

INSIDE THE WOLF by AMY ROWLAND

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. North Carolina is home to the only population of wild red wolves. How are wolves depicted in the novel? Is the red wolf Rachel sees throughout the novel “real”?
2. Shared experiences (both happy and tragic) can bind generations, but also separate them. How did the shootings affect Rachel’s family? Professor’s?
3. How does the novel’s setting figure in the story? How does it influence the characters?
4. What was the overall effect of the novel’s three-section structure? What did it suggest about the story being told?
5. Which character did you find the most sympathetic? The most intriguing? Did your relationship to particular characters change throughout the novel?
6. The references to folklore and ghost stories often involve violence toward women. What effect did they have on your reading? Are there myths or folklore you grew up with that seem an intentional effort at collective remembering—or collective forgetting? What’s the value in this? What’s the danger?
7. In 2020 (the most recent year with available data from the CDC), guns were the number one cause of death for children ages 1-19 in the United States, and 4,357 children died of gun violence. Do these statistics surprise you? Why or why not?

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8. As the novel shows, shootings have both direct and indirect victims. How do you think gun violence will shape the lives of Tom and Lyric?
9. What brings Tobias and Rachel together? Do you think they have a future as a couple?
10. Tobias tells Rachel that no matter how she feels about her hometown, the people there know her and would pull her out of a fire. “But they’d be the ones who started it!” she retorts. What role does the idea of home and community play in the story and in your own life?
11. What are the roles of secrets in families? In communities?
12. Is lying ever the right thing?
13. There are several moments in the novel in which the past haunts the present. Does the past haunt your community?
14. What did you make of the ending? Do you think Rachel will stay in Shiloh?
15. Do you think it’s meaningful or pointless to live in a community where your views are in the minority? Do you live in a so-called “bubble”? Have you always?

