

Discussion Questions for “The Princess Bride” by William Goldman December 19, 2020

1. True or False
 - a. What is your opinion of Goldman's inspiration for writing an unabridged (“the good parts”) version of S. Morgenstern’s now-out-of-print classic? How do the author’s asides and interjections affect the story? What do you think is true and false about Goldman as a character in the novel?
 - b. Throughout the book, characters move between lying and telling the truth, sometimes in a single sentence? Are characters consistent about when they lie/don’t lie and to whom?
 - c. Do evil characters stay evil or become good (or were they not evil to begin with)?
2. Characters
 - a. What traits are valued in the world of “The Princess Bride”? Are some characters rewarded for their actions and others punished and what is the moral?
 - b. Why does Goldman use catchphrases for some characters?
 - i. Vizzini: “Inconceivable!”
 - ii. Inigo: “My name is Inigo Montoya. You killed my father. Prepare to die.”
 - iii. Westley: “As you wish.”
3. Women & Feminism
 - a. Is Buttercup testing the limits of feminism or subservient and a woman of an unspecified historical time and place (after Paris and taste, but before Europe, clearly!)?
 - b. Is Buttercup the mirror of women in 1973, when the novel was published, or a mirror of when in said unspecified time?
4. Romance and Revenge
 - a. What is Goldman saying romance and marriage (Westley and Buttercup, Goldman and Helen, Miracle Max and Valerie)?
 - b. Prince Humperdink manufactures revenge for “love of country.” Is Inigo’s quest for vengeance presented as the ultimate act of love for Inigo’s murdered father? In the world of “The Princess Bride,” is revenge acceptable?
5. What is the significance of lists and rules in the book?
6. Genre
 - a. Is the novel is a satire, fantasy, adventure, love story, memoir, tribute, literary criticism, or other genre?
7. Endings
 - a. Why did Goldman provide three endings and which is your favorite?
 - i. Goldman’s father’s
 - ii. The Morganstern ending
 - iii. The Goldman Ending

Sources/References for questions:

“The Princess Bride and Philosophy” <https://www.hoopladigital.com/play/11808474>
<https://www.underatinroof.com/blog/2017/12/6/uatr-book-club-the-princess-bride-discussion>
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