

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION | *The Angel of Losses* | Stephanie Feldman

1. Who is the white magician introduced in the beginning of the novel? Why does Eli tell his granddaughters, Marjorie and Holly, the story of the white magician when they are children? How does this story influence the course of their lives?
2. Describe Marjorie's relationship with her grandfather and with her sister, Holly. How do both change as the girls grow up?
3. Why do you think Eli wanted his notebooks burned after his death? What drives Marjorie to pursue her grandfather's notebooks? Why did he never share his story with his family when he was alive? As Marjorie discovers each story that he wrote, what does she learn about Eli, her family, and herself? How does the knowledge transform her?
4. Do you understand the decisions he made in his youth? What is his ultimate legacy to his granddaughters, especially Marjorie? Can we ever run away from our past or change our heritage?
5. What is the Angel of Losses? How does discovering the story of the White Rebbe and the Angel impact the decisions Marjorie eventually makes? Before he dies, her grandfather warns her, "he's coming for me. Then he's coming for you." What does this cryptic message mean?
6. Talk about Holly and Nathan's marriage. What drew Holly to Nathan? Could you change your whole life as she did for love? Are they happy together? When can faith evolve into a cult? Why does Marjorie mistrust religion? Does her skepticism change by the story's end?
7. What is Marjorie's opinion of Nathan? Why doesn't she approve of her sister's new life? What do you think of Nathan? Is he devout or crazed? Do you think he and Marjorie are opposites, or more alike than they realize?
8. How does meeting Simon impact Marjorie? Why won't she trust him with her dreams, with the story of her grandfather and his mystical tales and their connection to her sister, Nathan, and the new baby?
9. Was Marjorie responsible for her nephew's illness? Does she heal him? If so, how? What is the cost of healing him?
10. What role do folktales and fairy tales play in culture? What do they teach us about ourselves?
11. What do you think happens to Marjorie and Holly after the novel is done? Do you think Marjorie can end the family legacy?
12. Before you read the novel were you familiar with the tale of the Wandering Jew? What did you think of this retelling? What did you take away from reading *The Angel of Losses*?