The Survivors by Jane Harper

The book is named after the sculpture called The Survivors that stands sentry at the caves in Evelyn Bay, which is almost a character in its own right. Discuss the meaning and significance of the title and the sculpture in the context of the book and its characters.

After the storm, Kieran accepted that he was partly to blame for the deaths of his brother and Toby. How do you think this influenced the way he lived his life from that point on? How do the events of the novel change this, and what effect might that have on Kieran’s future?

Why do you think Kieran is more successful than some of the other characters at living with the trauma he experienced? What are some of the ways in which the other characters try to cope, and how successful are they?

Kieran’s relationship with his parents was irrevocably changed after his brother’s death. How has Brian’s dementia wrought further changes, both positive and negative?

Liam Gilroy says to Kieran on page 158, “You kind of ruined my life, you know?” How have Liam’s father’s death and the circumstances in which it occurred shaped the man Liam has become?

The opening of Chapter 11 (page 95) describes all the ways in which Finn Elliott was “the real deal.” Later, we see some examples of behavior that paint Finn in a less flattering light. However, many of these more questionable behaviors are excused, or even celebrated. What do you think this says about the idea of masculinity in our society?

George Barlin says of Evelyn Bay, “Places like this, they need to be tight-knit to work. Once the trust is broken, they’re stuffed. Whether people see it or not, the writing’s on the wall.” What do you think he means? Do you think this is true?

What are some of the effects of the outpourings on the social media site EBOCH on Bronte’s murder investigation? How is the ability to be anonymous on the EBOCH site helpful or unhelpful?

Mia says of the storm, “I’m not for a minute saying that [what happened to Finn] was a good thing, of course not. But you’re right. It did change your life, but I’m not sure it was in the way you sometimes think it was… Honestly, Kieran, I think it made you a better person. Kinder, definitely. More aware of other people, more conscious of your actions.” Do you think Mia is right?

Did you suspect at any point that Sean might have been involved in either (or both) of the deaths of Bronte and Gabby? Why or why not, do you think?