

# Southwest Book Club—October 25th, 2022

## *The Keeper of Lost Things*



Ruth Hogan, 2017

HarperCollins

288 pp.

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### Summary

*A charming, clever, and quietly moving debut novel of endless possibilities and joyful discoveries that explores the promises we make and break, losing and finding ourselves, the objects that hold magic and meaning for our lives, and the surprising connections that bind us.*

- Lime green plastic flower-shaped hair bobbles—Found, on the playing field, Derrywood Park, 2nd September.
- Bone china cup and saucer—Found, on a bench in Riveria Public Gardens, 31st October.

Anthony Peardew is the keeper of lost things. Forty years ago, he carelessly lost a keepsake from his beloved fiancée, Therese. That very same day, she died unexpectedly. Brokenhearted, Anthony sought consolation in rescuing lost objects—the things others have dropped, misplaced, or accidentally left behind—and writing stories about them.

Now, in the twilight of his life, Anthony worries that he has not fully discharged his duty to reconcile all the lost things with their owners. As the end nears, he bequeaths his secret life's mission to his unsuspecting assistant, Laura, leaving her his house and all its lost treasures, including an irritable ghost.

Recovering from a bad divorce, Laura, in some ways, is one of Anthony's lost things. But when the lonely woman moves into his mansion, her life begins to change.

She finds a new friend in the neighbor's quirky daughter, Sunshine, and a welcome distraction in Freddy, the rugged gardener. As the dark cloud engulfing her lifts, Laura, accompanied by her new companions, sets out to realize Anthony's last wish: reuniting his cherished lost objects with their owners.

Long ago, Eunice found a trinket on the London pavement and kept it through the years. Now, with her own end drawing near, she has lost something precious—a tragic twist of fate that forces her to break a promise she once made.

As the Keeper of Lost Objects, Laura holds the key to Anthony and Eunice's redemption. But can she unlock the past and make the connections that will lay their spirits to rest?

Full of character, wit, and wisdom, *The Keeper of Lost Things* is heartwarming tale that will enchant fans of *The Particular Sadness of Lemon Cake*, *Garden Spells*, *Mrs Queen Takes the Train*, and *The Silver Linings Playbook*. (From the publisher.)

# Keeper of Lost Things (Hogan) - *Discussion Questions*

## **Discussion Questions**

*We'll add publisher questions if and when they're available: in the meantime, use these LitLovers talking points to start a discussion for The Keeper of Lost Things...then take off on your own:*

1. How would you describe Laura? Why has intimacy been such a problem for her? How does owning Peardew's house affect her? In what way does she become an agent of change and redemption?

2. Talk about the tragedy for Anthrony Peardew of losing his beloved Theresa and the effect it has had on his life. What is the impetus for his compulsion to collect lost things? Which of his imagined stories about lost items do you find most engaging—the blue jigsaw or the white umbrella, perhaps?

3. Talk about Sunshine, who describes her self as a "dancing drome." Did you appreciate her clairvoyance and connection with the irascible ghost?

4. How does the story of Eunice and Bomber relate to Laura and Anthony's story? Did you find the two plot strands difficult to juggle, perhaps too distracting? Or do the two tales enhance one another?

5. In what way are lost things symbolic of lost souls looking for a place to belong...or a lost self struggling for self-discovery? How does each lost item connect with the individual who lost it?

6. Does the book satisfy? What was our experience reading it?

*(Questions by LitLovers. Please feel free to use them, online or off, with attribution. Thanks.)*