

THE LOST MADONNA by Kelly Jones
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Have you read the book? Some of these questions might reveal elements of the plot.

1. What is the significance of the title **THE LOST MADONNA**? Does the title take on new meaning as Suzanne reveals more about her past?
2. The story is told entirely from Suzanne's point of view, but at two different times in her life, both relating to her experiences in Florence. How is the young Suzanne different from the middle-aged Suzanne? How are they alike? At one point in the story Roberto tells her she is not the same person as she was then. Do you believe this is true? Why or why not?
3. When Suzanne visits the Brancacci Chapel for the second time, she sees Masaccio's and Masolino's frescoes of Adam and Eve in a different light than on her first visit with Stefano. What did she think of the frescoes on her first visit? How does she see them now? Do you think this view has been influenced more by her education in art history or by her personal experiences? When Suzanne notices that the leaves added during the reign of Cosimo III have been removed, revealing the artists' original nude figures, she reflects on how society's sense of morality changes over time. Do you think this is true? Is morality dictated by society? How does this idea of morality determined by society become a part of Suzanne's story?
4. Suzanne admits that she has had trouble in relationships, even telling Roberto at one point that she isn't good at this. Why do you think she has not found a successful relationship? Do you think her relationship with Roberto will continue to be successful?
5. The one man who has remained constant in Suzanne's life has been Charley. Why do you think they have been able to maintain a friendship? What role has he played in her life and how would you describe their relationship?
6. Point out scenes in the story where Suzanne interacts with children. How do you think she feels about children and family? Why do you think she decides not to take advantage of the new medical technology that might allow her to have a child in middle age?
7. What do you think Stefano's true feelings were toward Suzanne when they were young and worked on the restoration after the flood? When they meet years later? Do you see him as the villain in the story? Is there a villain in the story? Do you believe the scene depicted in Greece will be the last time they meet?
8. Why do you think Pietro took the painting? Do you think Suzanne made the right decision in not returning it or reporting it to the authorities when she discovered it? Do you think it will eventually be found and returned? Is this important to the story?
9. Toward the end of the story, Suzanne speaks of sin and forgiveness. What do you think she perceives as her own sin? Does she deal with the forgiveness of others? How?

10. What do you believe Suzanne sees as her own personal loss or losses? By the end of the story do you feel she has found what she had thought was lost forever?
11. Why does Pietro's mother take the action revealed in the epilogue? Do you believe this provides a satisfying conclusion to the story? Why or why not?