

# Ashes of Roses

by Mary Jane Auch



When part of Rose's family is sent back to Ireland from Ellis Island, she and her twelve-year-old sister Maureen decide to stay and make a new life in America. Sixteen-year-old Rose finds work at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory, which is fated to burn down.

**Directions: After reading chapters 1-16, select FIVE questions to answer. After reading chapters 17-32, select FIVE questions to answer. You will have a TOTAL of Ten questions to answer with full sentences.**

### **Chapters 1 and 2**

1. Describe the conditions of steerage on the boat.
2. How does Margaret Rose (our narrator) describe the Statue of Liberty? How is Margaret Rose feeling as the boat pulls up to Ellis Island?
3. Describe the process of entering Ellis Island.
  - a. What must each passenger endure? Why?
4. What happened to baby Joseph? What could this mean for the Nolan family?

### **Chapters 5 and 6**

1. Why does Ma move them to the middle of a large crowd and then start smiling and talking to Rose as if she has not seen her for a long time?
2. What is meant by, "The streets of America were paved in gold"? Why does Rose believe this is true at this time?

### **Chapters 7 and 8**

1. In what ways are the living conditions at Uncle Patrick's very different from what the Nolans are used to?
2. What inferences can we make about Ma and her feelings about religion? What clues led you to this inference.

### **Chapters 9 and 10**

1. Explain what Rose meant by "A contest was goin' on here, with one team sittin' at the table and the other standin' at the stove."
2. How does Elsa try to convince Uncle Patrick that the Nolan girls need to leave their home?

### **Chapters 11 and 12**

1. What term do the New Yorkers use to refer to the immigrants coming into America? Do you think it is an offensive term? Why or why not?
2. Describe the work Rose had to do for Mr. Moscovitz. Where was the location of this building?

### **Chapters 13 and 14**

1. Why are the girls in Mr. Moscovitz's shop upset with Rose?
2. What can we assume about the area in which Rose was working? Why?

### **Chapters 15 and 16**

1. How does Rose convince her mother to let her stay in America?
2. At the end of chapter 16, what does Rose reveal to her readers about their plan in America?

### **Chapters 17 and 18**

1. When Rose and Maureen go to look for an apartment to rent, many landlords tell them that they would like to rent to a man, not two girls. Why do you think this is so?

2. Why was it a bad idea that Rose told Mr. Moscovitz that her mother went back to Ireland?

### **Chapters 21 and 22**

1. How does Rose prepare for a job at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory?
2. Describe Rose's first day at the factory.

### **Chapters 23-25**

1. Describe Maureen's experience at school.
2. Describe the friends that Rose makes from the Triangle factory. How did they differ from Gussie? What do they enjoy doing and reading in comparison to Gussie?
3. How does Gussie feel about the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory? Why is she so passionate about the union?

### **Chapters 26-28**

1. Why was it so difficult for the girls to get out of the room on the ninth floor?
2. What happened to the girls who jumped from the windows?
3. How does Rose escape the room, and of what does she think once she is out of the room?

### **Chapters 29-32**

1. Why doesn't Gussie get out?
2. Why do you think seeing the piece of cloth from her dress with the dead people's remains upset Rose?
3. Why is Rose feeling responsible for and guilty about Gussie and Maureen?
4. What does Rose think was Gussie's real problem?
5. Explain how the fire changed Rose.