



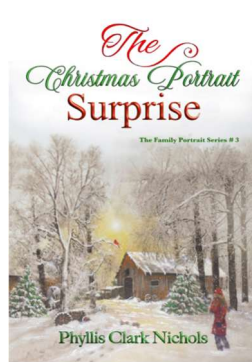
Greetings from Phyllis  
Let's swap stories over a cup of tea.

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DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR  
**THE CHRISTMAS PORTRAIT SURPRISE**

By Phyllis Clark Nichols



- Describe Kate's emotions as she is still struggling with her mother's death and her new blended family.
- Often, there is a feeling of guilt with grief—guilt that life goes on. How did Kate and her family deal with these feelings?
- With which character do you identify most? Kate, Granny Grace, or Evie. Why?
- What is the significance of the Christmas tablecloth? Why do you suppose Granny Grace chose this Christmas to pass the tablecloth down to Kate?
- Chesler found a treasure, one that had been buried for decades and had been there all along. What other treasures did this family uncover during this Christmas season?
- The elusive, mysterious Mister Josh returns again. Discuss Kate's encounter with him.
- What does this story tell us about being neighbors? Compare and contrast neighborly acts in a small town and to neighborly acts in a city.
- Discuss Granny's conversation over hot-chocolate and the metaphor of hot-chocolate.
- Talk about the significance of the different signatures on the tablecloth.
- Examine the value of family traditions to children and to adults and to senior adults. Is the value the same or different for each age group?