

- This book was originally a play. Do you notice a playwright's touch in the chapters at all?
- As an international bestseller, this book has been translated the world over. What about the story do you think has such universal appeal?
- Discuss each character's reasons for time traveling. Do you feel any character—or all of them—was satisfied with the knowledge gained as a result?
- Which of the rules do you think are fair? Which rule did you find the most maddening?
- Would you time travel yourself if given the option under the book's parameters? If yes, would you travel back in time or to the future?
- Discuss the concept of duty to others, and its centrality in this novel.
- Traveling in time is exciting, but also a bit of a sacrifice and a gamble. Discuss each of the characters who took this risk and their reward.
- Discuss the ghost—how do you think she ended up in her current fate? Will she ever be able to leave the café? Imagine the ghost's story.
- The magic—did you deduce it is found in the café, the actual coffee beverage, the staff serving it, or that one seat? Any conclusions?
- Did you find any of the characters particularly likeable or unlikeable?
- Discuss the café staff and their role in providing and protecting this magical experience.
- Discuss this novel's more sentimental, magical realism approach to time travel versus those stories more rooted in science fiction. Did you wish to know more about the technical aspects of time travel through the café as are often covered in depth in the sci-fi stories?
- Per the rules, you cannot vastly impact the past or future, and traveling with that goal is prohibited. That said, do you believe a possibility exists that the interactions held during each travel would have influenced those visited in some small, nuanced way?
- To that end, discuss the idea of 'butterfly effect' in day-to-day life: the theory of small things impacting complex systems in a non-linear way.
- If given the chance to time travel, is there a year in your life you'd most like to visit or anyone you'd most like to see—either past or future?
- *Before the Coffee Gets Cold* has now been in book form, on stage, and on screen. If you were making a film out of the book, who would you cast? Would you change anything for that version?

Eager to keep *Before the Coffee Gets Cold* discussion going? Check out our exclusive Author Q&A with Toshikazu Kawaguchi, plus a Meeting Planner and Recommended Next Reads, available at [theclub.hoopladigital.com](https://theclub.hoopladigital.com).

