

# “Beyond The Other Side” Discussion Guide

**Note:** Please be aware that the following questions may prompt conversations about death, slavery, physical combat, suicidal ideation, and suicide.

## CHARACTERS

1. Did Ryan or Eli have any special skills that made them stand out in Alezand?
2. What do you believe has made Ryan so distrusting of adults and strangers?
3. Ryan mentions that Eli’s ability to switch off his sadness might haunt him down the line. How might that impact him as he gets older?
4. How did Ryan evolve throughout the story? How different has she become since the moment she stole from the corpse on the first page?
5. Is Benny an antagonist or a villain? (Antagonists pursue goals that create obstacles for the hero. Villains pursue their goals by choosing evil.)
6. Consider the dream catcher girl. Did Ryan drive her to make that fateful decision toward the end of the story? Or is the dream catcher girl responsible for her own actions? Perhaps the government of Alezand is responsible because they didn’t provide accessible resources; what do you think?
7. Think about the ending regarding the necklace. Did Ryan make the correct decision? Why or why not?

## WORLD-BUILDING

1. What does Alezand say about our current world? Is it optimistic about the future? Or warning us?
2. What do you think life is like on The Other Side? Knowing what happens at the end of the story, do you believe knowing what happens on The Other Side is important?
3. How might you react if you were placed in the world of Alezand, specifically The Outside?
4. What did you think of the digital currency used in Alezand? Do you believe we’re headed toward a similar future regarding currency?

5. What is the meaning behind the slogan, “True Wealth Comes from Self”? Is this attainable for citizens of Alezand? Did the mock version of the slogan (“True Wealth or Kill Yourself”) evoke any emotion in you?
6. Ryan suggests that Outsider towns more supportive of the Alezand government receive better supplies. Based on what you’ve read, do you think she’s right? Could this be true of our world, in a sense?

## THEMES

1. Did this story challenge you to change your opinion? Or does it confirm something you already believe?
2. Some characters in this story believe stealing is okay as long as it’s for survival. What do you think? Is stealing always bad, or can it be justified?
3. How relevant is the theme of sacrifice to your own life?
4. Do you experience unconditional love in your life? If so, do you receive it or give it? And to whom?
5. Ryan discovers the consequences of poor decisions made throughout the story. Have you ever made a poor choice that had ugly consequences? On the flip side, have you ever made a good choice that has had a beneficial effect?
6. Did the themes of this story remind you of another book? If so, which one?

## MISCELLANEOUS

1. Did you highlight any lines or quotes? Why?
2. What literary devices or writing styles did the author use to enhance her storytelling?
3. Would you read another story by this author? Why or why not?

“Beyond The Other Side: A Post Apocalyptic Short Story” by Jenny Hubert may be purchased on [Amazon](#) or read for free on Kindle Unlimited. Learn more at [www.jennyhubertwrites.com](http://www.jennyhubertwrites.com).