

the **GLOSS**
THE FAVORITES
LAYNE FARGO

1. Rate the book from 1-5.
2. Obsession vs. ambition: At what point does devotion (to a person, a dream, or success) tip into something unhealthy in this novel? Did that line feel clear—or constantly shifting?
3. Public image vs. private reality: The book plays heavily with how the characters are perceived versus who they really are. Where did you feel the biggest disconnect, and why do you think that mattered?
4. Power dynamics: Who truly holds the power in the central relationship(s)—and how does that change over time? Were you surprised by where power ultimately landed?
5. “Favorites” culture: What does the title suggest about how society chooses winners and losers? Did it make you reflect on where you’ve seen (or felt) favoritism play out in real life?
6. Moral flexibility: Did you find yourself rooting for characters even when they behaved badly? What does that say about charisma, storytelling, or our tolerance for moral grey zones?
7. Ambition in women: Katarina’s ruthlessness is a defining trait. Did you find yourself judging her more harshly because she’s a woman, or did the novel successfully challenge that instinct?
8. The cost of success: What sacrifices felt justified to the characters—but not to you as a reader? Where would you have drawn the line?
9. Truth and narrative: The novel plays with perspective and control of the story. Whose version of events did you trust the most—and whose did you question?
10. Identity outside the spotlight: When success or validation disappears, what’s left for these characters? Did any of them feel prepared for that moment?
11. Final take: Did the ending feel inevitable, satisfying, unsettling—or all three? If the book left you uncomfortable, what do you think Fargo wanted you to sit with?