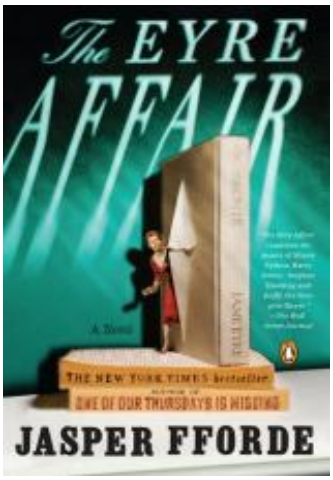
The Eyre Affair

by Jasper Fforde



About the Book

Masterpiece Theatre meets James Bond in **The Eyre Affair**, the first novel in Jasper Fforde's cheeky sleuth series featuring a book-loving, gun-toting, wit-slinging heroine named Thursday Next. In Thursday's world, an alternate version of 1985 London, literature rules popular culture?audiences enact and participate in *Richard III* for Friday-night fun, thousands of visitors make literary pilgrimages to gawk at original manuscripts, and missionaries travel door-to-door heralding Francis Bacon as the true Bard.

The mysterious theft of the **Martin Chuzzlewit** original manuscript from the Dickens Museum catalyzes Thursday's transformation from humble library cop into intrepid literature savior. When Thursday's eccentric uncle Mycroft and aunt Polly are kidnapped along with their Prose Portal, an ingenious device that allows readers to physically enter the world of any book, the SpecOps literary division uncovers a dastardly plot to kidnap and murder characters from everyone's favorite novels. The criminal operation is helmed by Acheron Hades, the third most evil man in the world, a supreme villain who bends minds, shifts shapes, and remains impervious to most mortal weapons. Thursday and her SpecOps cohorts' mission to capture their slippery adversary is further complicated by the meddling of the pointedly named Jack Schitt, the despotic head of security at the hegemonic Goliath Corporation, whose investment in Hades' capture seems suspect. And when the perpetrators dare to steal the original **Jane Eyre**, Thursday must race to save one of the most beloved characters in English literature?and Brontë's classic love story itself?from eradication.

Discussion Guide

1. If you could jump right into any novel with Ms. Nakajima, which novel would you choose to visit? What classic novel endings have left you unsatisfied? What endings would you change if you had the power to do so?

2. Acheron Hades claims that pure evil is as rare as pure good. Do you think either exists in our world?

3. Two of the main plot devices**?**time travel and book jumping**?**illustrate the infinite possibilities of alternate endings. If you could travel through time, is there anything in history, either in the broad sense or in your own personal history, that you would go back and revise?

4. If you could choose Ms. Nakajima's ability to jump into novels, Thursday's father's ability to travel through time, or Acheron Hades' ability to defy mortality, which power would you choose to have and why?

5. Despite the fact that he is her one true love, Thursday holds a grudge against Landen Parke-Laine for over ten years because he betrayed her brother when they returned from the Crimean War. Whom do you think Thursday's first allegiance should have been to, her lover or her brother? Do you think her decision to return to Landen comes out of weakness or strength?

6. In the hands of villains like Jack Schitt and Acheron Hades, the Prose Portal could be exploited for villainous deeds, but it could also have been used to do good deeds such as producing a cure for terminal diseases. Would you choose to destroy the Prose Portal as Mycroft does without trying to extract good use out of it first? Do you think the risk of the destruction it could cause outweighs the possibilities for good?

7. Thursday's brother, the very Irreverend Joffy, tells her, "The first casualty of war is always truth." Do you think this is true? Why or why not?

8. Thursday says, "All my life I have felt destiny tugging at my sleeve. Few of us have any real idea what it is we are here to do and when it is that we are to do it. Every small act has a knock-on consequence that goes on to affect those about us in unseen ways. I was lucky that I had so clear a purpose." In a world where time is so pliable, can there be such a thing as destiny? Was there a defining moment in your life when you understood what your own purpose was?

9. Who is the worse villain, Acheron Hades or Jack Schitt? Which sentence do you think is worse**?**death by a silver bullet to the heart or an eternity trapped in Poe's "The Raven"?

Author Bio

Jasper Fforde spent 20 years in the film business before debuting on the *New York Times* bestseller list with THE EYRE AFFAIR in 2001. Since then, he has written numerous novels, including THE BIG OVER EASY, THE CONSTANT RABBIT and SHADES OF GREY. Fforde lives and works in his adopted nation of Wales.

Critical Praise

"Filled with clever wordplay, literary allusion and bibliowit, **The Eyre Affair** combines elements of Monty Python, Harry Potter, Stephen Hawking and Buffy the Vampire Slayer, but its quirky charm is all its own"

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