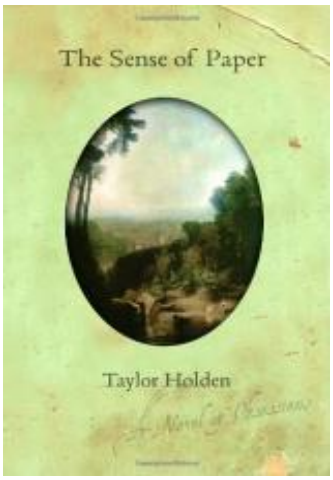
The Sense of Paper

by Taylor Holden



About the Book

Charlotte "Charlie" Hudson was once a star journalist covering war-torn countries and witnessing things that should never be seen. Now Charlie is trying to escape the ghosts that haunt her and her failed marriage by writing a book on the history of paper --- a subject that has always fascinated her --- and famed artist J.M.W. Turner. Her research introduces her to Sir Alan Matheson, a brilliant artist and acclaimed Turner scholar who has ghosts and secrets of his own. Charlie quickly falls under Alan?s seductive spell. Aroused by his sensuality and drawn inexorably into the vortex of his troubled past, she will come face-to-face with a shocking betraya --- and ever nearer to a danger she doesn't even suspect exists.

Discussion Guide

1. Why do you think this novel is entitled **The Sense of Paper**? What meaning do you think the word "sense" has in this title? Is it an apt title? A great title? What role does "sense" play in the novel?

2. Each section starts with a technical term for different forms of paper. Is each term a metaphor for what happens in the section of the story that follows?

3. Charlie quit her job as a journalist and became estranged from her husband. Why is Charlie running so desperately from her past?

4. Discuss your reaction to how Charlie handles various situations throughout the book, such as meeting Sarah Matheson and learning Angela?s history. Do you think she's troubled? Snoopy? Would you handle similar situations in the same way Charlie did?

5. Charlie and Carrie shared so much together, but took very different paths. Still, Carrie always came to Charlie as a

friend and as a sister. Who do you think is the stronger of the two? What do you think of their friendship dynamic?

6. Charlie was once a tough journalist --- tracking down the facts in countries torn apart by violence. Why is Charlie so reliant on Alan for her current book project?

7. Charlie and Alan are both unstable and have a lot of secrets. What do you think of their relationship? Are they good for each other or not? Are they addicted to each other for the wrong reasons?

8. Is there a common link to be found with the women in Alan?s life? Charlie, Sarah, Lori, Angela, Susie Ball? What are these women hiding?

9. Why is Charlie so intrigued by Angela? What feelings and similarities were unraveled during this search?

10. Why did Charlie choose to write a book on paper? How did Turner inspire her interests? What parallels can be drawn from Turner's life to the lives of the characters in the novel?

11. What did you learn about the history of paper? What lengths did people go to make paper? To get the "right" paper?

12. In this novel, paper plays a big role. Could paper be considered another character? Major or minor? How does it move the story along?

13. Could paper be seen as a metaphor? For what?

14. It is so easy for people to take paper for granted. While reading this novel, did you become more aware of paper --- its many physical qualities as well as its many uses? Its beauty as an object in and of itself? How?

15. Do you think Charlie will ever begin to heal? To grow?

Author Bio

Taylor Holden, as Wendy Holden, was a respected journalist for *The Daily Telegraph*, where she covered wars and events around the world, including Northern Ireland, the US, Eastern Europe and the Middle East. She has co-written several autobiographies of remarkable women, including Goldie Hawn's recent *New York Times* bestseller. She lives in Suffolk, England, with her husband and four dogs. This is her first novel.

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