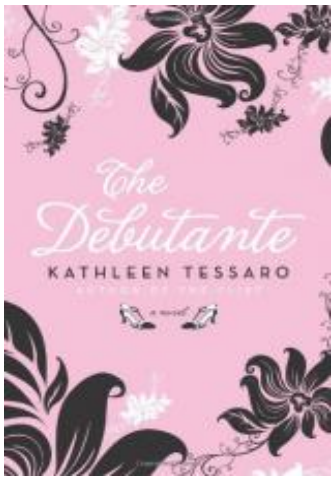
The Debutante

by Kathleen Tessaro



About the Book

Can the secrets of one woman's past change another woman's future?

A gifted artist, Cate has come to London from New York to escape her recent past. Working for her aunt's auction house, she is sent down to Devon to value the contents of Endsleigh House, the once gracious but now crumbling estate of a former socialite. There, hidden in the back of a dusty bookshelf, Cate discovers an old shoebox. Inside is a strange assortment of objects: an exquisite pair of dancing shoes circa 1930; a diamond brooch; a photograph of a young sailor; a dance card; and a pearl and emerald Tiffanys bracelet. Intrigued by her find, Cate sets out to solve the mystery of the box, becoming immersed in the story of its owner, Baby Blythe. Bright, beautiful, and reckless, Baby was the most famous debutante of her generation?and the most dangerous. As the clues begin to reveal a shocking tale of destructive, addictive love, Cate finds herself being drawn deeper into Baby's tragic life story --- a story that will force Cate to face some dark truths about her own.

Discussion Guide

1. What would you do if you found a box containing a long-kept secret?

2. Kathleen begins the book with a quote from Lord Byron?s **Don Juan**. Why do you think she chose this particular passage?

3. Discuss the universal themes in both the past sections of the story and the present. What are the similarities?

4. What is it about Baby Blythe that speaks so much to Cate?

5. At one point, Cate says, ?I?m not afraid of anything.? Is that true? If not, what *is* she afraid of?

6. If you were Jack, how would you have reacted to the truths he learns about his life? Do you agree with his choices?

7. What was your favorite moment in the book? Favorite character? Which storyline do you identify with the most, Cate?s present or Baby Blythe?s past?

8. Discuss Jack?s message to Cate, ?No more excuses.? How does that tie into the greater themes of the book?

Author Bio

Born in Pittsburgh, Kathleen Tessaro emigrated to London where she worked as an actress in films, television and theater, while training to be a drama teacher and voice coach. She is the author of the novels ELEGANCE, INNOCENCE and THE FLIRT. Kathleen currently lives in Pennsylvania.

Critical Praise

"Fabulous fiction. Expect to laugh and maybe pick up some Grace Kelly --- Jackie O-esque tips."

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