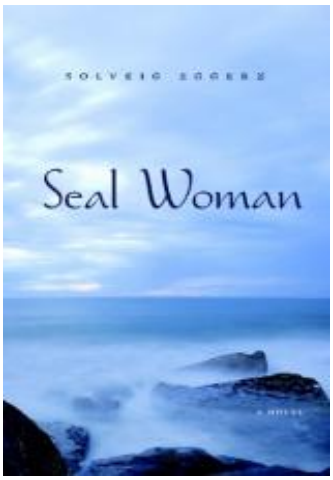
ReadingGroupGuides
The online community for reading groups

Seal Woman

by Solveig Eggerz



About the Book

Description: In the rubble of post-World War II Berlin, artist Charlotte flees her past and everything she's lost by responding to an ad calling for strong women who can cook and do farm work in Iceland. But painful memories and ghosts follow Charlotte as she struggles to make a new life in a raw and rugged landscape. This debut novel celebrates the twin powers of storytelling and art as ways to reassemble the fragments of Charlotte's broken self and move her-and everyone she loves-toward peace. This novel won first prize for fiction from the Maryland Writers' Association.

Discussion Guide

1. How does Charlotte?s fate relate to that of the seal woman in the folk tale?

2. Is Charlotte the seal woman?

3. What is the role of silence in this story? The role of talk?

4. What does the story say about healing powers of art? Of nature? Of story?

5. Are there traces of magical realism in the story?

6. Does the story feel like historical fiction, in that the character?s life is shaped by historical events?

7. How does the character of Charlotte grow and change in the course of the novel?

8. What does Charlotte learn about art from Max?

9. What does she learn about art on her own?

10. How does she apply art in her personal struggle?

Author Bio

A native of Iceland, Solveig Eggerz has lived in Alexandria since 1974. She was a freelance writer for several years before joining the Alexandria Port Packet as a reporter during 1977-78. She continued to contribute to the paper until 1988. She has worked as a journalist and professor of writing and research.

Seal Woman
by Solveig Eggerz

Publication Date: May 15, 2008
Paperback: 284 pages
Publisher: Ghost Road Press
ISBN-10: 097962553X
ISBN-13: 9780979625534