

Discussion Questions

For ANGEL BOY

By Kelly Jones

1. Discuss the book title. Who do you believe the angel boy is?
2. At the beginning of the book there is a reference to “unpardoned sins,” then later, the idea of forgiveness plays into the story. Is there a difference between pardoning and forgiving? Do you believe there are acts that cannot be forgiven? Are there any in the story?
3. Dana is anxious about having Mia with her for the school year. Why do you believe she is apprehensive? Does her relationship with Mia change over the course of the book? Why or why not?
4. Dana relies on her sister-in-law for advice on teenagers. Do you think she offers good advice? What kind of advice would you offer?
5. When do you think Dana begins to trust Ryan? Do you believe there is a turning point, and do you believe this is a mutual trust? How important is this to the story? How do you think these two are alike? Different? Are similarities or differences more important in a relationship?
6. At times, Dana expresses thoughts on journalistic ethics, but at other times she seems unconcerned. Do you think she makes the correct decisions throughout the story, both professionally and personally? What do you think is the chief factor that influences her to continue working with Ryan?
7. After accusations are made against Kip, Dana considers that, “Women who wanted to get ahead put up with that shit. Younger women just weren’t inclined to do so.” Do you believe this is true? Do you believe women of Dana’s age have accepted behavior that younger women will not? How do you feel about Dana’s friendship with Kip? Should she have been aware of his behavior? Should she have done something or said something? How did you feel when he came back to Boston?
8. Fire has many symbolic meanings including birth, rebirth, resurrection, and hope as well as being the predominant symbol of hell. How does the author use these contradictory concepts of fire both literally and figuratively to tell the story?
9. Mia reflects that, “Everyone suffered loss, and yet many overcame the grief. Others were haunted forever.” Do you believe there are losses that cannot be overcome? How does loss define the different characters in the story? How does it affect Dana and Drew’s marriage?
10. Should an organization or religion be punished as a whole for the behavior of a few? Why or why not?
11. Were you surprised by the ending of the story? If it were to continue, what do you think Dana would be doing now?