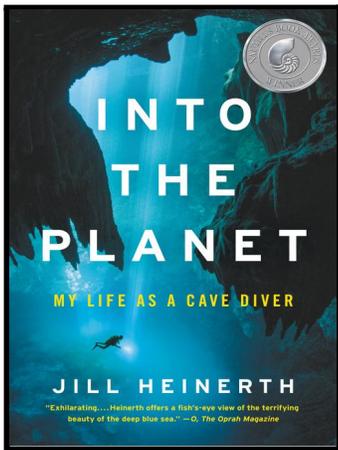




BOOK BUZZ

Into the Planet Reader's Guide



Into the Planet : My Life as a Cave Diver
By Jill Heinerth
Ecco
An Imprint of HarperCollins Publishers

[A Jill Heinerth Reading Group Guide](#)

Introduction

Taking you to places where no person has ever gone before, and blending memoir, adventure, and science, *Into the Planet* is a riveting account of one of the most dangerous yet exhilarating pursuits in the world.

As one of the most celebrated cave divers in the world, Jill Heinerth has seen the planet in a way almost no one has. In a workday, she might swim below your home, through conduits in volcanoes or cracks in the world's largest iceberg. She's an explorer, a scientist's eyes and hands underwater—discovering new species and examining our finite freshwater reserves—and a filmmaker documenting the wonders of underwater life. She tests the limits of human endurance at every tight turn, risking her life with each mission. To not only survive in this world but excel, Jill has had to learn how to master fear like no other.

With gripping storytelling, and radiating with intimacy, *Into the Planet* will transport you deep into the most exquisite, untouched corners of the earth, where fear must be reconciled and the innermost parts of the human condition are revealed.

Discussion Questions

1. "I had been born an explorer, just like every other being on earth," writes Jill. Do you feel like an explorer? If you don't now, did you once? How has your curiosity evolved over time?



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2. How do you think Jill came to a place of being able to control her fear? Do you think her bravery is hardwired within her, learned, or both? Are there any lessons on mastering fear in the book that resonated with you and that you would like to apply in your own life?
3. When Jill's life began to feel monotonous, she turned to scuba diving. Can you relate to her feelings of inertia? Have you ever longed for a stronger connection to the natural world? Are there any hobbies or pursuits that you'd be interested in taking up but that you haven't yet incorporated into your life?
4. Jill chose not to pursue legal action against her former partners at the design firm after they shut her out of their business. Do you understand why she did this? What did she gain by making this choice? And what do you think you would have done in her shoes?
5. Jill is familiar with the feeling of breaking new ground—from being the first to dive inside an iceberg to breaking diving records to being a woman in a male-dominated sphere. What is the benefit in being a trailblazer, and what are the potential downsides? Have you ever been the first person in your family or extended circle to break new ground in some way? What was that experience like?
6. Have you ever been scuba diving? If not, would you like to? Has *Into the Planet* increased or decreased your interest in diving? And did the book teach you anything about diving—or the people who love it—that surprised you?
7. Were you surprised that Jill dove again after getting the bends? Do you understand why the risk is worth it to her? What do you think cave diving adds to her life? Do you have any passions or hobbies that you cannot imagine living without?
8. "I dance in the joy of uncertainty," writes Jill. Every day in Jill's profession is wildly different, and she has to contend with the potentially fatal risks of her work. What is your relationship with uncertainty? Is it something that has changed through the years? Is it something you would like to work on? Is Jill's approach to uncertainty something you might like to try to emulate? Why or why not?



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