

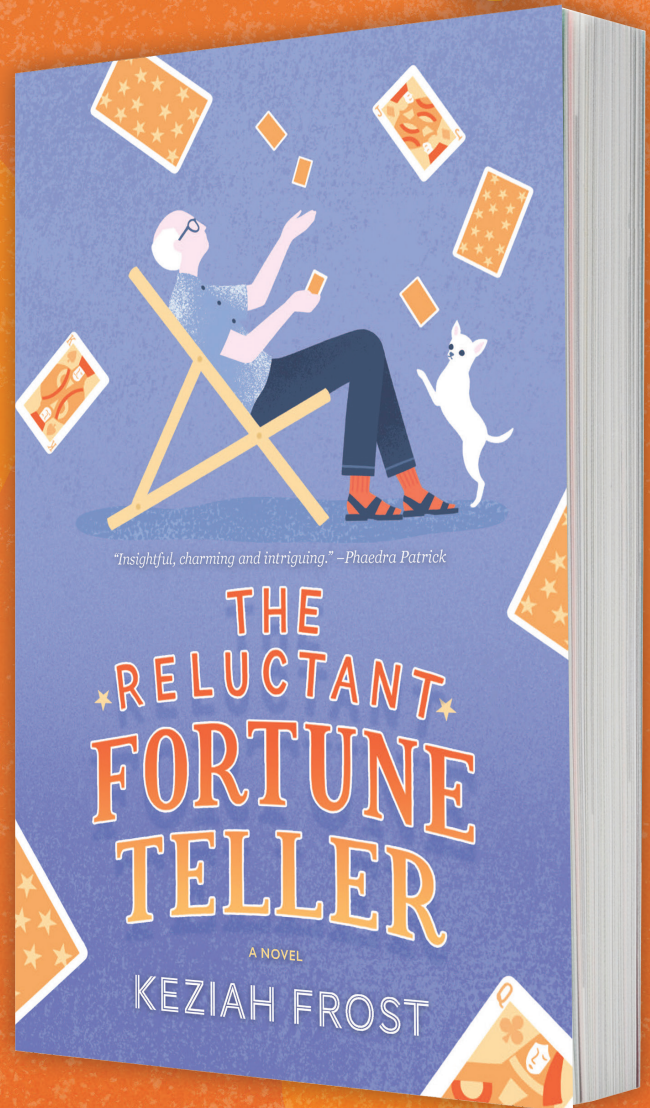
Your Next Book Club Read



We're never too old to learn new tricks.

Norbert Zelenka has always lived life on the sidelines. It's why at seventy-three 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—decide to make Norbert their latest project, he reluctantly agrees to their scheme: establishing himself as the town's fortune-teller.

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 when a troubled young woman goes missing after a bad reading, Norbert must find a strength beyond the cards to bring her home safely.



Discussion Questions

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.” Do you believe that it is true, in life, that we are always able to change?
2. Is Norbert truly psychic? What are your arguments for and against?
3. Norbert finds value in being of service to and helping others. In what ways has he fulfilled this sense of duty?
4. Discuss Norbert's evolution from the opening scene to the closing scene. How has he grown and changed?
5. How do the companion animals in the story reflect their owners? Did you enjoy the parts they played?

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About the Author

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.



The Not-So-Reluctant Writer...

In fifth grade, Mrs. Kean used to call me up to the front of the class to read my poems and compositions. I was afraid the kids would call me “teacher’s pet,” but they didn’t. They had great reactions and cheered me on. That continued next door in sixth grade, with Miss Burns, Mrs. Kean’s friend. Every week I was chosen to read my work. I began to see that not only did I get to have the enjoyment of the play that went on in my mind when I wrote these pieces, but I was giving entertainment and happiness to others by sharing my writing. That’s when I knew I wanted to be a writer.

I kept writing all through school, and my first master’s degree was in English. After that, life led me along many routes and

I gained experiences that inform my writing now. I finished this novel due to ignoring the common advice to not talk about your work in progress with anyone. That is nonsense! Of course, the people you talk to should be well-chosen, encouraging ones.

I joined my local writers’ workshop, which meets at the public library, and I signed up for the Faber Academy UK online course “Writing a Novel.” I also had my daughter, Claire, reading along and reacting as I wrote chapter by chapter. I listened carefully to critiques from all of these sources. I know that all that encouragement and accountability helped me to finish writing *The Reluctant Fortune-Teller*.

