

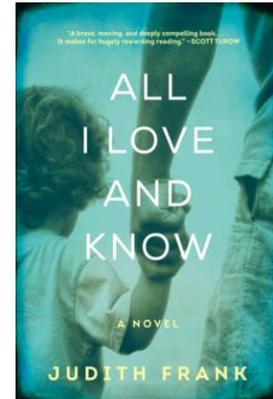
All I Love and Know

William Morrow

By Judith Frank

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Questions for Discussion



1. The first 45 pages of *All I Love and Know* are narrated from Matt's point of view. Why might Frank have chosen him as the initial point-of-view character in this novel? How does Matt's outsider status – as a young gay man, as a non-Jew, as “the boyfriend” – put him in an awkward or advantageous position as Daniel's partner in this crisis? What about as a parent to Noam and Gal?
2. In what ways is *All I Love and Know* about the experience of being a twin? What does being a twin mean to Daniel, and how does it affect his thinking about rebuilding his life after Joel's death? We're told that he and Joel “invented the semifacetious idea of *twinsism*: the act of stereotyping or fetishizing twins”. What does that running joke tell us about their feelings about twinship?
3. *All I Love and Know* can be read as a novel about parenting and being parented: as these gay men become sudden parents, they are thrust into contact with their own parents and confront their feelings about being their parents' children. What are the aspects of parenting that the novel asks you to think about? What do you think Daniel and Matt's relative strengths are as parents to Gal and Noam?
4. Matt moved to Northampton after his best friend Jay died of AIDS. How does Jay's death change the way he handles this new crisis? How does this AIDS story relate to the central narrative of terrorism and trauma? What is at stake in the fight Matt and Daniel have over the relative “innocence” of Jay's and Joel's deaths?
5. Why do you think Frank decided to make Malka and Yaakov Holocaust survivors? What does their experience add to the novel's story of survival? At the military cemetery, Malka surprises Daniel by comparing victims of terror to Holocaust survivors and claims that Israelis despise them both. What is the connection, in her mind? Does her bitterness make you think differently about her?
6. Israel is very important to many American Jews, and it appeals to the Rosen sons in different ways. What does Israeli culture have to offer Daniel and Joel as young men from an affluent Jewish-American family?
7. In a central event of the novel, talking to a reporter, Daniel says of the terrorist who killed his brother, “...I can understand trying to violently place yourself within the Israelis' field of vision, in a way they can't ignore. I don't condone it, but I do understand it”. He receives hate mail in response, and wonders whether he has “breached an important code of

conduct, or failed at some response crucial to the common human enterprise". What do you make of Daniel's response to the terrorist attack? Is he doing something wrong? Does the novel make you think any differently about terrorism?

8. Daniel has a left-of-center position about the Israeli occupation. From what kinds of sources does he get his information? What factors from his personal life contribute to the way he feels about Israel's policies? And conversely, how does his political position impact or impede his mourning process? What do you think the novel is trying to say about the tension between the personal and the political?
9. Daniel grieves throughout the novel, sometimes in alienating ways. He believes Matt and his friends are pressuring him for "grieving wrong," and feels they're trying to push him into therapy. Matt believes that Daniel has become "frozen" and "different". What are the factors that have made Daniel's process especially grueling? How did you respond to the ways in which he becomes "frozen"?
10. Does Gal get lost accidentally or on purpose in the Jerusalem *shuk*? What kind of internal drama is being enacted as she races away from the suspicious box, feeling her parents at her heels? What kind of figure is Chezzi the fishmonger? What does this frightening event express about Gal's relationship with Daniel?
11. The idea of gay marriage comes up in this story, and it takes one character some time to warm to the idea. In this era of victory for marriage equality in many U.S. states, why do you think some gay and lesbian people might be ambivalent about getting married?