

READER'S GUIDE - THEMES

Discussion & Reflection Questions for the Book

Authors: Cherie Lutes, Jalynn Bacon-Dorow & M.T New

I. Identity, Belonging & the “Scatterling” Theme

1. The title *Scatterling* refers to someone displaced or scattered—carrying both freedom and loneliness. In what ways does Louis embody this identity throughout the memoir?
 2. Louis refers to his Arizona home as “Our shelter in nature.” Why do you think this phrase carries such deep emotional significance for him?
 3. What is a “scatterling,” and how does Louis’s lifelong movement between places—both physical and emotional—reflect that term?
 4. How does Louis relate to the void in the sculpture *E Viaggiatori*, and what does it symbolize in the context of his journey?
 5. Have you ever experienced “hiraeth”—a longing for a place or time that no longer exists? How did Louis’s reflections on his past evoke that emotion for you?
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II. Family, Relationships & Emotional Growth

6. The memoir begins with a photo of two-year-old Louis with his father, Kanna. What was your first impression of this image, and how did it evolve as you read?
7. Louis refers to his in-laws as “Mom and Dad,” never “step-parents.” How does this choice reflect the book’s broader themes of chosen family and deep gratitude?
8. Louis’s relationship with his father was shaped by political and generational tensions—especially regarding apartheid. How did these ideological differences impact their bond?
9. His mother’s rejection of his best friend Lou left an emotional scar. How do such childhood betrayals influence a person’s emotional life and relationships?

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10. Divorce deeply affected Louis, who described it as “in some ways worse than death.” What do you think he meant by that? Do you agree?
 11. How did Louis’s second wife, Terri, help him heal emotionally? What mutual interests and experiences forged their bond?
 12. What traits—strengths, flaws, and growth—did you observe in Louis over the years? Which qualities did you admire or relate to most?
 13. What are some examples of how Louis and Terri prioritized family, even during times of hardship?
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III. History, Politics & Social Change

14. What role did historical events—such as apartheid, the Rhodesian war, Mandela’s rise, and the fall of colonialism—play in shaping Louis’s journey?
 15. How do the “winds of change,” as referenced in Harold Macmillan’s famous speech, echo through Louis’s life?
 16. How did Louis’s personal rejection of apartheid contrast with his upbringing? How do family and environment shape political views?
 17. What insights did the book offer into apartheid, British colonization, and the social divides between English and Afrikaners in South Africa?
 18. Did the book shift your understanding of South African history or the immigrant experience?
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IV. Adventure, Hunting & Conservation

19. How did Louis’s early experiences as a hunter evolve into a deeper ethic around animal protection and photo safaris?
20. What ethical dilemmas did he face as a professional hunter? What specific events changed his perspective?
21. What were the consequences of killing top genetic specimens in a herd? How did this impact conservation efforts?
22. Why did Louis ultimately transition from hunting to guiding photographic safaris, and what benefits did he see for local communities?

23. How did he help transform parts of Botswana from hunting grounds into conservation tourism destinations?

V. Career, Reinvention & Resilience

24. How did Louis's career shift from law to safari guide, and later to digital entrepreneur, reflect his resilience?
25. What role did technology and the internet play in reviving his business? How did his vision for owning the best safari domain names pay off?
26. How did helping his son with a domain backfire, and what impact did it have on their relationship?
27. How did Louis and Terri adapt their businesses during economic ups and downs? What can be learned from their flexibility?
28. What challenges did Louis face in immigrating to the U.S., and how did they affect his marriage and mental health?

VI. Loss, Legacy & Personal Philosophy

29. In the "Author's Notes," Louis makes a heartfelt plea to readers. What message or legacy do you think he hopes to leave behind?
30. What helped Louis rediscover happiness after the devastation of divorce?
31. Terri said, "No matter what, I just put one foot in front of the other." Do you relate to that life philosophy?
32. Bart Saaiman's quote—"You can run out of money, as long as you don't run out of plans"—appears often. Has a similar mindset helped you?
33. How did Louis and Terri draw on personal fortitude to navigate health crises and aging?
34. Do you think family, friends, or life partners are most vital to emotional survival? Why?

VII. Culture, Art & Writing Style

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- 35. How would you describe Louis's storytelling style—philosophical, humorous, candid? Did his voice enhance your connection to the story?
 - 36. Did you find the cultural references—African sayings, food, landscape, languages—enriching? Did the book make you want to visit southern Africa?
 - 37. What did you learn from Louis's understanding of animal behavior and his time in the wild?
 - 38. How did Louis's multilingualism shape his identity and deepen his connection to Africa?
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VIII. Personal Reflection

- 39. Which moments in the book resonated most with your own life experience—childhood freedom, family conflict, career change, love lost or found?
 - 40. Have you ever had to start over or adapt drastically as Louis did? How did you handle it?
 - 41. What theme—identity, resilience, legacy, loss, adventure, activism—left the deepest impression?
 - 42. Would you recommend *Scatterling* to others? Why or why not?
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IX. Reader Engagement

- 43. We'd be honored if you'd consider writing a review! Reader feedback helps new readers discover the story. If you're open to sharing your thoughts, please email Louis@AfricanSafaris.travel and we'll send you a direct review link.