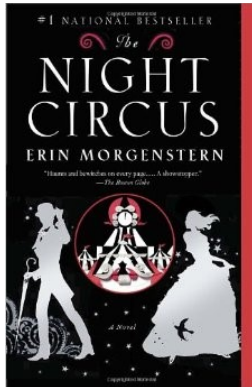




Discussion Guide



About the Book

Book Title: *Night Circus*

Author: Erin Morgenstern

Book Website: <http://erinmorgenstern.com/writing/the-night-circus/>

Author Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/erinmorgensternbooks>

Questions for Discussion

1. What were your general impressions of this book?
2. This book is classified as a fantasy novel. What is your experience reading fantasy and how did this book compare and contrast with other fantasy novels you've read?
3. Why do you think Erin Morgenstern wrote this book?
4. What were the themes of this book? Do you see any of the themes playing out in real life, beyond the fantasy world she created?
5. "People see what they want to see." P.156, Location 2423, Celia to Isobel. Is this true? What does this mean in the context of *Night Circus*?
6. "There are never really endings, happy or otherwise." (P. 377 Location 6002) Do you agree with this thought? What does it mean in the context of the *Night Circus*?
7. This book is also a love story. What did you think of the relationship between Celia and Marco? How did the relationship play out through the story and in the ending?
8. Read over the MAMs comments on the book. Which of them do you most agree with and why?
9. In what ways, if any, will this book change your life or perspective?
10. With which of the MAMs do you most agree about this book?

Other Links...

Night Circus Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WZJiW2w1xdc>

Nancy and the MAMs discuss the book...



NANCY: I ventured into this artfully designed fantasy slowly, entering an imaginary world where magic danced across every page. I found myself cheering for the lovers pitted against each other in a strange and mysterious contest, as they searched for a path out of the game. I wondered about the metaphors of circus, the trap, the love connection and competition and how these metaphors apply to the lives we all lead. Certainly the magical, mystical aspects of life were reflected in the environments created and also the extent to which we are bound by our own reality, and searching for ways to fly beyond. In our book club, we read a variety of books, and I've certainly never read anything quite like this before. I especially appreciated the light in the main characters.



SALLIE: Well, as I look at this from the point of the children, once again, I'm appalled at the stories of Marco and Celia. I really did not like the way they were pawns for Marco's mentor and Celia's father. This is child abuse! But I cheered them both in rising above their teachers. It puzzles me why someone would write a book like this. And as for Poppet and Widget, they seemed to fair a little better growing up within the circus. But still, this is a very strange and peculiar story and I'm not sure I liked it very much.



ABIGAIL: I agree with Sallie that it was a rather bizarre story. I haven't read much fantasy since C.S. Lewis and Madeleine L'Engle's children's books. So I found the fantasy not quite as spiritual in nature as I prefer. But like Nancy, I saw the metaphors somewhat meaningful. If you think about the sense in which modern society is permeated with competitions that we are somehow participating in almost against our will as we try to find a path to love? Maybe?



MOLLY: Strange book, for sure. My son likes to read fantasy and I asked him what he thought about it. He told me that there are other books in this genre where the magicians duel; so this falls into that category. He prefers the ones that deal with outer space and other worlds. He pointed out this is much more abstract and refreshing than Harry Potter, although he loved that, too when he was a child. With my chemo recently I found it hard to follow the book, that's why I asked him.



PRISCILLA: I have to admit I didn't read this book. It looked a little too much like the work of Satan. At my church, we are suspicious of anything related to magic. We don't practice Halloween either. So you ladies will have to discuss this one without me. I'll just listen. I hope we do a Christian book next!



KATHARINE: Not my usual reading fare either, I'm afraid. But I noticed this is considered Young Adult fiction, so I read it thinking about my students! I thought perhaps it would help me to relate to them better, knowing the sort of thing they are reading these days. I think I'll ask them next year if they see any Biblical themes in *Night Circus*. Of course the young adults aren't big readers these days, so I doubt anyone will respond to that question. A few thoughts come to mind... The prominence of love, the issue of predestination, triumph of good over evil. What do you think?



JANE: Well, you've probably figured out by now I don't do very much reading and I could barely get through a chapter of this book. But I would like to watch the movie. I've been a big fan of the horror films and I think this would be a little like that. I'd like to see this *Night Circus* come to life. Should we make it a date, MAMs, when the movie comes out?