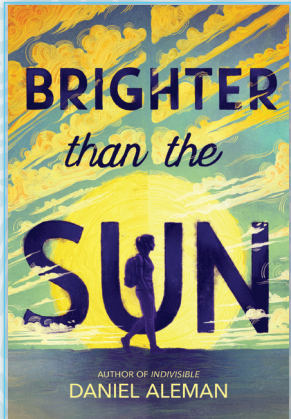


## BRIGHTER *than the* SUN

DANIEL ALEMAN



— Book Club Pick —

### PRAISE

“Beautiful and honest. A must-read for anyone who loves cheering for the underdog.” —**Yamile Saied Méndez**

“A coming-of-age story that wrenches and soothes the heart.” —**Adi Alsaid**

“A reminder, a promise, that borders are undefined places that can never truly divide love, lives, or people.” —**Jenny Torres Sanchez**

“Every word is moving and powerful and needed.” —**Zoulfa Katouh**

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. *Brighter Than the Sun* opens with Sol giving the meanings of her names, Soledad (“solitude”) and Sol (“sun”) (p. 1). Why does Sol feel torn between these two versions of herself?
2. Sol describes a lime tree her Mami planted in their yard. How does the tree’s growth mirror that of Sol’s immediate family? How does her family change, both individually and collectively, over the course of the book?
3. Many characters are divided from one another: by distance, by language, by emotions. How are these borders crossed? What do you think brings people closer together?
4. In considering the responsibility placed on her, Sol laments, “If I could choose a life where I didn’t have to look after everyone else, I’d take it, without a doubt” (p. 30). Who in Sol’s life cares for others and who is taken care of? How can adults and young people share responsibility?
5. How does Sol’s split time between Tijuana and San Diego affect her? What does each location offer her?
6. Sol’s abuela says, “Desgracia compartida, menos sentida—shared misfortune hurts less” (p. 78). What different types of family and community do you see in Sol’s life? What do you think makes someone family?
7. Sol reassures Diego that “sadness is like...like waves in the ocean” (p. 176). How do different characters deal with grief? How can you honor the past while moving forward?
8. What does it mean to stand in solidarity with someone? How do Sol and others use their voices and actions to support those around them?
9. Sol wonders “how we’re supposed to do impossible things if obstacles keep being thrown at us even when we try to catch up with everyone else” (p. 308). What hurdles does Sol face that her classmates do not? How do those factors impact her daily life? Do you think you can ever truly understand the challenges another person faces?
10. Throughout the book, Sol feels torn between what she feels she must do for her family and what she dreams of doing for her future. Do you think she ultimately finds that balance? Why?