



# Whispers Beyond the Veil

*Jessica Estevao*

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**Whispers Beyond the Veil** Jessica Estevao

**First in a dazzling new historical mystery series featuring Ruby Proulx, a psychic with a questionable past who suddenly finds her future most uncertain...**

*Canada, 1898.* The only life Ruby Proulx has ever known is that of a nomad, traveling across the country with her snake-oil salesman father. She dreams of taking root somewhere, someday, but, until she can, she makes her way by reading tarot cards. Yet she never imagined her own life would take such a turn...

After one of her father's medical "miracles" goes deadly wrong, Ruby evades authorities by hiding in the seaside resort town of Old Orchard, Maine, where her estranged Aunt Honoria owns the Hotel Belden, a unique residence that caters to Spiritualists—a place where Ruby should be safe as long as she can keep her dark secret hidden.

But Ruby's plan begins to crumble after a psychic investigator checks into the hotel and senses Ruby is hiding more than she's letting on. Now Ruby must do what she can to escape both his attention and Aunt Honoria's insistence that she has a true gift, before she loses her precious new home and family forever...

## Whispers Beyond the Veil Details

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Author : Jessica Estevao

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## From Reader Review Whispers Beyond the Veil for online ebook

### Amanda NEVER MANDY says

\*\*I received this book for free through Goodreads First Reads.\*\*

Two books ago I read a book that was just like this, a Victorian Era mystery centered around a woman who realizes that hell yes she can stand on her own two feet without a man guiding her. Even the covers mirrored each other; a woman in a fancy dress, umbrella over her right shoulder, gazing off into the distance.

*If I hadn't picked up two alike books, would my rating of whichever one I picked be different?*

The answer to that question is a big fat no. I liked this one as much as I liked the first, average rating for an average read. As I am typing this I realize I can't even remember the details of how the story ended which says a lot about my interest level in the story. Damn, I seriously cannot believe I don't remember. I have an image of the characters in my mind, the location and some of the ending but not the big whodunit piece of the pie. I would normally downgrade it a star for this but I kind of feel like this is on me since I am still riding the average vibe from the other book. So three stars because negative me is cutting this book a break.

*In unrelated news...*

I just had to do a little google research on the whole "centered around" versus "centered on" thing because spell check keeps hitting me with the blue squiggle. **They** say that "on" is the correct usage but **I** cant like that, especially not today.

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### Veronica says

This was a debut book and it felt like it in many ways. The story follows 20 year old Ruby Proulx who was raised by her conman father. When his latest scheme goes horribly wrong, Ruby finds herself on the run and seeking shelter at the home of a maternal aunt in Maine, whom she's never met. This Aunt, Honoria, owns and runs a small seaside hotel that caters to those in the Spiritualist Movement that was popular at the cusp of the twentieth century, 1898 for our story. Upon arriving at this idyllic hotel, Ruby dares to hope that it will turn out to be the stable home she's always wanted. She soon finds, however, that she may share certain, innate "gifts" with a long line of female ancestors. When the bodies of murdered hotel guests start popping up, Ruby has to work to save the place she hopes will be her new home.

As a mystery, this had a bit of slow start being that the first murder doesn't happen until well into the story. While Ruby makes for a decent heroine, I can't say, in retrospect, that she does any real sleuthing. She more or less finds things out by accident or through her very uncanny ability to always be in the right place at the right time to overhear some crucial bit of information. There is also this tendency for information to be shared off the page and then reported on later by some character or another.

As a bit of historical fiction, the setting and the inclusion of various spiritualists was fun and new but I think the author could have expanded on this a bit more. As it is, there is a sense that readers are only allowed to skim the surface of Maine in 1898. The same can be said of characterization. There are several secondary characters that are likely to stick around and yet I never got the sense that I got to know any of them very well. This even includes Officer Warren Yancy who, even though he contributes to the story through his own POV parts, still remains largely a question mark. He has his own family scandal in his past and has his own

reasons for being wary of spiritualists. Presented as a likely future love interest for Ruby, there wasn't sufficient interaction between them in this book for me to really get a sense of how they'd work off of each other.

