



Discussion Guide for
The Slave Across the Street
by Theresa Flores

Preface and Introduction:

- Share your thoughts on how Theresa began the process of writing the book.
- What symbolism did she use to represent the turning point of wanting to write the book?
- Theresa mentions that she had a difficult time defining what happened to her – eventually settling on human trafficking/slavery. What does it mean to be a slave?

Chapters 1 & 2:

- What would it feel like if you had no name?

Chapters 3 & 4:

- What kind of family did Theresa grow up in? Does this differ from your personal thought of what a human trafficking victim's background looked like?
 - Or what, if anything, surprised you about Theresa's family/background?

Chapters 5 & 6:

- What made life at the new school so different?

Chapters 7 & 8:

- How did things change from chapter 7 to chapter 8?
- Theresa says her mother embraced other ethnicities, so why do you think her mother was so opposed to the Chaldeans calling the house?

Chapters 9 & 10:

- What red flags did Theresa ignore and what "mistakes" do you think she may have made?
- How did Daniel manage to manipulate Theresa into thinking she had to earn the pictures back?

Chapter 11:

- How did racism affect Theresa's everyday life?



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Chapters 12 – 19:

- What forms of control did the Chaldeans use against Theresa?
- Do you think Daniel ever actually felt remorse for what he did?
- Theresa tried multiple times to find a “protector” but no one helped her. How do you think this affected her?
- Throughout the book, Theresa describes her mixed feelings for Daniel. How could she have these feelings?

Chapter 20:

- Would you have taken Jonathan’s offer? Why or why not?

Chapter 21:

- What do the dead animals mean?

Chapter 22 –23:

- Why didn’t the teacher stop Nick?
- Why do you think none of the teachers, the school security guard, or even the police officer do anything to help Theresa? Would she have confided in them if they had tried?
- Initially, do you think she used getting the pictures as a way to deal with the abuse, or do you think she really believed she would get the pictures if she did what they wanted?
- Do you think Theresa finally understood that she would never receive all of the pictures? Does it really seem to matter to her anymore?

Chapter 24:

- Why do you think Janie did not believe Theresa’s warnings?
- Do you think Theresa did enough to help Janie? What else, if anything, could she have done?

Chapter 25:

- Do you think Theresa experienced Stockholm syndrome and/or Post Traumatic Stress Disorder? If so, what signs was she showing?

Chapters 26 – 28:

- By moving, Theresa was physically freed from her bondage, but was she really free?
- How do you think a person moves on from something like this?

Chapter 30:

- What did you think after reading Allen’s story?



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Chapters 31 – 32:

- Why did it take so long for Theresa to confide in someone?
- Why do you think she still felt she couldn't tell her family after some time had passed?

Chapter 33:

- Are there any other questions you would like to ask Theresa?

Chapters 35 – 37:

- In this section, Theresa describes her healing process. What, if anything, stood out to you about her process?

Chapter 38:

- Theresa makes a call to action to parents, teachers, principals, coaches, law enforcement officers, and medical and counseling professionals. She asks: "How would you respond if I had been that child in your classroom [office, program family, etc.]?" "Would you make the choice to go down the hard road, with hopes of saving a child or would you ignore it? Wish it away? Turn your back?"
 - How do you, or hope that you will, respond to this call to action?
- Compare 1980s standards to current – What do we know now about human trafficking and rape that wasn't known then? Has society changed enough, or at all, to support victims?

Chapters 34 and 39:

- In these chapters, Theresa gives some information about and definitions of human trafficking and slavery. What did you think of Theresa's descriptions of the words "choice" and "options" and how these relate to human trafficking and slavery?
- On page 169 Theresa asks: "Why is it difficult for society to blame the perpetrators rather than the victim?" What is your response?

Epilogue:

- What does Theresa say is the most important message of this book?