



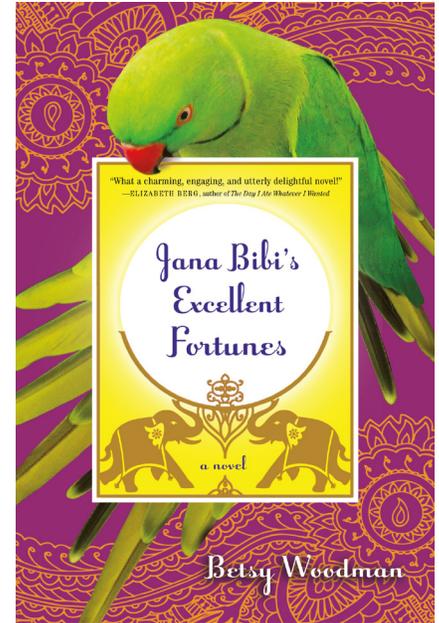
Reading Group Gold

Jana Bibi's Excellent Fortunes

Betsy Woodman

Discussion Questions

1. The idea of going on a pilgrimage comes up several times throughout the novel. Are there any parallels to be drawn between Jana's decision to live as a missionary or her decision to move into Jolly Grant House and Feroze's pending pilgrimage to Mecca? What about Moustapha's journey to Bombay to pursue his musical career?
2. What role does Western society and culture play in this novel?
3. What purpose does Jack serve in this novel? What image does he project of life outside of India? Do you see Jana differently once Jack has been introduced in the story?
4. How does Jana's history help shape her as a person?
5. How does religion affect the characters' lives?
6. Compare the different images of family we see in this novel: Jana and her son; Jana and her adopted family (Tilku, Mary, etc.); Feroze, Moustapha and Zohra; Police Chief Bandhu, Manju and Raju; and Sandra and her father. More specifically, how do the parent-child relationships differ? What do they have in common?
7. What role does the Fair Oaks School play in the daily life of the small town?
8. Between his conversations with Yousuf Baig and his diaries, the author gives us many chances to get to know Feroze. Does the Feroze we see with Yousuf Baig differ from the Feroze we see through his diary?
9. Music is everywhere in Hamara Nagar. Discuss its different functions throughout the novel.
10. Is there a moral to be taken from this novel?
11. Do you like the way the author ended this novel? Do you think Jana will ever leave India? Why or why not? What does the book have to say about nationality, belonging, and home?



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