All in all, it wasn't bad for a debut book but there is room for improvement, both in plotting, pacing, and characterization. I did like Ruby and the hotel setting enough to give the second book a chance to see how or if things improve. I hope they will.

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### **Karen says**

This book cover is as visually stunning as the story and mystery in Whispers Beyond The Veil by Jessica Estevao. This story starts off in Canada which I found extraordinarily appealing, quickly following main character Ruby to Old Orchard, Maine. History lovers are going to truly enjoy this book. With the story roots in the "phonies and fraudsters" of the time a compelling mystery unfolds as Ruby learns to trust, survive and come into her own.

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### **OpenBookSociety.com says**

<http://openbooksociety.com/article/wh...>

Whispers Beyond the Veil  
A Change of Fortune Mystery, Book #1  
By Jessica Estevao  
ISBN13: 9780425281604  
Author website: <http://www.jessiecrockett.com>  
Brought to you by OBS reviewer Kayt

#### Synopsis:

First in a dazzling new historical mystery series featuring Ruby Proulx, a psychic with a questionable past who suddenly finds her future most uncertain...

Canada, 1898. The only life Ruby Proulx has ever known is that of a nomad, traveling across the country with her snake-oil salesman father. She dreams of taking root somewhere, someday, but, until she can, she makes her way by reading tarot cards. Yet she never imagined her own life would take such a turn...

After one of her father's medical "miracles" goes deadly wrong, Ruby evades authorities by hiding in the seaside resort town of Old Orchard, Maine, where her estranged Aunt Honoria owns the Hotel Belden, a unique residence that caters to Spiritualists—a place where Ruby should be safe as long as she can keep her dark secret hidden.

But Ruby's plan begins to crumble after a psychic investigator checks into the hotel and senses Ruby is hiding more than she's letting on. Now Ruby must do what she can to escape both his attention and Aunt Honoria's insistence that she has a true gift, before she loses her precious new home and family forever...

#### Review:

To start with, just let me tell you I love Jessica Estevao/Jessie Crockett's writing no matter if she is writing a cozy mystery or a period fiction novel. Whispers Beyond the Veil is different from her fabulous cozy books, but her story telling talents are just as wonderful. In the first of what promises to be a fantastic new series (A Change of Fortune Mystery), this historical mystery is replete with fascinating characters, settings, intrigue and some paranormal activity as well. Starting out in 1898 Canada, Ruby Proulx is a protagonist that lacks confidence, but has a true will to survive whatever comes her way. Her father forces them to travel as he peddles outlandish cures and medical equipment guaranteed to heal anything. When things go horribly wrong while trying out his latest investment, the pair split up. Her father tells her they have to go their own ways in order to save their hides.

Luckily Ruby has been doing a bit of side work reading cards and has a bit of money saved. She takes all the money she has and gets a ticket to Old Orchard, Maine. There Ruby hopes to entreat upon her Aunt Honoria Belden, her mother's sister. She knows only that her mother and Honoria are in a photo that she has saved. Her mother has been gone since her birth. When she arrives in town, someone tries to steal her belongings, what little she has. She has been taught from an early age to never trust the police. So when Officer Warren Yancy comes to take her statement, she holds back some information. He is nice enough to help her to her aunt's hotel. The Hotel Belden is about to have a grand opening to entice Spiritualist. The whole town is full of them. Definitely a change of fortune for Ruby. She is able to take over for a medium that has cancelled last minute. Not that she thinks she is a real medium, but she has always heard voices so maybe they will assist her.

Things get hairy when one of the guests turns out to be the president of the Northeastern Society for Psychical Research and is known as a persistent debunker of the movement and its participants. Leander Stickney ends up dead, so suspicion lands on Ruby, her aunt and the other psychics at the hotel. That could ruin things for the reopening of Honoria's hotel. It does not help that once friendly Officer Yancy has an entrenched suspicion of them. He especially does not like the friendship Ruby has with his mother and sister. His boss wants him to get to the bottom of the death and the abundance of pickpockets yesterday. Is there more going on than meets the eyes? There an undercurrent making things even more intriguing.

