

AMULET BOOKS *DISCUSSION GUIDE*

VILLAGE OF SCOUNDRELS

BASED ON A TRUE
STORY OF COURAGE
DURING WWII



- Throughout the novel, Jean-Paul and others grapple with going about their normal lives, even though their very existence puts them in grave danger. How does a person go on in the face of overwhelming fear?
- The students contemplate what one should do when the law is morally wrong. When terrible wrongs are being committed, are we contributing to the problem if we don't speak up? Are we tacitly agreeing with the policies and implying that what is taking place is acceptable?
- After defying the law over and over – forging documents as well as smuggling people and contraband across borders – Sylvie wonders, “When the war is over and peace returns, will we be able to tell right from wrong?” This is an actual quote by a young rescuer. When is it justified to break the law? What are the consequences? What does it do to one's sense of right and wrong?
- Inspector Perdant asks himself, “Why? Why did he want to do what he did?” Why did so many people get on board with the German occupiers and Nazi ideals? Were these people bad?
- What makes the village of Les Lauzes (and its real counterpart, Le Chambon) and its people different from so many other places and people? Why are they willing to risk their lives to shelter Jews and other refugees when others are not? What are the reasons each individual character (Jean-Paul, Philippe, Celeste and Jules) gets involved with the rescue effort?
- In what ways do the students and villagers in the story combat hate?
- What does it mean to resist as the pastor suggests “without fear, without pride, without hatred” with only “weapons of the spirit”? What does he mean by “weapons of the spirit?”
- Can you draw parallels with what is happening now? Who are contemporary equivalents to the young people in the story? What is our responsibility now?

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AMULET

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