

Harry's Trees ~ Jon Cohen

Page Turners Meeting – Sept. 10, 2019 @ 6:00

Discussion Questions:

1. Fairy tales have been around forever. What's their appeal, and how does *Harry's Trees* use the fairy tale form either in a traditional way or with a twist? Did the fairy tale elements work for you?
2. In many classic tales, gold is at the heart of the story (Rumplestiltskin, Smaug's gold in *The Hobbit*, King Midas's golden touch, etc). Gold is often hoarded and fought over. But Harry gives his gold away. How does Harry's golden journey affect him and ripple outward to test friendships in this book?
3. We all do something called *magical thinking*. For example, we're at a wedding, and it's been raining. Just as the ceremony starts, the sun comes out. We smile because the marriage is now somehow *blessed*. Lucky coins, lucky numbers, lucky weddings – we constantly imbue the ordinary with special meaning. Name some instances in *Harry's Trees* where a character engages in magical thinking, connects dots that are merely coincidences.
4. Is there any *actual* magic in this book? If not, then why does it feel magical? How is this accomplished?
5. Often, during the course of our lives, the world feels subjectively *different* – for instance, when we are in love, or when we grieve. Can emotions temporarily transform the world into a magical place?
6. Many people have a memorable tree in their life. A childhood tree they used to climb, a shade tree in their grandparents' yard, a tree they like to watch come into blossom after a long winter, a tree planted to commemorate something or someone. Do you have a significant tree in your life?
7. Why do trees feel magical versus, say, an azalea bush or a tomato plant? Is it their size or the memories they evoke? Why do we travel to see the giant redwoods or take trips in the fall to see the maples turn red and orange? Is it simply the call of beauty, or are we looking for magic?
8. Who did you find yourself cheering for in this novel? Why?

Jottings...