I am a cozy mystery reader through and through. I can honestly say, even the most staid reader will not find things to offend you in this wonderful historical mystery. Whispers Beyond the Veil is an entertaining read that kept me enthralled throughout. Meeting the new characters, visiting a different time, getting to follow Ruby on her journey of self-exploration, all held my attention and pulled me in so I did not want to put this book down. I even enjoy that there are still questions unanswered, I cannot wait for the next book in this fascinating new series. I believe any fan of historical fiction and even cozy mysteries will love this new book and series. It is extremely well written. As I look into the cards, I see Ruby and "A Change of Fortune" series being one of my new favorites. Take a chance and I am sure you will have a bright future ahead at least during the time it takes to read this fabulous journey into the past.

\*OBS would like to thank the publisher for supplying a free copy of this title in exchange for an honest review as part of their ongoing blog tour\*

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## Nancy H says

I am not normally into plots involving the paranormal, but I LOVED this book! I am so happy to see that it is the first in a series, because I can't wait to read the next one. The story line is that Ruby Proulx leaves her charlatan-medicine-man father, under very bad circumstances, and travels to the seashore of Maine to the

house of her aunt. Her aunt has turned her hotel into a paranormal experience, in an effort to save the hotel from bankruptcy and herself from losing her home and livelihood. When Ruby arrives, they are in desperate need of a medium, and when Ruby tries to help out, she finds herself embroiled in two murders. This is definitely a page-turner and a very good read.

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### **Okan Anuas says**

#### **Delightful read!**

Ruby and her father have conned people all their lives. When a new idea goes wrong, Ruby is forced to flee the life she's known and live with an aunt she's never met. She tries to cover up her past but a series of deaths threaten to destroy her aunt's livelihood and unravel the new life she's made for herself. Desperate to help her aunt (and herself), she decides to investigate a little on her own.

Jessica Estevao's debut is funny, cozy, and lovely to read. The characters are distinct and develop well. The many side plots and details add up cleverly. However, it is the historical accuracy and engaging writing style that makes *Whispers Beyond the Veil* a must-read. I loved the characters, the dialogue (which never becomes too tiresome or overdone), and the element of supernatural and magic in an otherwise realistic book. Be warned though: if you are looking for a pure murder mystery, you may be disappointed. The actual mystery is only revealed midway through the book.

*Whispers* never lost my attention. I was eager to read it to the very end, and I am excited for future mysteries from Estevao!

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### **Scottsdale Public Library says**

Ruby escapes her ne-er do well father and heads to her dead mother's family, thinking she has killed a man. She hasn't but her father has and wants to pin the blame on her. She is lovingly received by her aunt and surprised to learn the truth about her mother's family: they all have psychic talents. She just thought she was going crazy. There are a few murders and mysteries as Ruby settles in to her new home, ever watchful about her past returning. This book is fun, not overly cozy or romantic, its historical aspects are perfect for the story and add to it rather than overwhelm. First in a series. -Suzanne R.

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### **Kristie Dilcher says**

I love historical mysteries. I found this book to be very well written and enjoyable. I thought the characters were interesting and likable. The story line was easy to follow and left me guessing until the end of the book. I never really read anything about the occult world, but I learned many things and look forward to reading more from this author. I highly recommend this book as it is a great read!

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### **Jaynie Flaherty says**

I enjoyed the book. It is a wonderful beach read. I live in Old Orchard Beach, Maine (book setting). The

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main character, Ruby is a woman ahead of her time. The story takes place in 1898, the year The Pier was built. Jessica develops the story and characters in a way that keeps the reader engaged. SO glad to know That this is the first book in a series.

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### **Mark Baker says**

Fleeing a tragic accident, Ruby Proulx crosses from Canada to Old Orchard, Maine. She's run there to meet her mother's side of the family for the first time. They are about to reopen the family home as a resort for spiritualists, and the summer of 1898 will be make or break for them. But when her past catches up to her and a murder threatens her new home, will Ruby be able to solve any problems?

While I am not a fan of paranormal cozies (because I don't believe in the things they are based on), I still found this a very fun debut. The characters are charming, and I fell in love with them. Even though the murder comes a little late, I still found Ruby's introduction to Old Orchard fun, and there is plenty of conflict early on. When the murder does happen, the pace picks up and leads us to a logical conclusion.

