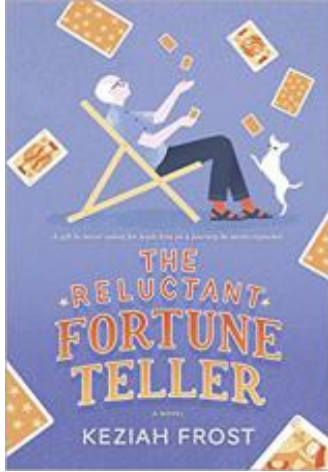


The Reluctant Fortune-Teller

by Keziah Frost



About the Book

Norbert Zelenka has always lived life on the sidelines. It's why at 73 years old he's broke and alone except for the company of a Chihuahua. But when "Carlotta's Club" --- three strong-willed seniors with plenty of time on their hands --- decides to make Norbert their latest project, he reluctantly agrees to their scheme: establishing himself as the town's fortune-teller. Soon his life begins changing in unexpected ways.

It turns out that years of observing other people make Norbert an excellent card reader. As Norbert's lonesome world expands with new friendships and a newfound self-confidence, he finally finds himself in a place where he belongs. But disaster looms on the horizon. When a troubled young woman goes missing after a bad reading, Norbert must find a strength beyond the cards to bring her home safely.

A heartfelt story of coming-of-age late in life, THE RELUCTANT FORTUNE-TELLER is a poignant reminder that we're never too old to learn new tricks.

Discussion Guide

1. THE RELUCTANT FORTUNE-TELLER explores the possibility of people changing at any point in their lives, of reinventing a new identity and "growing into themselves." Who are the characters you see making these changes? Do you believe that it is true, in life, that we are always able to change? What do people need in order to make changes in themselves?
2. In the book, there are instances of people pretending to be what they are not. How are Carlotta, Summer, Stanley and Norbert all different kinds of imposters?

3. Is Norbert truly psychic? What are your arguments for and against?
4. Consider the roles that jealousy, resentment and envy play in the story. Who are the characters most plagued by these feelings, and how do these feelings impact their behavior?
5. Why does Carlotta need to be in control of other people? Like Carlotta, how do other characters attempt to control?
6. Norbert finds value in being of service to and helping others. In what ways has he, over the course of his life, fulfilled this sense of duty? Consider how the need to be of service can affect a person's behavior.
7. Discuss Norbert's evolution from the opening scene to the closing scene. How has he grown and changed?
8. Did you enjoy the companion animals and the parts they played? How do they reflect their owners, if at all? What do they add to the story?
9. If you could have lunch with one of the characters, which one would you like to get to know better?

Author Bio

Keziah Frost holds master's degrees in English and counseling. She developed THE RELUCTANT FORTUNE-TELLER while enrolled in the Faber Academy online course. She shares her life with five little dogs, one audacious cat and her encouraging human family. THE RELUCTANT FORTUNE-TELLER is her first novel.

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