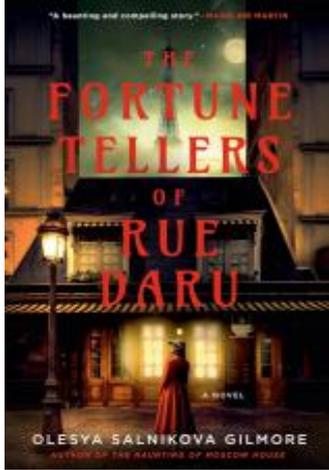


# The Fortune Tellers of Rue Daru

by Olesya Salnikova Gilmore

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## About the Book

**A fearless fortune teller in 1920s Paris must use her powers to divine who she can trust when an exiled Romanov princess and her brother come to her seeking answers about a decades-old mystery.**

Spirited Zina and her secretive grandmother, Baba Valya, own a tearoom on rue Daru in Paris, where they have lived quietly since Zina's mother's untimely death. By day, the women serve tea, mostly to members of the bustling Russian émigré community. But when dusk falls, they divine fortunes and perform séances for their loyal clientele.

Then the charming Princess Olga and her brother arrive, searching for knowledge about the disappearance of their father, the exiled Grand Duke, cousin of the last Tsar of Russia. Zina, eager to learn more about the spirit world and her powers, performs the séance. She is able to summon the Grand Duke. But to her horror, he starts to haunt the shop and seems to know something sinister about her mother's death.

As Zina delves into her family's hidden past, dark secrets are unearthed, threatening the home and tearoom Zina and her grandmother have worked so hard to build, not to mention their very lives.

## Discussion Guide

1. How does Zina grow in her power as a fortune teller and a woman throughout the story? Do you agree with the choices she makes to get there?
2. How does the relationship between Zina and her grandmother evolve? Which of them is your favorite?

3. How does the author use the setting of the tearoom and the greater Paris area to create atmosphere? How does the setting heighten the gothic and historical elements?
4. How does the past, specifically the Lenormands' generational trauma and choices, influence the story and Valya's and Zina's paths?
5. How is fortune-telling and spiritualism the same and different in the novel from what you've heard? What is the author's twist on them? Is their existence, and the general belief in the supernatural, accepted by the characters?
6. How do Valya's and Zina's struggles as émigrés in 1920s Paris reflect the difficulties faced by the émigré community at large, both in the book and in history?
7. Did you feel empathy for Olga, Alec, and their father, the Grand Duke? Why or why not?
8. Are Zina and Gabriel enemies-to-lovers? What growing do they have to do to get past their conflicting motivations?
9. What was your favorite scene in the novel?
10. Is the end a happily ever after?

## Author Bio

Olesya Salnikova Gilmore is the author of *THE WITCH AND THE TSAR*, *THE HAUNTING OF MOSCOW HOUSE* and *THE FORTUNE TELLERS OF RUE DARU*. Originally from Moscow, she was raised in the US and graduated from Pepperdine University with a BA in English/political science, and from Northwestern School of Law with a JD. She practiced litigation at a large law firm in Chicago for several years before pursuing her dream of becoming an author. She writes speculative gothic suspense and other dark fiction. She also loves exploring Eastern European history and folklore. Her work has appeared in LitHub, Tor.com, CrimeReads, Writer's Digest and Washington Independent Review of Books, among others. She lives in a wooded, lakeside suburb of Chicago with her husband and two daughters.

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**Publication Date:** March 24, 2026

**Genres:** Fiction, Gothic, Historical Fiction, Historical Mystery, Horror, Mystery

**Hardcover:** 416 pages

**Publisher:** Berkley

**ISBN-10:** 0593952685

**ISBN-13:** 9780593952689