EPISODE SIX
FROM LENNON TO LENIN
SYLLABUS
Born in 1870, Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov, better known as Lenin, was a Russian communist revolutionary and political theorist who masterminded the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia in 1917 and helped forge the subsequent Soviet state. In the wake of the revolution, Lenin consolidated power as Russia was plunged into civil war, famine and disease. He would die in January 1924 and eventually be succeeded by Joseph Stalin. Lenin’s corpse was embalmed and is on display in a mausoleum in Moscow’s Red Square.

History is rich and incredibly dense. Once you start pulling the thread on even a single event, an avalanche comes tumbling over you. In this final episode of the season, we tie up some loose ends to our thread that joins John Lennon to Vladimir Lenin, discover a few more surprising connections between our characters and meditate on the nature of art, life and redemption.
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Questions based solely on material discussed in the podcast.

1. Have you ever experienced a “synchronicity” in your life?

2. What role can suffering play in the development of great art? Do you need to have suffered in order to create great art?

3. Who do you think was the worst father: J.D. Salinger, Eugene O’Neill or John Lennon?

BONUS QUESTIONS (for college listeners)

1. How can art, from The Catcher in the Rye to Helter Skelter, influence or shape the minds of demented individuals?

2. What does the idea of “instant karma” mean to you?
EPISODE QUIZ (with answers)

Questions based solely on material discussed in the podcast. Correct answers in bold.

1. What did Vladimir Lenin disguise himself as in order to sneak back into Petrograd in 1917?
   a. A vagrant
   b. A clergyman
   c. A woman

2. What term did Mark David Chapman use to refer to a meaningful coincidence, moment or serendipity?
   a. Synchronicity
   b. Destiny
   c. Turning point

3. Which famous Hollywood thriller was filmed in part at the Dakota building in Manhattan?
   a. Rosemary’s Baby
   b. The Exorcist
   c. A Nightmare on Elm Street

4. Which famous American writer did J.D. Salinger seek out on more than one occasion during World War II?
   a. F. Scott Fitzgerald
   b. Harper Lee
   c. Ernest Hemingway

5. Which one of the following artists was not accused by U.S. authorities of being a communist?
   a. Charlie Chaplin
   b. Eugene O’Neill
   c. Mia Farrow
PRIMARY SOURCES:

- *The Thread*, Episode Six, “From Lennon to Lenin.” Available at ozy.com/thethread
- *The Thread* immersive story page. Available at ozy.com/thethread

SECONDARY SOURCES:

- *Queen of Bohemia: The Life of Louise Bryant* (1996), by Mary V. Dearborn
- *J. D. Salinger: A Life* (2011), by Kenneth Slawenski
- *Lennon: The Man, the Myth, the Music — The Definitive Life* (2011), by Tim Riley