

# Reading Group Discussion Questions

## THE STEAM MAGNATE BY DANA COPITHORNE

Do you feel that Eson, Kyra, and Jado were justified in their actions throughout the story? Explain.

In the story, Neriv asks Kyra if Eson is a kind of vampire. Given what you know about him at the end of the story, would you say he is immortal? If not, what is he?

Did the author's line drawings included throughout the book give you additional insight into the story contained in *The Steam Magnate*? Give an example where one of the drawings changed your mind about a scene or enriched that scene in your imagination.

Architecture plays a significant role in this book, from the High Bank that signals the strength of financial markets by sliding glass panels into different configurations to the secluded, almost invisible homes of the Steam Territories' heir families. What piece of architecture fascinated you the most? If you had to choose one place from *The Steam Magnate* to live or work, which would you choose, and why?

If you could hang out with one person from the book's circle of debtors at a social event, who would you choose and why?

Reincarnation is a recurring theme in Eson's belief system. Within the constraints of the story, do you believe that either Sarah or Kyra could be a real-life embodiment of an ancient goddess, and if so, what is her role to play in the future? Then discuss the following: if it somehow turned out you were a reincarnation of someone or something from Earth's history, who or what would you most like it to be? How would you change your life today if that were true?

In *The Steam Magnate*, electrical power comes from tides, steam, and wind, and Jado dreams about owning his own solar power source. Do you think it's possible for our world to be run with these kinds of power, and if so, when do you think that will occur in the first world? The third world?

Have you ever felt similar to Jado in that he is curious about the faraway place from which his ancestors came? If you were given the opportunity to visit that place at a manageable cost, would you do it?

The writing of Dana Copithorne has already been compared with Charles Dickens and Jane Austen. Do you agree, and if not, which author does her work or subject matter most resemble?

The Steam Magnate does not follow a typical genre plot formula, but rather seems to grow organically as each character comes to various decisions, often while growing and changing him- or herself. How did you find yourself reacting to the lack of predictability in the storyline?