

## **THE ETHAN CHRONICLES: REQUIEM FOR A LIFE STOLEN**

### Study Guide for High School Discussion Groups

These questions may be discussed or chosen as topics for oral or written exposition. Since there are questions for each chapter the format lends itself to discussing in a group a reading assignment that may include 3-5 chapters per night.

If the students are to read the entire book, or each of the three parts before a discussion takes place, it may be more practical to choose only those questions that have been bolded.

#### **Part One: The End**

##### **One**

Have you or anyone in your family ever received a call that someone close to you has been seriously injured or has unexpectedly died?

What did you feel, or what do you imagine you would feel if you received such a call?

Could you keep your wits about you?

##### **Two**

Have you ever had inner dialogues with different parts of your personality? Where do you think those different voices come from?

Do you try to talk calmly to yourself when you're upset?

**How do you think you might react if told the person you love the most had just unexpectedly died?**

##### **Three**

Did you feel any "foreshadowing" in this chapter? Where?

Do you think it's possible for people and animals to sense death before it comes?

##### **Four**

When did Mark really realize that Ethan was probably involved in the crash on Old County Line Road?

Why do you think no one would tell Mark at first whether Ethan was injured in the crash or not?

How risky do you think it might be to drive after receiving such news?

##### **Five**

Why do you think that Ann didn't tell Jennifer right away that Ethan had died?

Would you want to see the dead body of a loved one?

How do you think humans react differently in a situation like this than chimpanzees do?

##### **Six**

What did you feel when Officer Mergenworth told Ann he was sorry she'd had "a difficult day"?

What were some of the reactions people had when they were told of Ethan's death? Did any of them seem odd to you?

**Why do you think it's difficult for people to know what to say around someone whose loved one has just died?**

### Seven

How did you feel when Harpy put the *Bola de Ora Café de Veracruz* sack in the trash?

Why might it have had emotional value to you but not to Harpy?

What did Harpy find ironic about people moving out to the rural areas outside Denver?

**Why might it be hard for urban families to achieve an idealized life in the smaller towns?**

### Eight

Why do you think people want to spend time together when someone they know dies?

Have you heard the saying, "Only the good die young"? What do you think it means?

Where do you think the expression might have originated, or why was it "invented"?

### Nine

Is there foreshadowing in this chapter?

**What can you tell about the kind of person Ethan was from this chapter?** Do you think he was enjoying his life? Why do you think so, or why do you think he was not enjoying life?

### Ten

Why do you think Ann would want her father to feel the pain of Ethan's death more than she wanted him to minister to her as a professional?

### Eleven

**Why do you think that Doug's talking about the birds' singing and unwrapping the wooden bird in the floral arrangement felt so significant to Doug and Ann? Do you think it was just a coincidence?**

Do you think that as Ethan's father you could have felt glad that 2 of the 3 young people survived the crash?

How hard would it be for you not to feel your son should have been the one to live, and to not unfavorably compare the other two boys to your own son?

### Twelve

**What was your impression of the Felton family from clues in this chapter?**

Is there anything in this chapter that makes you think perhaps Debby Felton was trying to escape certain hard realities in her life?

### Thirteen

What juxtapositions did the author use in this chapter to contrast the potential of Ethan's young life with the reality of his premature death?

What does the note Ethan wrote to Mark about the job he'd done arc-ing a satellite dish tell you about Ethan?

**Fourteen**

What is the basic message about life that both Ann and Doug feel compelled to share with the people at the memorial service? How do you think that become so clear to them?

**Fifteen**

Why do you think Ann finds so appealing the images her friend, Patricia, tells her about Ethan “on the other side”? Do you think Patricia’s visions of Ethan are real experiences, or symbolic, or dream sequences?

**Sixteen**

**Why were Mark and Jennifer upset by the note from the volunteer fireman, saying Ethan had been ‘strong and courageous till the end’? How could Ethan have been ‘not quite conscious’ but still demonstrated bravery?**

Why do you think the volunteer fireman who climbed into the truck with Ethan might not have wanted to speak with Ethan’s family?

**Part One**

**What did you learn about death and grief from reading this section of the book? Why do you think the author called the beginning section “The End”?**