

A NOTE FROM THE AUTHOR

Dear Friend,

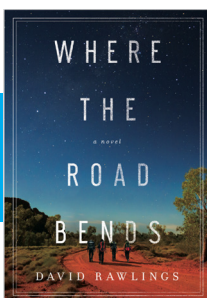
Thank you for investing your time in reading this story. I hope you enjoyed it and the brief visit to my country.

As much as the corner of the Outback in which my American characters found themselves was fictional, it was representative of the wonder and rugged harsh beauty of the heart of Australia. Come and visit—there will be no lack of ravines, sweeping dunes, abandoned railways or dirt tracks for you to enjoy, lose yourself and—hopefully—find yourself.

I really wanted to write a story about Australia. It's a rugged, dangerous, enchanting place, and I wanted to share it with you. If you ever get a chance to visit Australia, I'd highly recommend it. When you're in the outback, you really are in the middle of nowhere, standing on the crushed red dust of the heart of this land, and you can hear your thoughts before you even have them. It's beautiful.

The other thing about being in the middle of nowhere is it gives you a chance to reflect. To think. To ask the question: How did I get here? You may have even thought about that yourself. I know I have.

It's a question we'd all do well to at least ask. We might find that the path we're on isn't the right one, but asking that question early enough gives us time to rethink and reshape. Or we might find that the path we thought we'd be on—the path we knew was best for us—wasn't actually the way we should have gone.



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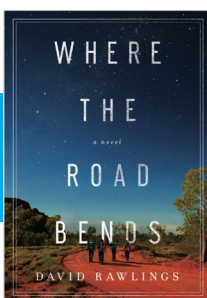
So that became the theme of the book: How did I get here? My stories always come with a theme. With *The Baggage Handler*, the story was about dealing with emotional baggage. With *The Camera Never Lies*, the theme was about the price of accepting honesty with others and ourselves.

So with the theme for this book, I'd like to pose that question to you: How did you get to where you are? Are you like Eliza, unsure of the value of your life because you've been at the center of it? Or perhaps like Bree—held back by fear and avoiding the opportunities that arise. Maybe Lincoln—held back by locking part of yourself away and the rest of the world out. Or even Andy, who is still running from the mess he's created.

If you'd like to explore this further, I have some starter questions on the next page. I don't do this to give you homework—but it will continue the thought process of not only working out how you got here but also where you might go from this place in your life. Around the bend in the road, to face whatever's next.

Take care,

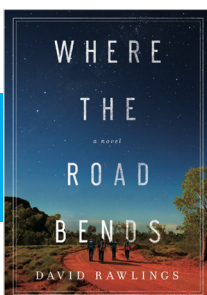
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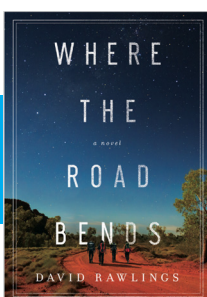
STARTER QUESTIONS FROM *WHERE THE ROAD BENDS*

1. How did you get to the point you are at in life?
2. Is there a particular character you related to, in terms of where they were at in life?
3. Is there a particular character whose challenges you related to? Who, and why?
4. If you connected with more than one character, which parts of them spoke to you?
5. Each of the characters had a guide to bring them to the next phase of their life's journey. Who around you could fill that role for you, or who would you like to play that role?
6. If you could stop at this juncture of your life and head in any direction at all, in which direction would you go?
7. What has shaped your life's journey?
8. Are there events from your past—actions by other people, yourself, circumstance, or even the worst of luck—that have put you on your current trajectory?
9. Where is this trajectory taking you?



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10. Like Bree, are there voices from your past that convince you that you are unable to overcome challenges? If so, how are you able to address them?
11. Bree was faced with fear stopping her from even attempting things outside her comfort zone. How would you address this?
12. Why would Bree keep a secret like the New York audition from Eliza over the years? If you were either Bree or Eliza in that situation, what would you do?
13. Like Lincoln, are there people in your past whose actions have driven you away from the person you are meant to be?
14. Lincoln covered the pain of rejection with materialism. How would you handle that if a friend was living that life?
15. Ultimately, Andy decided that it was easier to run than face up to the consequences of his actions. How long do you think Andy will be running for? What would it take for him to stop running?
16. Eliza said she had moved on, fifteen years after breaking up with Lincoln. What did you think of that—is that fair?
17. Lincoln was still, in his own way, clinging to the past. Should he have moved on? If so, how? If not, why not?
18. Whose face is in the center of your life's compass?
19. What do you think the sandstorm represented? And the wind that carried away certain guides? Were there any other symbolic elements of the Australian outback that represented parts of the characters' journeys?
20. Like Andy, do you entertain compulsions in your life you know are unhealthy for you?



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