

**Discussion Guide for
First Lie Wins by Ashley Elston**

1. Throughout the novel, Evie assumes various identities for her assignments. How does this constant change impact her as a person? Discuss the psychological toll of living a double life.
2. Mr. Smith plays a pivotal role in the story, orchestrating Evie's assignments and testing her loyalty. What are your theories about Mr. Smith's motivations? How does he manipulate and control Evie?
3. Evie adopts various identities throughout the novel, with her true identity, Lucca Marino, taking the fall. Why is Lucca Marino significant to her, and how does it shape her choices? Reflect on the importance of your name to your identity. Can Evie find happiness as Evie Porter?
4. Both Evie and Ryan are morally ambiguous characters. Despite her criminal life, Evie has lines she won't cross. Does her behavior redeem her, and why or why not? Explore the complexities of morally gray characters in the story.
5. Evie turns to a life of crime to pay for her mother's medical needs. Considering today's high healthcare costs, do you sympathize with Evie's choices? Should she have continued a life of crime after her mother's death? Share your perspectives on Evie's path and its ethical implications.
6. Many readers praise the book for its unexpected twists and turns. Share your favorite plot twist and discuss how it impacted your perception of the story.
7. The novel is described as a cat-and-mouse game. Identify key moments in the story where this dynamic is evident. How does the suspense and tension contribute to the overall reading experience?
8. The book provides glimpses into Evie's past assignments. Discuss the significance of these flashbacks. How do they contribute to the understanding of Evie's character and her dynamic with Mr. Smith?
9. Discuss the impact of the author's use of flashbacks. How do they contribute to understanding Evie's actions and thought processes in the present? Share specific insights gained from the flashbacks.

10. Evie chooses an isolating job despite her mother's death. Why do you think she sought out others working for Mr. Smith? Did Evie find her family with Devon, Amy, and Ryan? By the end, has she achieved her initial hopes? Explore the significance of her garden.
11. Analyze the symbolism behind Evie leaving an origami swan after each job. What does this calling card signify? Does Evie enjoy the chase, or is there a part of her that wants to be discovered? Can both be true?
12. Trust is a recurring theme in the novel. Analyze the characters' trust in one another, especially considering the nature of Evie's work. How does the theme of trust evolve throughout the story?
13. As a Reese's Book Club Pick, the novel gained significant attention. In your opinion, what elements make it suitable for a book club discussion? How does it compare to other thrillers you've read?
14. Discuss Evie's resilience and survival instincts. How does her background and past experiences shape her ability to navigate the challenges presented in the story?
15. Reflect on Evie's statement about finishing the longest con of her life. Were you aware that Evie was one step ahead of Mr. Smith? When did you realize who George was? Discuss your expectations and reactions to the various reveals in the book.
16. Mr. Smith suggests similarities between him and Evie in their ability to con and manipulate. Do you think Evie is aware of these similarities? Considering the ending, where Evie might take over Mr. Smith's business, do you believe this is what she truly wants? Can she balance this job with a happy life with Ryan?
17. Several reviewers mentioned that the book was a page-turner and had a lasting impact. Share your thoughts on what makes "First Lie Wins" a memorable and engaging read.