defense mechanism rooted in fear of exposure or a rigid attachment to an old childhood script. If you create things (whether art, a business, a home, or a family), what is the typical illusion or fear that causes you to stall? What are the creative "crutches" or external validations you find hardest to let go of?
3. **Being Your Own Highest Artform:** The novella explores art, magic, and spirituality not as mere hobbies, but as a lifestyle. Cybilline champions the idea that personhood itself is the ultimate creative act. How does it change your perspective if you view your daily choices, your environment, and your self-construction not as a routine, but as a masterwork of art?

Theme B: The "Inside Job" of Satisfaction & Growing Younger with Age

A recurring theme is how we rely on social norms and expectations to guide what we do, even when those messages might not be in alignment with what brings us lasting satisfaction.

1. **The Illusion of External Deliverables:** We often demand that a new relationship, a financial milestone, or a geographical move "set us free." Yet, our internal restlessness is usually waiting for us when we arrive. Have you ever asked an external circumstance to do the heavy lifting for your happiness? What happened when it couldn't provide it?
2. **Rewriting the "Aging Script":** Cybilline is on the verge of her sixth decade—a time when society often tells women to dim their vibrancy, dress "age-appropriately," and fade into the background. Instead, she radically embraces her style, her sensuality, and her refined appreciation of beauty as part of her life-force. How do you see traditional expectations of aging shaping your life in ways that limit you?
3. **The Freedom of the Prime Years:** While not everyone can live as a completely untethered free agent, what does it look like for you to maintain a vibrant, "prime years" relationship with yourself? Can you break society's arbitrary rules and still feel deeply connected to a community? What do you do to luxuriate in your own presence?

Theme C: Imagination and the Cosmic Citizen

Cybilline's origins are shrouded in mystery—there is no mention of family, she seems to turn into butterflies at night, and the youngest we experience her is as an NYU student, a time when it's as if she effectively "walks into the world" already a grown person with an unknown background.

1. **Imagination as a Tool for Destiny:** Many artists share their process of creation with Cybilline, and part of what she identifies from those stories is how we use our imagination to create our possibilities and the way we see ourselves. You can free your identity and even your destiny with your imagination, but it can also be weaponized

against us. In what ways do we accidentally use our imagination to focus on worst-case scenarios or rehearse old traumas, enacting an "escape from freedom" rather than opening new doors?

2. **Transcending Boundaries:** We often define ourselves by narrow labels—our neighborhood, our nationality, or our local culture. Cybilline challenges us to expand our view entirely, functioning instead as a "Cosmic Citizen."
 - If you zoom out and view Earth as just one of many small towns in a massive universe, how does shifting your perspective to a cosmic scale change what you value most?
 - Does it set you free to just be a part of consciousness happening?
 - If your true "home base" is not tied to a specific physical location, a country, or a past story, where do you find your sense of safety and belonging? How do you anchor yourself from the inside out?

Section 5: Book Club Activities

Book Club Activity I: "Behind the Soundtrack"

At the conclusion of the book, there is a full "Radio Report" soundtrack listing iconic tracks by artists like Blondie, Cyndi Lauper, Fleetwood Mac, and Galactic Witchcraft. This is part of the antenna of the car catching signals from space and connecting them directly with the unfolding action.

- **The Activity:** Have each book club member look at the soundtrack report. If your current chapter of life had a metaphorical "antenna" drawing in a radio station of your internal world and the reality you are dreaming into being, what song is playing through your speakers right now? What is the song in your heart?

Book Club Activity II: The Personal "Inventory Report"

In honor of the song in your heart, have each member take a quick, silent inventory of their current "internal landscape" and share their answers with the group:

- What is one external illusion or societal script you are ready to stop performing?
- What is one creative or personal pleasure you want to cultivate purely for yourself, without needing anyone else's validation or applause?