

Someone Knows Discussion Questions

by Lisa Scottoline

Author Bio: (from Fantastic Fiction & Lisa Scottoline website)

Lisa Scottoline is a New York Times bestselling and Edgar Award-winning author. She has 30 million copies of her books in print in the United States, has been published in thirty-five countries, and her thrillers have been optioned for television and film. Lisa also writes a weekly column with her daughter, Francesca Serritella, for The Philadelphia Inquirer. Those stories have been adapted into a series of memoirs. She lives in the Philadelphia area with an array of disobedient pets.



Characters:

- **Allie Garvey:**
 - 1999 – (15) – Slightly overweight. Not in any clique. Has a crush on David Hybrinski. Older sister, Jill, had Cystic Fibrosis. Died a year earlier. Father, Mark, is an orthodontist. Mom, Linda, is clinically depressed over Jill’s death.
 - 2019 – Married to Larry Rucci. College sweetheart. Marriage is in trouble. No children. Works as a child advocate getting special needs children the education they need.
- **Sasha Barrow** – Popular 15-year-old girl. Likes designing clothes. Successful parents travel around the world for work. “Bonnie & Clyde” the family’s live-in staff take care of Sasha and the home. Enthralled with the gun Julian found.
- **Julian Browne** – Teenage boy. David’s best friend. Goes to the local private school, Lutheran Academy. Father built the development they all live in. Parents are divorced. Found the gun and buried it. Has a crush on Sasha, his next door neighbor. Voyeur. Comes from a great deal of money.
- **Scott Browne** – Julian’s father. Real estate mogul. Self-made millionaire. Divorced from Julian’s mother. Playboy with many girlfriends and a boat. Built Brandywine Hunt, the development where all the families live.
- **Barton Dinnerstein** – Attorney Allie consults on Russian Roulette death.
- **Kyle Gallagher** – (15) – New to the area. Used to play basketball. Renting place in development with mother. Parents divorced. Used to be Kyle Allen Hammond, but changed his name when he and his mother moved to the development. His father, Dr. Brian Hammond, a pediatric oncologist, is in prison.
- **Barb Gallagher** – Kyle’s mother. Used to live in the area and moved back when husband went to jail. She turned her husband in for his crimes. Best friend is Sharon Kelley.
- **David Hybrinski** – (15) – Popular teenage boy. Nationally ranked junior tennis player. His favorite book is “Infinite Jest” by David Foster Wallace. Has an older brother, Jason, and younger, twin sisters, Jessica and Jennifer. Father, Bill Hybrinski, owns a failing optical (eyeglasses) store.
- **Larry Rucci** – Allie’s husband. A lawyer. Lives in Philadelphia. Good with people. He is a salesman at heart. Marriage to Allie is in trouble. Believes he and his family are uncommonly lucky.

Discussion Questions:

1. Did you like the book? Why or why not?
2. What does the title "**Someone Knows**" reference/mean?
3. This story is told by multiple characters (each teen, their parents, the kids as adults, etc.) and in two different timelines. Why do you think that the author did that? Did it work or did you find it confusing? Do you like that story telling device? Why or why not?
4. Who was your favorite character? Who was your least favorite character? Why?
5. **Someone Knows** begins in the present, but then moves into the past as Allie remembers her teenage years. Discuss the way that the present is informed by the past throughout the novel. How does the structure of the novel reflect the influence of the past?
6. Discuss the ways that the members of Allie Garvey's family copes with Jill's death. Why do you think that they express their grief so differently? Some characters in the book think that Mark's way of grieving may have cost him his wife. Do you agree? Do you feel sympathy towards him?
7. How did Kyle's father's criminal actions and his going to jail influence what happened to Kyle in the book? How did the story breaking in the news affect "the incident"?
8. Do you think the way the teens reacted to "the incident" is true to life or exaggerated? How do you think you would have reacted?
9. Scottoline attempts to capture the ups and downs of adolescence. Some research shows that teenage brains work very differently from those of adults. Where do you see this in the novel? How do the voices of the teenager narrators differ from those chapters narrated by adults? Do you see Allie's voice change over the course of **Someone Knows**?
10. How are the four main characters each affected by guilt over Kyle's death? What are the mental and physical manifestations of guilt that follow them into adulthood?
11. Discuss the role of memory in **Someone Knows**. Does it work for or against the characters? Is it reliable? How do the characters' memories of the same events differ?
12. What do you think of Larry's role in the novel? What was it like to hear from a character who was not connected to Kyle's death? What would you have done if your spouse or family member had kept a major secret from you, like Allie did from Larry?
13. Do you think Julian's actions were foreseeable? Could anyone have done anything to stop them?
14. Do you believe that Allie was right to tell Barb, Kyle's mom, about the true events surrounding "the incident"? What would you have done had you been in her place? And how would you have felt if you were Barb?
15. What role does justice play in the novel? Is justice truly achieved after Allie confesses to Barb? Consider the "City of Refuge" Barton describes. Do you believe that people can heal by admitting and sharing their guilt with others?
16. Are any of the characters in **Someone Knows** truly "innocent"? And does hiding the truth of that death make certain characters "guilty," even if they did not fire the gun?

