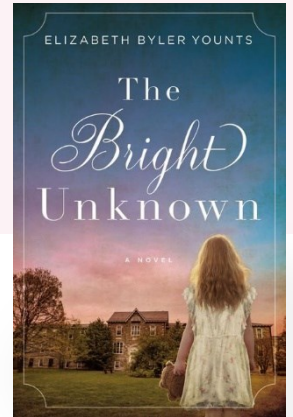




# PARTICIPANT GUIDE

## THE BRIGHT UNKNOWN BY ELIZABETH BYLER YOUNTS



*"I live in a lunatic asylum with women considered insane and incurable – if they weren't crazy when they came, they are now. None of us can leave. We're all trapped. I'm trapped."*

**BRIGHTON FRIEDRICH**



### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1

Q. Which character from 'The Bright Unknown' did you relate to the most? Why?

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Q. What did you find most shocking about the Riverside Asylum?

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3

Q. How did Brighton and Angel's friendship help them survive both Riverside Home and their journey out into the 'real world'?

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4

Q. Home and Belonging are powerful themes in 'The Bright Unknown'. What kind of emotions do these words evoke in you?

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5

Q. In many ways, Nurse Joann is more of a mother to Brighton than her biological mother. Can you relate to this? Besides your biological mother, do you have a 'mother figure' in your life?

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6

Q. Angel experiences rejection from his mother, which becomes a deep and painful burden to bear. Are you familiar with the feeling of rejection? How did you overcome this?

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7

Q. Angel feels accepted by the 'Fears and Fancies'. It's comfortable to be surrounded by people like ourselves, but it's not always the best thing for us. Discuss.

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8

Q. Despite her many failings, Nurse Joann lovingly sacrifices her dreams of a husband and family for Brighton. Has there been a time in your life when you've needed to sacrifice something you've deeply desired for another person?

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9

Q. On page 226, Angel says, "For the first time in our lives, we get to make choices for ourselves". Can you remember the first time you truly gained your independence and made a big decision for yourself?

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10

Q. Is there a season or event from your past that you would rather forget? How can remembering often lead to healing?

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