



Discussion Questions
***A Walk Across the Sun*, by Corban Addison**

1. Do you think that the mystery novel format used in *A Walk Across the Sun* made the subject matter of human trafficking more accessible? Why or why not?
2. While staying with his friend Dinesh in Mumbai, Thomas is taken to a club called The White Orchid, where Dinesh and his friends hire women as prostitutes at the end of the evening. The next day, Thomas asks Nigel about it at CASE, saying “The White Orchid didn’t feel like a brothel. And the girls didn’t look like slaves” (p. 109). What was Nigel’s response, and how is the question and answer pertinent to a U.S. context?
3. Before a raid on a brothel, Inspector Khan says to his officers, “It doesn’t matter where you’re from or what you feel about the *beshyas*. Think of the girls we’re going to rescue as you think about your own children” (p. 113). Why would he need to inspire compassion for the girls among the officers? What do you imagine the effect of such a message to be?
4. How do our public sympathies differ between girls and women who are trafficked? What drives the discrepancies?
5. There is a moment after being caught trying to run away and finding herself on the pier that Sita thinks about the escape of suicide. How does the human spirit keep going under the conditions she found herself in? What coping mechanisms did the girls and women use in the book?
6. In a poignant comment following a discussion on the extremely high demand for “cheap commercial sex” in the United States, (p.312), DeFoe tells Thomas, “Trafficking will stop when men stop buying women” (p.313). Why do men buy girls and women for sex? How will it finally stop?
7. When Sita is being dressed and prepared for a john in the United States, she thinks “Bombay was half the world away, but so much of this was the same” (p.316). While Sita was trafficked internationally, there are many girls who are trafficked internally within the United States, such as those being driven around in the van with her. Their stories are very similar to those in other parts of the world. Is this surprising, and why do you think more people do not know more about the serious problem of sex trafficking?
8. What do you think “A walk across the sun” means?
9. In the Epilogue, when Thomas sees Sita, he reflects that “The nuns would have to watch her with the boys,” and then wonders if she would ever want to marry after what she had been through (p.362). What might the author have been trying to do with this passage? What was your reaction to it?
10. Addison exposes many of the heinous realities of sex trafficking and also allows readers a sense of other forms of human trafficking, such as labor and drug trafficking. Discuss the human rights violations inherent to the buying and selling of human beings for any purpose. What is the world’s responsibility for these crimes? What is the community responsibility? What can you do?