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The Cure For Dreaming



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Synopsis

Winters breathes new life into history once again with an atmospheric, vividly real story that includes archival photos and art from the period. Olivia Mead is a headstrong, independent girl "a suffragist" in an age that prefers its females to be docile. It's 1900 in Oregon, and Olivia's father, concerned that she's headed for trouble, convinces a stage mesmerist to try to hypnotize the rebellion out of her. But the hypnotist, an intriguing young man named Henri Reverie, gives her a terrible gift instead: she's able to see people's true natures, manifesting as visions of darkness and goodness, while also unable to speak her true thoughts out loud. These supernatural challenges only make Olivia more determined to speak her mind, and so she's drawn into a dangerous relationship with the hypnotist and his mysterious motives, all while secretly fighting for the rights of women.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Stage-show hypnotists are relics at this point, found only in Vegas or sailing the high seas aboard a large commercial cruise ship. And, unless you're trying to kick a particularly bad smoking habit or unlock suppressed memories, it's unlikely you'll see a hypnotist in your normal daily life. But there was a time when they were a lot more popular. And Cat Winter's new book, *The Cure for Dreaming*, takes us back to that day and time. It is just before the turn of the twentieth century in Portland, Oregon. Neighboring Idaho has recently given its women the right to vote, but Oregon's anti-suffragist movement is still holding strong. Henri Reverie, a famous stage hypnotist, is performing in Portland on Halloween night, and Olivia Mead attends the show with

some friends. When Olivia volunteers, her friends (like John and me) are good enough cheerleaders to convince Henri that he should bring Olivia on stage. As it turns out, Olivia is highly susceptible to hypnosis. All Olivia remembers is being put in a trancelike, dreamlike state where she felt a divine. She can vaguely recall some of Henri's words and directives, but it is not until she has returned to her seat, amidst audience titters, that her friends tell her that Henri put her in a deep sleep, laid her as stiff as a board with her head on one chair and her feet on another, and stood upon her corseted stomach. When Olivia returns home and tells her father about the hypnotist's show, he confronts her about another bit of news he heard: earlier that day Olivia had participated in a protest with women of the Oregon State Equal Suffrage Association on the courthouse steps. He is horrified by her behavior and worried that it will cost him some of his upper-crust dental clients.

I always really enjoy the historical aspect to Winters's novels; she does an excellent job of blending history with paranormal aspects that make the story even more intriguing. This story focuses on a lot of elements significant both historically and to human nature. I loved the background on the suffragist movement of the 1900s. This was an interesting time in history and it was fun to take a peek into it. I also enjoyed the discussion of how long-term illness like cancer is finally being treated in a more technical way. Additionally there was a lot in here on mesmerists which was incredibly interesting. I always love how Winters focuses on a few topics for each book and as a reader you get to learn a lot about these interesting topics. Olivia was an intriguing character as well. She's not outrageously into women's rights but she does want to be educated. She really doesn't even get drawn into the suffragist movement until her super strict (and somewhat creepy) father drives her to it. Once Olivia obtains the ability to see a person's true nature things really get interesting. These parts really drive home how different a person's internal nature can be from their external appearance. While this is by no means a startling observation; it is interesting how it is depicted and how it helps Olivia see that all the bright and shiny people aren't usually as bright and shiny as they seem. I also really enjoyed the character of Henry Reverie and his mesmerism. The fact that Henry is portrayed as an honest and upright young man who makes his living performing mesmerism is somewhat ironic and makes him an interesting character. The ending is wrapped up fairly well and realistic, if a bit disappointing.

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