

The Silver Gun Discussion Questions

1. When you think of the 1930s in America, what comes to mind? Did the representations of the '30s surprise you? Why or why not?
2. Just like art, stories speak differently to different people. Discuss the overarching themes of the book. For you, what was the main theme?
3. When you think back to the book, what scenes keep coming to mind? What has been the most memorable thing about the book?
4. Who do you think the hooded figure is in the Intro? (Hint: We will find out who it is in the next book).



5. Did you read the quotes at the beginning of the chapters? Why or why not? Why do you think art is a theme in this series?

(My answer: I confess I sometimes don't read the epigraphs at the beginning of the chapter. It's like I can't wait to get to the story. For this series, though, I wanted those quotes because I wanted to underscore the idea that art was a serious theme in society at the time. And even today, art has a capacity to "open the shutters of our heart," as a friend of mine likes to say. I think we can see things through art that we cannot see otherwise.)

6. If you did read the ML quotes at the beginning of chapters, did you see how they connected to the chapter theme? Were there any that stood out to you and why?
7. How do you think van Gogh's search for acceptance mirrors Lane's (and Finn's) desire for home? What might Lane find when she ventures to her childhood home in Rochester, Michigan?
8. Just like the art and vitality of the 1930s being overshadowed by gangster stories and the Great Depression, van Gogh's reputation is a mixed bag. His genius is loved and understood these days, but sometimes the fact that he cut off his ear overrides everything else. Did you know some of this history of van Gogh? What was new to you? Did you recognize any of his sayings before it was revealed just who ML was?
9. In Stephen King's book, *On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft*, he has a quote that says, "Life isn't a support system for art. It's the other way around." Do you agree that art is a support system to life? Why or why not?
10. The epilogue gives a clue to Tucker's role in the next book. What do you think he'll do and what is his main objective?