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White Truffles in Winter

by N. M. Kelby



About the Book

WHITE TRUFFLES IN WINTER imagines the world of the remarkable French chef Auguste Escoffier (1846-1935), who changed how we eat through his legendary restaurants at the Savoy and the Ritz. A man of contradictions --- kind yet imperious, food-obsessed yet rarely hungry --- Escoffier was also torn between two women: the famous, beautiful, and reckless actress Sarah Bernhardt and his wife, the independent and sublime poet Delphine Daffis, who refused ever to leave Monte Carlo. In the last year of Escoffier's life, in the middle of writing his memoirs, he has returned to Delphine, who requests a dish in her name as he has honored Bernhardt, Queen Victoria, and many others. How does one define the complexity of love on a single plate?

N. M. Kelby brings us the sensuality of food and love amid a world on the verge of war in this work that shimmers with beauty and longing.

Discussion Guide

1. If you were to create a dish for someone you love, what would it be? What elements would you include and why?

2. Delphine wonders to herself "what it was like to be Sabine, so beautiful but with polio. Flawed and broken." How do you think having polio has shaped Sabine's personality and outlook?

3. How are Delphine and Sarah different? Do they have any traits in common? What do you think attracts Escoffier to each of them?

4. Did your opinion of Sarah change over the course of the novel? Why?

5. How do you think Escoffier's Catholic faith shaped him? In light of his infidelity, were you surprised to learn how

devout he was?

6. Why does Delphine refuse to live with Escoffier when he relocates to London? How would you feel if you were in her position? Would you act differently?

7. What role does the mysterious "Mr. Boots" play in Delphine and Escoffier's relationship?

8. What motivates Escoffier to play matchmaker with Sabine and Bobo? Why does he think they are suited to each other?

9. Were you surprised by how much love exists between Delphine and Escoffier despite the way their marriage was arranged and the many years they spent apart?

10.How do the various characters use food to express or convey emotion? Did reading Escoffier's story make you reconsider your own relationship with food?

Author Bio

N. M. Kelby is the critically acclaimed author of IN THE COMPANY OF ANGELS, WHALE SEASON, WHITE TRUFFLES IN WINTER and the Florida Book Award winner A TRAVEL GUIDE FOR RECKLESS HEARTS, among others. She lives in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

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