



Fates and Furies Reader's Guide

BY LAUREN GROFF

Category: Women's Fiction |
Literary Fiction

READERS GUIDE

Questions and Topics for Discussion

Fates and Furies

by Lauren Groff

Reading Group Guide

1. *Fates and Furies* is told in halves. Why do you think the author chose to narrate the story this way? How did the split storytelling affect your reading of the book? Might it be symbolic of the characters' inner lives?
2. Consider Mathilde's final decision—to keep her past a secret for so many years. Do you think she should have told Lotto the truth? Think about whether this lie was truly for the best; could they have been happy if Mathilde had told him everything? Why do you think she kept this information to herself?
3. How did the inclusion of Lotto's writing affect your reading experience? Did Lotto's plays help you to understand his character?
4. Discuss the way the author presents Lotto's writing talent. Mathilde has a significant hand in his success, but she is never recognized for it. Should she have taken the credit? Discuss the effect of stardom on Lotto's understanding of himself and his marriage.
5. *Fates and Furies* questions male vs. female perceptions of reality. Think about how the author approaches the notion of feminine anger. Mathilde is an incredibly angry character; do the men in her life allow for this anger? Why or why not? Do you think Lotto is a misogynist? And how does your vision of Lotto's world change after hearing Mathilde's side of the story?

6. Mathilde's relationship with Ariel is abusive. What does Ariel's presence in the story say about Mathilde's natural impulse toward revenge? Where is her reaction to her experience with Ariel directed at other characters?
 7. Think about setting. As the characters grow, they find themselves in ever-changing spaces. How does each setting compel their actions and, eventually, their relationships? Specifically, discuss Mathilde's life in France, Lotto's childhood in Florida, and how these geographical differences affect their union in New York.
 8. *Fates and Furies* spans a long period of time. Chronologically, the plot is very complex, though there is a central focus on Lotto and Mathilde. . How do Lotto and Mathilde change over the years, together and apart? Do you think they had a happy marriage?
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