

Questions and Topics for Discussion

LOST DOGS OF ROME, Williams & Castle Press, 2017

By Patsy Hand

1. There is a strong theme of finding family throughout, and yet every character seems to move away from reaching that goal.

What creates a sense of family?

Does Francesca manage to create a sense of family?

Is home and family the same thing?

2. Did Jack really want a relationship with his father? With Francesca?

3. With regards to her son, did Francesca abandon Jack? Or did she believe:

A) She had no choice, or

B) He would have a better life with the senator?

4. Did Francesca do the best she could under the circumstances?

5. How did the incident of the robbery and beating change Francesca, or did it?

6. Francesca was orphaned as a young girl. Did that impact the career she chose? What about the way she lived her life?

7. Does Will's mother, Betts, stand by Will when he needs her?

8. Jack admits he has no one in the world he can turn to. Is that his fault? Why or why not?

9. Will has a driving need to belong to something bigger than himself. Why?

10. What is the importance of Leo, the neighbor, in Will's life?

11. Should Leo have enabled Will to make his journey to Rome?

12. Who gave Will his drive and his courage? Can those traits be inherited?

13. Why does Will believe the truth is so important?

14. Is Father Berliosi an honorable man?

15. Does Father Berliosi risk the lives of the Liberatori for his own vendetta?

16. Astrid is a major character. Did she protect Will, or was she just protecting the Liberatori?

17. Did you like or hate Astrid? Explain.

18. Would you call Raife a good man? How did he influence Jack?
19. Raife had an opportunity to be a true father to Jack. Did he fail?
20. Why were Raife and Francesca so drawn to one another? Why did their relationship seem so fraught with regret? Were they as good at being a team as they believed? Do you see Francesca's proposal for a strong part-time life working?
21. The senator is a complicated character. Would you describe her as selfish? Did she provide a good home for Jack? Discuss her relationship with both her son and Raife.
22. The title of the novel is Lost Dogs of Rome. Discuss the title as a metaphor for the characters in the book.