



Other Oceans: Book Two of the Hook & Jill Saga

by Andrea Jones — Discussion Questions

1. Discuss the significance of the title, ***Other Oceans***. Which characters experience something new in their lives that can be metaphorically described by the title?
2. As in Book One of the Saga, ***Hook & Jill***, one of the lessons of ***Other Oceans*** is that adults, like children, continue to mature. After Captain Hook's imprisonment and near-death in Chapter 35, (page 578), Hanover claims that Hook is "exactly as I first believed you." Hook replies, "On the contrary, Hanover – I am stronger." How is Hook stronger at the end? What lessons has Hook learned?
3. How do Cecco, Mr. Smee, and Liza grow and change? What lessons does each of them learn?
4. Another common theme in the Saga's first two books is that right and wrong are not as simple to distinguish as black and white. What are the "black and white" sides of Doctor Hanover's character? How do you see his future? Who, if any, is the moral superior – the pirate, or the "gentleman"?
5. ***Other Oceans*** is described as an unabashed study in loyalty. Red-Handed Jill strives throughout the book to remain loyal to her oath to Captain Hook. Do you agree that she succeeds? Does she, at any point, betray either Captain Hook or Captain Cecco?
6. In ***Hook & Jill***, Nibs and Tootles grew up to be the pirates called "Nibs the Knife" and "Tom Tootles." What trials must they face in ***Other Oceans*** before they become true men? How are their loyalties tested – to Hook, to Jill, to Cecco, and to the *Jolly Roger* itself?
7. Does Captain Cecco betray Jill's trust, or does he adhere to it, when he allows Nibs and Tom to accept LeCorbeau's offer and join the French privateers on ***L'Ormonde***? What degree of courage does it take for Cecco to grant their freedom against Jill's wishes, and against the young men's welfare?
8. How are the loyalties of Cecco, Liza, and Mr. Smee tested? Which of these characters are loyal, and to whom?
9. Hook teaches Jill to "identify the weapon, and use it first." How does Jill use Hanover's weapons against him? How does she use Cecco's? Jill's honesty is a weapon, too; how does she wield it to win?
10. What are Jill's weaknesses, and how are they used against her? What are Hanover's weaknesses? What are Cecco's? What mistake leads Hook into trouble?

11. Red-Handed Jill is a power in herself, but she is a product of both her time period and an earlier story by J.M. Barrie (*Peter and Wendy*). As a result, Jill is not the swash-buckling, voluptuous female pirate so often portrayed in modern fantasy and in artistic caricature. Jill's weapons are subtle, based in her intelligence. Were you disappointed that Red-Handed Jill doesn't wield a cutlass or a pistol in this book, or dress in a less formal manner? Why does Jill adopt and adhere to a regal, lady-like persona? Why, given his confidence in Jill, does Hook forbid her to fight alongside his men?

12. After Tom breaks Hook's rules by touching Liza, is Hook justified in imposing the severe punishment of a beating at Mr. Starkey's hands? Is Jill right to support that punishment against her own son? Is Jill as caring as a mother as Wendy was?

13. Scars afflict the principle players, and Jones employs these marks as metaphors for "experience." In Chapter 5, (page 77), Jill tells Hanover, "You and I both know that one can live with scars. We can even take pride in them." How do their various scars affect Hanover, Cecco, Tom, Jill, and Hook? Who takes pride in scars, and who finds scars to be shameful?

14. How does Tom turn the tables on LeCorbeau's second officer, Guillaume? Trace the development of the relationship between Tom and Guillaume. How does Guillaume change through his contact with Tom? How does he balance his old loyalty to LeCorbeau and his friendship with Tom?

15. Cecco is elected captain because Mr. Smee refuses the job. Why does Smee refuse, and is he correct to do so? How would Smee and Jill's relationship change if Smee accepted? How, and how successfully, might Cecco have pursued Jill if Smee became captain?

16. Many readers look for the death of Doctor Hanover. Do you agree? Why does Hook content himself with Hanover's public humiliation, and allow this dangerous enemy to live? How does sparing Hanover's life enlarge Hook's legend?

17. Did you believe, as indications first appear to point, that Hook himself beat Liza during the party with *L'Ormonde* in Chapter 12, "Guilty Parties," or was it clear to you that Liza's father is the "guilty party"? Why is Smee so concerned for Jill's safety after the party, if he trusts Hook to be guiltless?

18. Compare the mystical connection between Hook and Jill to its genesis in Book One, *Hook & Jill*. How is this bond strengthened in *Other Oceans*? How does Jones lead the reader to suspect that Hook and Jill's ties are sinister, in order to create dramatic tension between them? In what scenes does Jones similarly cause Jill and Cecco to pretend to be at odds, in order to mislead their enemies?

19. In Chapter 17, "Coming to Terms," Jones found it necessary to portray the details of Cecco's seduction of Jill, instead of "fading to black" in that sultry scene. If you hadn't had this opportunity to follow Jill's reasoning, how might the omission affect your opinion of her choice to accept Cecco so completely?

