

Book Club Discussion Questions for *Cave Mountain - A Disappearance and a Reckoning in the Ozarks* By Benjamin Hale

- How does the Ozark landscape shape the emotional atmosphere of the book? In what ways does the mountain function as more than a setting? Is the mountain a setting, a character, or something else?
- The book revisits events many remember through headlines. How does reading a reflective, literary account change your understanding of what happened?
- How does time alter memory? What feels certain in the story – and what remains unknowable?
- How is forgiveness interwoven into the story, and why does it matter?
- What responsibility does a writer carry when telling a story that involves family, trauma, and public attention?
- In what ways does community shape survival – both physically and emotionally?
- How does the book explore the tension between faith and fear? Do they coexist, conflict, or reinforce one another?
- How do public narratives about missing children differ from the lived experience of families?
- How does faith influence both the search and the narrative that followed?
- What does survival mean in this story – physically, emotionally, spiritually?
- What does it mean to be “found”? Is it purely physical, or does the book suggest something deeper?
- How does the presence of media during crisis influence the way events are remembered?
- How does the story challenge common true-crime tropes or expectations?
- What did this book leave you thinking about long after you finished it?
- Where do you see grace at work in this story?
- How does hope persist in circumstances that seem impossible?
- What role does prayer – personal or communal – play in the narrative?
- How might the story differ if told entirely from Haley’s perspective?
- What questions remain that only time or lived experience can answer?