

LADY SUNSHINE

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Reader's Guide



QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Several characters note the Sandcastle's isolation, describing it as walled off from time or the modern world. How does this affect Jackie's stay there in 1979? In 1999?
2. Voyeurism is a major theme in the novel. Why do Jackie and Willa spy from the treehouse? Is it ultimately constructive or destructive? Who else in the book engages in voyeurism, and why? How are their motives different from or similar to Jackie and Willa's reasons for spying?
3. Jackie and Willa are opposites in nearly every way, but they idolize each other. Do you think they see each other clearly when they're teenagers? Adults? How do their roles reverse over time?
4. Jackie is obsessed with Debbie Harry and Blondie, while Willa loves folk singers like Joni Mitchell and Joan Armatrading. Who were your favorite musicians when you were a teenager, and why? Have your musical tastes changed over the years?

5. As a teenager, why is Jackie drawn to Graham? What does she find in him that she doesn't find elsewhere in her life? How does this connection impact her reaction to the revelation about his treatment of Angela?
6. How do the following characters approach their musical talent differently?—Graham, Willa, Bree, Jackie, Shane. Why are some people able to handle fame and attention, while others are not?
7. Can you separate a creator from their art? Can you appreciate their work even if they have not behaved appropriately as people?
8. If you left behind unfinished art like Graham did, would you want someone else to complete your work? Why or why not?
9. In 1999, Willa hints that Graham's accident might have been for the best. Do you agree? How are she and Jackie able to look at what happened to him differently as grown women than as teenagers in 1979?
10. Why do Jackie and Avery toss the album review into the ocean? What do you imagine life will be like at the Sandcastle for Jackie and Avery and for future generations? How will it be different or the same?