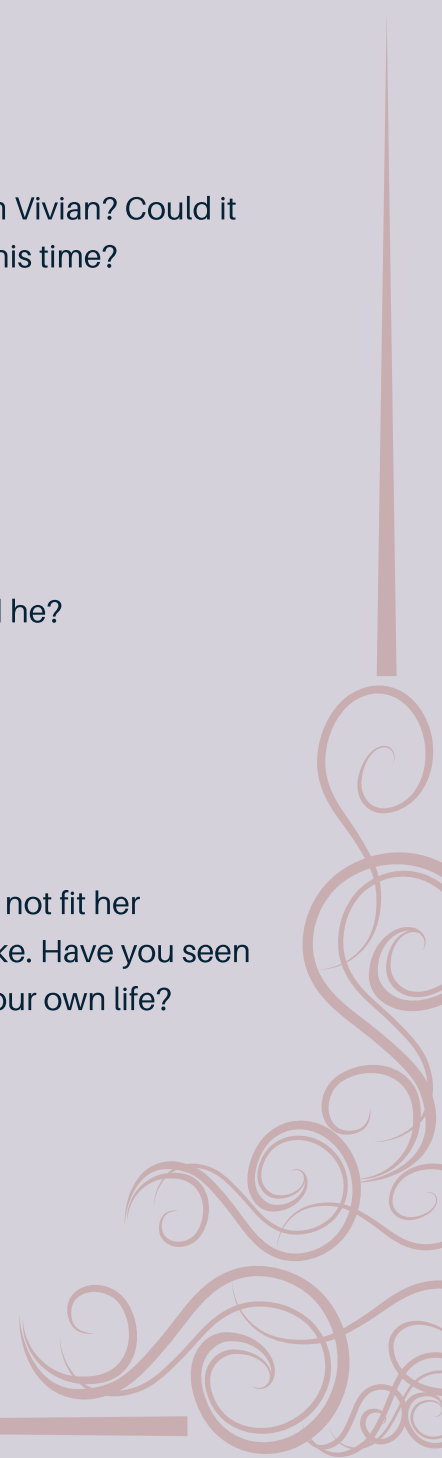# Carved in Stone Discussion Guide

1 Gwen and Liam get off to a rocky start, but Patrick cautions, "*The two of you are very different, but people of good character can disagree and still be admirable.*" What does he does he mean by that, and do you agree?

2 What do you think of the way Gwen tried to win Jasper back from Vivian? Could it ever have worked? How would you have counseled her during this time?

3 Do you think Liam will ever be able to forgive his mother? Should he?

4 Gwen struggles to accept Liam upon his return because he does not fit her preconceived expectations of what an older brother should be like. Have you seen preconceived expectations cause difficulties among people in your own life?

5   Patrick prides himself on being "a man of the people," so what did Gwen mean when she accused him of being a snob? Is snobbery always a one-way street?

6   The extraordinary marble mansions of Gwen's family are quite different from the craftsman-style home she designed for herself. If money were no option, would you choose to live in gilded splendor, or would you choose a home that reflects a more traditional style?

7   Patrick says, "*Sometimes the Lord sends us into the valley for a reason, even if we don't understand why.*" Can you see examples of this in the novel or in your own life?

8   Gwen's comfortable life at Blackstone College led her into complacency about pursuing her ambition to earn a doctorate in botany. What caused her to develop the strength to pursue it near the end?

9   Liam partners with Uncle Oscar at the end of the novel. How do you predict that alliance will play out?

10   Some of the Blackstones are admirable people, but some are not. Penelope-
     Arabella is only eight years old but already behaves in an entitled and rude
     fashion. What role, if any, should the extended family play in trying to correct such
     behavior?

11   When was the last time you had a tetanus booster? They should happen every ten
     years. What are some of the dangers of living in an era where medical miracles
     have become commonplace?