

THE SEVENTH UNICORN by Kelly Jones
QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why do you think Alex's career at the Cluny is so important to her? Does she see her role as a good mother as important as her career?
2. Why does Jake come to Paris? Is he running from something? Or searching for something?
3. Alex's relationship with Thierry is described through her point of view. Do you think Thierry might see the reasons for their unfulfilling marriage differently? In your opinion is the failure of a marriage ever solely one person's fault?
4. During a tour of the Cluny, Alex describes the sixth tapestry, A Mon Seul Desir, as representing a renunciation of worldly things, denying the passions of the senses. Later, after Pierre's death Alex's mother-in-law, Simone asks Alex to look around at the lovely furnishings and paintings in her home, and tells Alex she finds little joy in them without her husband. Do you think there is a distinct difference between worldly things, experienced through the senses, and those which are spiritual? What about nature? Art? Music and literature? Are there scenes in the story where the senses play an important role?
5. Neither Alex or Jake's father is living at the time of the story. Is either of them a character in the story? Do you feel it is realistic that both Alex and Jake continue to be influenced by relationships with their fathers?
6. Sister Anne and Alex talk about being called to a particular life. What role does free choice have in our destiny? How do the choices made by the characters in the story effect the outcome? Did Adele have the same choices as Alex? How have women's opportunities for choice changed through the centuries?
7. The original six tapestries are presented on a garden island. How do images from a garden figure into the story?
8. Simone says it is more difficult to open up to the possibility of love than to love. Do you believe this is true? Why do you think Alex has difficulty opening up to Jake? Do you think their relationship would have been successful when they were younger, if Alex had not met Thierry?
9. Who do you think is the most honest person in the story and why?
10. What is your opinion of Juliana? Do you like her? Why or why not? How is she different from Alex? Are there any similarities in the two women?
11. Discuss the concept of second chances and how this relates to the story.
12. Do you think Alex will research her family history? Will the discovery of her personal link to Adele Le Viste effect how she feels about the tapestries?