



LOUISE CALLAGHAN

is the Middle East Correspondent for the *Sunday Times* (UK), one of the youngest ever hired. She made Forbes' Europe 30 under 30 in media 2018 list, has won the Marie Colvin Award for British Journalism, and young reporter of the year at the 2016 British Press Awards and the 2017 British Journalism Awards.

She's been featured in *The Sunday Times Magazine*, *Vogue*, *Newsweek*, the *Times Literary Supplement* and more. *Father of Lions* is her first book.

1. When ISIS takes over Mosul and the Iraqi army evacuates, Abu Laith and his family try to run away, though they have to go back. Hakam and his family don't even try to leave. Would you stay or would you try to run?
2. Though there are common struggles and events, Abu Laith and his family have a very different experience of the years living under siege than Hakam and his family do. Why do you think that is?
3. Lumia is often angry with Abu Laith for thinking about the animals when she thinks he should be prioritizing his family because they're humans and deserve his help before the animals do, but Abu Laith believes that if you don't have mercy on animals you cannot be a good person. Who do you agree with? Is it possible to agree with both Lumia and Abu Laith?
4. Abu Laith's children are all very concerned about the animals' well-being. Why do you think this is? Are they emulating their father? Is it just that kids love animals? Or is it something else altogether?
5. The children think Mother is evil for attacking Warda and for eating Father. Abu Laith says it's just animal instinct, though her actions clearly upset him. Do you agree with the children or with Abu Laith?
6. This book depicts many different ways of being religious. For example, there is Abu Laith, who is religious but "hates the trappings of organized religion with a deep passion." He clearly believes in God and is greatly angered by religious hypocrites, but refuses to go to the mosque to pray. Many people in the book, such as Abu Hareth, think this akin to blasphemy. Do you agree? Can there be more than one right way to worship the same god?
7. Throughout the book Zombie, Lula, and Warda behave in surprisingly human-like ways, such as when Zombie knows to stay quiet in the truck, or when Lula mourns for her son. If you had to, would you say that these similarities come from animals having human instincts or from humans not having left all our animal instincts behind?
8. Every time a new force comes into Mosul—the American army, ISIS, the Iraqi army—the citizens of Mosul are treated as the enemy. Soldiers would say this is necessary. Do you agree? Even if it is necessary, is it fair?
9. It's widely known that ISIS recruits all over the world, but the group is usually portrayed in Western media as backwards-thinking Middle Eastern fanatics. Yet Hakam, Lumia, and Abu Laith all notice that many of the most extreme ISIS members are the foreign ones. What does this say to you?
10. Caring about animals is used as a litmus test for being a good person throughout this story. Do you agree with that?
11. If you had to distill one moral from this book, what would it be?