Questions for “Unspoken: Asian Americans on Coming Out to Immigrant Parents” and “Quarantine”

Before Reading

1. Coming out as gay, lesbian, bi, trans, and/or queer is often difficult and, even if the person who is coming out has been thinking about it and deciding how and when to do it for a long time, it may seem surprising to the people they come out to. How might this be made more difficult if your parents are immigrants?

2. What did you hear during the documentary about how their lives have been affected by living at the intersection of being a minority and an LGBTQ person?

During Reading

3. After the first full paragraph on page 4 (“...dating men.”), answer the following question: How does the narrator’s mother view his sexuality? What makes you think this?

4. After the last full paragraph on page 4 (“Last week...she said.”), answer the following: after viewing the documentary, why do you think he “better not tell Bapuji that Jeremy is my boyfriend”? Use examples from the story and the documentary.

5. After the last paragraph on page 5 (“...like a bribe.”), answer the following: why is the narrator so torn about what to do with the money? Use examples from the text to answer.

6. After the paragraph break on page 8 (“...materializing as clouds.”), answer the following: what is it like living with Bapuji? Use examples from the text to answer.
7. After the second full paragraph on page 10 ("...prepare for bed."), answer the following: why does the mother react like this towards Bapuji? Why do they decide to watch a movie?

8. After the paragraph break on page 11 ("...starts the car."), answer the following: does the narrator’s father have a responsibility to stand up to Bapuji? Explain your answer.

**After reading**

9. What do you think the messages are on his answering machine? Why do you think that?

10. Look back page 4 and find the quote, towards the bottom, about “home-cooked Indian food” and “spaghetti and microwave burritos.” How is the last sentence of the story **ironic** after looking at this? Explain making sure you demonstrate your knowledge of irony.

11. How might the trip to the commune aid in understanding Bapuji’s actions since his wife, Motiba, died?