17. Once it was revealed who loaded the gun, how did you feel? Why?
18. What is the difference between responsibility, culpability, and guilt? Allie feels guilty for what happened during “the incident.” Is she responsible for it? Is she culpable? Should she feel guilty? How do you mitigate feelings of guilt?
19. Who was the most at fault in this book? The least?
20. What do you imagine will happen to Larry, Allie, and their child after the novel’s end? Do you think that Allie will be a “good” parent? What are the different representations of good parenting in **Someone Knows**?
21. Scottoline has written a number of other books. Will you read them?

References:

- Fantastic Fiction – <https://www.fantasticfiction.com/s/lisa-scottoline/>
- Novelist – <http://web.b.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.clevnet.org/novp/detail?vid=2&sid=c4f8f2bd-7bd6-44e8-a284-fcc7b57ddf6e%40pdc-v-sessmgr01&bdata=JnNpdGU9bm92cC1saXZl#UI=10764093&db=neh>
- Reading Group Guides – <https://www.readinggroupguides.com/reviews/someone-knows/guide>
- Lisa Scottoline website – <https://www.scottoline.com/>

Lisa Scottoline Books

Rosato and Associates

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|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Everywhere That Mary Went (1993) | 7. Courting Trouble (2002) |
| 2. Legal Tender (1996) | 8. Dead Ringer (2003) |
| 3. Rough Justice (1995) | 9. Killer Smile (2004) |
| 4. Mistaken Identity (1998) | 10. Lady Killer (2008) |
| 5. Moment of Truth (2000) | 11. Think Twice (2010) |
| 6. The Vendetta Defense (2001) | |

Rosato & DiNunzio

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| 1. Accused (2013) | 4. Damaged (2016) |
| 2. Betrayed (2014) | 5. Exposed (2017) |
| 3. Corrupted (2015) | 6. Feared (2018) |

Stand Alone Novels:

- Final Appeal (1995)
- Running From the Law (1995)
- Naked Came the Phoenix (2001)
- Natural Suspect (2001)
- Devil's Corner (2005)
- Dirty Blonde (2006)
- Daddy's Girl (2007)
- Look Again (2009)
- No Rest for the Dead (2011)
- Save Me (2011)
- Come Home (2012)
- Don't Go (2013)
- Keep Quiet (2014)
- Every Fifteen Minutes (2015)
- Most Wanted (2016)
- One Perfect Lie (2017)
- After Anna (2018)
- Someone Knows (2019)
- Eternal (2021)

Nonfiction

- Why My Third Husband Will Be a Dog (2009)
- My Nest Isn't Empty, It Just Has More Closet Space (2010) (with Francesca Serritella)
- Best Friends, Occasional Enemies (2011) (with Francesca Serritella)
- Happy and Merry (2012) (with Francesca Serritella)
- Meet Me at Emotional Baggage Claim (2012) (with Francesca Serritella)
- Have a Nice Guilt Trip (2014) (with Francesca Serritella)
- Does This Beach Make Me Look Fat? (2015) (with Francesca Serritella)
- I've Got Sand in All the Wrong Places (2016) (with Francesca Serritella)
- I Need a Lifeguard Everywhere But the Pool (2017) (with Francesca Serritella)
- I See Life Through Rose-Colored Glasses (2018) (with Francesca Serritella)

If you liked Someone Knows, try...

- Open House – Katie Sise
 - Then She Was Gone – Lisa Jewell
 - The Bad Daughter – Joy Fielding
 - A Simple Favor – Darcey Bell
 - The Good Daughter – Karin Slaughter
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