ReadingGroupGuides
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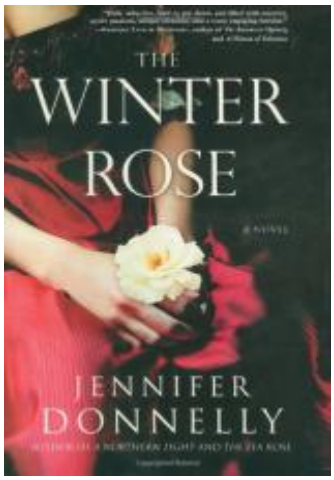
The Winter Rose

by Jennifer Donnelly



About the Book

Spanning three continents and crossing all corners of London society in the early twentieth century, **The Winter Rose** is the story of female physician India Selwyn Jones, and how her world is upended when she crosses paths, and falls in love, with notorious gangster Sid Malone. Exploring many potent themes --- such as the role of women in the 1900s, the harmful effects of secret-keeping, and what happens when love crosses the social strata --- **The Winter Rose** is a terrific choice for book groups, and the below questions are designed to aid discussion of this sweeping, multilayered novel.

Discussion Guide

1. The Winter Rose is filled with vivid descriptions of England in the early twentieth century. Which images or scenes stood out for you?

2. Family, and familial duty, is at the center of the book. Talk about the important, and sometimes detrimental, role that family plays in the lives of the main characters.

3. Before you started reading **The Winter Rose**, what did you know about 1900s London? What are some of the things you?ve learned? Could you have lived in that time?

4. Discuss the role of women in the book. How were they treated? Which of the female characters would you describe as a feminist?

5. Discuss Sid Malone --- was he a Robin Hood, or the devil incarnate? Did you agree with Ella?s exhortation on page 172, ?Let a bad man do a good deed?? Did you like Sid? Why or why not?

6. What was your opinion of Freddie Lytton? Did you suspect his duplicity? Do you think India was aware of his bad

intentions? If not, why do you think she didn?t know what he was up to?

7. What was at the heart of India and Sid?s attraction to one another? Did you expect them to reunite at the book?s end?

8. In Chapter 28, India says to Sid, ?It?s such a hard world. Such an ugly world. Sometimes it seems like a fool?s errand to try and change it for the better? (page 237). Why does she --- and Joe, Fiona, and Sid --- try so hard to better the world they live in when change is so difficult to effect?

9. ??Bury the past,? he said aloud, as he left Fiona?s study, never realizing, never suspecting, that the past might well bury him,? (page 33). How did the past come back to haunt Joe?

10. ?[India had] known her only twenty-four hours, but she already felt close to her,? (page 81). Talk about the friendship between India and Ella Moskowitz. Why did they become so close? What (or who) did Ella represent to India?

11. Of all the twists and turns of plot in **The Winter Rose**, which one caught you most by surprise? Why?

12. What does the book?s title mean? What is the significance of a rose in winter?

Author Bio

Jennifer Donnelly?s first novel, THE TEA ROSE, was a Book Sense pick and a Romantic Times Book Club top pick. Donnelly is also the author of the critically acclaimed novel THE WINTER ROSE, and of the award-winning young adult novels A NORTHERN LIGHT and REVOLUTION. She lives with her family in upstate New York.

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