20. Although Jill is a pirate, some readers question her morality. What is your opinion of a woman who enjoys her sexuality? Is she to be admired? Censured? Would the same question arise if a male character behaved as Jill behaves, unashamedly engaging in intimacy? If she tamed her passions, would she be Red-Handed Jill, or would she be more suited to life in London, as Wendy Darling?
21. Jill never believes Hook is dead. Why, in Hook's absence, does Jill propose marriage to Cecco? What makes her dread Hook's return, even as she hopes for it?
22. Cecco begins as an adversary, and ends as a champion. Do you believe him worthy of the love Jill awards him? Is he worthy of Hook's leniency and the reward of his own ship? If Hook took action against Cecco, how might the crew's loyalties cause them to react?
23. In Chapter 13, (page 209), Doctor Hanover, who considers himself a gentleman, rails that Hook is everything he hates: "a thief, a liar, a fugitive, murderer, and seducer...and exactly what the good doctor had become." Which of Hanover's actions, both aboard ship and in his past, indicate that he possesses each of these "piratical" character flaws? Can he blame Hook for these faults in himself?
24. Doctor Hanover is a man who craves control. Given his rigid moral stance, why has Hanover chosen to partner the unscrupulous Captain LeCorbeau? Why, in Chapter 16, (page 276), when Hanover is horrified to learn of Jill's perfidious plan to murder him and discovers her utter loyalty to Hook, does he redouble – instead of abandon – his pursuit of her? Why does Hanover later rape Jill, whom he professes to love and respect? How does the doctor justify his seduction of his daughter?
25. Liza is a troubled young woman. Did you feel sympathy for her? Did your level of sympathy change with her trials? Do you know anyone who has dealt with the emotional, verbal, physical, or sexual abuse Liza experiences? If so, how did your acquaintance deal with those issues?
26. Does Liza make the proper decision when she opts to stay with the pirates as Yulunga's property, or should she have remained with her father? What is Liza's future likely to be? Whose child does she carry – Yulunga's, Hanover's, or Hook's?
27. Mr. Smee claims that Captain Hook is "a generous man." In Chapter 26, "A Last Supper," we discover the depths of Smee's feeling for Hook. In Chapter 29, "A Communion of Men," (page 493), Jill asks Smee to read the story she has written, depicting the first meeting of Hook and Smee. What are your observations about that story, and how does it explain the fundamental relationship between the two men? How does it define the two men's relationship with their storyteller, Jill?
28. Now describe the relationship between Hook and Smee within *Hook & Jill*. How did their relationship grow and change in *Hook & Jill*, once Wendy entered Hook's life? Did their relationship alter, years earlier, once Hook lost his hand? How has it changed again within *Other Oceans*?
29. How has Red-Handed Jill changed between the end of *Hook & Jill* and the end of *Other Oceans*? In the Neverland, Wendy/Jill aged with her experiences, instead of with Time. How old is she now?

30. In *Other Oceans*, Jones continues *Hook & Jill*'s convention that, while holding happiness, certain characters from the Neverland can fly. How does that ability advance the plot of *Other Oceans*? As you read the story, when did you first remember that Hook himself can fly? How does Hook's flying – never directly shown until Chapter 36 – enhance his pleasures with Jill, assist his victories in battle, and allow him to recover his position of authority after his kidnapping?

31. Why, in Chapter 25, (page 443), and Chapter 33, (page 555), do Jill's powers of flight falter? What are the separate "happy thoughts" that, in each case, restore her flight?

32. What is the significance of each of the three ships' names: *L'Ormonde*; *Unity*; *Red Lady*?

33. In what ways is DéDé LeCorbeau in *Other Oceans* similar to Peter Pan in *Hook & Jill*? How are Liza Hanover and Tinker Bell alike? Compare Doctor Hanover to the crocodile.

34. In her new life aboard the *Jolly Roger*, Jill continues her role as the storyteller, and this role is a literary device that allows Jones to enlarge upon the sparse but potent seeds J.M. Barrie has sown in *Peter and Wendy*. Beside a detailed account of Captain Hook, Barrie provides the following character sketches for two of his other pirates:

- Of Cecco, Barrie says only: "his great arms bare, pieces of eight in his ears as ornaments – the handsome Italian Cecco, who cut his name on the back of the governor of the prison at Gao."
- Barrie describes Yulunga (whose name was bestowed by Jones) this way: "That gigantic black behind [Cecco] has had many names since he dropped the one with which dusky mothers still terrify their children on the banks of the Guadjjo-mo."

How well has Jones built Barrie's brief character sketches up to the three-dimensional life of a full-length, literary novel? How successfully has Jones blended Barrie's character concepts with her own? How do Jones' own, original characters – Captain LeCorbeau, Doctor Hanover, Liza, Guillaume, and Renaud – compare to Barrie's characters?

35. Knowing of the emotional and legal ties between Hook, Jill, and Cecco, how do you believe the three will interact in the next book, *Other Islands: Book Three of the Hook & Jill Saga*?

Five books are planned in the award-winning *Hook & Jill* Saga by Andrea Jones, Neverland novels for adults:

Hook & Jill ~ Other Oceans ~ Other Islands
coming next...*The Wider World*

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