

Fair Play

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Reading Group Guide

Introduction

Heroine Billy Jack Tate has a man's name and a man's profession in a man's world. As a doctor at the 1893 Chicago World's Fair, she is one step closer to having her very own medical practice.

Hunter Scott is one of the elite. A Texas Ranger and World's Fair guard specifically chosen for his height, physique, character, and skill. Hailed as the toughest man west of any place east, he has no patience for big cities and women who aspire to walk in a man's shoes.

When Hunter discovers an abandoned infant in a White City exhibit, he and Billy's search to find its parents leads them down a path of discovery, hope, and loss as they help erect a playground for underprivileged children on the West Side of Chicago. As Billy and Hunter pursue their common goal, their passion and respect for each other grows, and the two must decide whether love is more important than having it all.

Discussion Questions

1. Dr. Billy Jack Tate, a female doctor in the 1890s, firmly believes women are just as capable as (if not more than) men. What events or circumstances may have shaped her beliefs? What kind of challenges would a woman with these attitudes face in the late 1800s?

2. One of Billy's strategies for being successful in a male-dominated profession is to make men forget she's a woman. Is this a good long-term strategy? Why or why not?
3. What are your first impressions of Hunter Scott?
4. Describe Billy's and Hunter's relationship at the beginning of *Fair Play*. How does discovering and spending time with Joey change the dynamic between them?
5. Would you describe Billy as a feminist? Why or why not?
6. How does Hunter perpetuate female stereotypes? What about male stereotypes?
7. In *Fair Play*, Billy often defies gender stereotypes and expectations for her generation. Can you think of any examples in which Hunter does not meet similar cultural expectations of how a man should act?
8. Do you think Billy was fair in her terms for her marriage to Hunter? Do you think her terms would be perceived differently if she were the man in the relationship?
9. Hunter's and Billy's mutual interest in creating a safe space for children to play on the West Side nurtured their burgeoning romance. Why do you think both were willing to sacrifice their jobs to make this happen?
10. Ownership is a significant theme in *Fair Play*. What are some examples of characters who believed they owned something or someone? How do those examples differ, and why were they important to the characters' development?
11. Billy's encounter with Kruse and his friends reminded her of how physically weak she was compared to some men. What do you think ultimately made her decide not to report them to the police? How do you think this changed her views on women's capabilities compared to men's?

12. In *Fair Play*, we are introduced to people of many nationalities, professions, income levels, and circumstances. Why was diversity so important in the plot? How was it a driving force behind Billy's and Hunter's relationship?
13. Billy's and Hunter's romance demonstrated that love compromise is an essential element of a successful, loving relationship. Do you think their compromises for each other in the end were balanced? Why or why not?