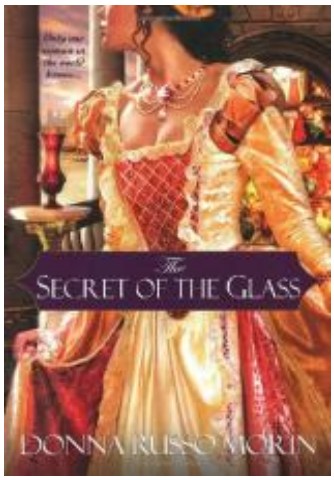
The Secret of the Glass

by Donna Russo Morin



About the Book

The Secret of the Glass is a thrilling historical novel that takes us into the secret and fascinating world of the legendary Murano glassmakers from the acclaimed author of **The Courtier?s Secret**, Donna Russo Morin.

The Murano glassmakers of Venice are celebrated and revered?but now three are dead, killed for attempting to leave the city that both prized their work and kept them prisoner. For in this, the 17th century, the secret of their craft must, by law, never leave Venetian shores. Yet there is someone who keeps the secret while defying tradition. She is Sophia Fiolario, and she, too, is a glassmaker. Her crime is being a woman?

Discussion Guide

1. Sophia?s and Zeno?s actions were equally responsible for the situation they found themselves in; what were they? How did it affect their relationship?

2. Upon her first meeting with the da Fulignas, what are Sophia?s initial impressions about the family dynamics? In what ways was she correct?

3. What did Galileo mean when he said, ?Why can I not marvel at the heavens and their miraculous workings and love the God who created them at the same time?? Is this a topic still under debate? What is it called?

4. The author often uses two distinct frames of reference for metaphors and similes. What are they and why are they so appropriate for the setting of the work?

5. Because of the event that took place at the Count of Camillo?s home, Galileo suffers a chronic illness that plagues him the rest of his life. What else does he suffer from because of the incident? How does it affect his behavior?

6. Sophia finally tells Damiana that she makes the glass, having kept it a secret for many years. What are the two main reasons why Sophia didn?t tell her sooner? What was Damiana?s reaction? Was it expected?

7. When Sophia follows Pasquale to the campanile and witnesses what takes place at its peak, she learns things about Pasquale and Teodoro that she did not expect. How did her actions, and what she learned, backfire?

8. Sophia?s behavior changes drastically from the beginning of her story to its end. In what ways did she change? How did the changes manifest themselves? What precipitated the changes?

9. When Pasquale says, ?You will have your lovers, and I will have mine?hopefully, they will never be the same,? what is the implication? Did Sophia have any inclination of this prior to this moment? Was it a surprise?

10. What is the irony of Sophia and Teodoro?s relationship? What are the conditions they each face? Why does his sadness bring her joy? Is it a normal reaction?

11. As Sophia and Pasquale watch Galileo accept his reward at the Doge?s palace, they share the moment and in it ?find a common ground.? What is it, and does it have any lasting effect on their relationship?

12. Sophia often chastises herself for her selfishness. In what ways does it reveal itself? Are there specific instances where she behaves selfishly? Is it ever warranted?

13. Sophia was ultimately responsible for saving Pasquale?s life, but she saved someone else by the same action. Who was it? How were they saved, and from what?

14. Discuss the meaning of the statement ?The line is so fine between the pleasure of wanting and the pain of not having.? How does it relate to what Sophia is experiencing? What other statements explain and support what she is feeling?

15. Sophia and Teodoro are the main characters in the story, but there is another entity that is equally as important. Identify the character and discuss the impact on the story.

Author Bio

Donna Russo Morin is a graduate of the University of Rhode Island where she obtained two degrees. In addition to writing, editing and teaching, Donna dabbles as a model and actor, using yet another imaginary world to help support her real one. Donna's two sons, Devon and Dylan, are her greatest works in progress.

The Secret of the Glass

by Donna Russo Morin

Publication Date: March 1, 2010
Paperback: 384 pages
Publisher: Kensington
ISBN-10: 0758226926
ISBN-13: 9780758226921