NOTE: I received a copy of this book in exchange for my honest review.

Read my full review at Carstairs Considers.

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### **Cindy Burnett says**

Whispers Beyond the Veil marks the beginning of a superb historical mystery series. Jessica Estevao manages to create an extremely likeable, flawed heroine, Ruby Proulx, and place her in an equally enjoyable setting, the charming seaside resort town of Old Orchard, Maine. As the book opens in 1898, Ruby is traveling in Canada with her father, a charlatan who enlists Ruby in his fraudulent schemes. After one of his supposed cures causes a death, Ruby escapes to Old Orchard, Maine to join her estranged Aunt Honoria and avoid being charged with the murder. Honoria owns the Hotel Belden which caters to spiritualists, a popular interest during this time period. When the medium hired by Honoria fails to show, Ruby steps in to fill the medium's shoes. Meanwhile, Old Orchard is building a large pier to attract more visitors, and the additional people mean an increase in crime. As the story unfolds, several individuals are murdered, and Ruby takes it upon herself to help the police solve the murders.

The historical aspects of the story are wonderful, and the characters well-developed. Estevao's attention to historical detail is fantastic – I felt like I was there. The story held my interest through the entire book, and the resolution was particularly creative. While I really loved the entire book, one of my favorite things about Whispers Beyond the Veil was how different it is from anything else I have read. As I mention frequently in my reviews, I feel like I encounter an overabundance of the same types of stories over and over again, and it gets old. Estevao's originality is much appreciated and welcomed; I cannot wait to read the next installment.

I highly recommend this clever, well-written, and very entertaining novel. Thank you to Berkley Publishing for this wonderful book.

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### **Kristina says**

Whispers Beyond the Veil by Jessica Estevao is the first book in A Change of Fortune Mystery series. It is 1898 (in Canada) and Ruby Proulx has not had an easy life growing up with her father. Her father hawks useless medicines and medical devices while Ruby earns a little extra money telling fortunes with her cards. They live in tents and are always on the go. They have never been able to save much money, because her father is always spending their money on new get rich quick schemes (that never work). His latest waste of money is a medical device that will invigorate and re-energize a person. Ruby wants nothing to do with it, but her father can be very insistent. He hooks up Ruby's friend, Johnny, to the machine and has Ruby turn it on. The voice warns her not to do it, but she flips the switch anyway. Johnny ends up dead and Ruby's father blames it all on her (of course). He states they must separate and tells her to leave immediately. Ruby takes what little money she has saved up telling fortunes, and heads for Old Orchard, Maine. Ruby is heading for Honoria Belden, her mother's sister (her mother passed away after giving birth to Ruby). Ruby arrives in town and is immediately accosted by a purse snatcher on the pier. Ruby is rescued by Officer Warren Yancy. He escorts her to her aunt at The Hotel Belden owned by her Aunt Honoria. Her aunt is thrilled to see her. Honoria has just revamped the hotel, and will be re-opening it as a hotel for Spiritualist (a big movement in the US at the time). The featured star will be the medium, Miss Flora Roberts. But when Miss Flora cancels, Ruby feels she must step in and help her aunt. Without the medium, the guests will cancel and her aunt will lose the hotel (she took out a mortgage for the remodel). It turns out that each female in Ruby's maternal family has a unique gift. Ruby has been hearing the voice for years, but she was afraid to tell anyone (did not want to be put in an asylum). Will Ruby be a convincing medium? Ruby gets worried, though, when Leander Stickney checks into the hotel. He is the president of the Northeastern Society for Psychic Research. Instead of promoting psychic phenomena, Mr. Stickney is out to debunk it. But then Mr. Stickney turns up dead, and this presents a new problem for Ruby—the police! Ruby needs to find the killer and save the Hotel Belden (before it gets in the press). Join Ruby in Whispers Beyond the Veil.

There is quite a bit going on in this book. I have tried to summarize the main portions of the book. I thoroughly enjoyed Whispers Beyond the Veil. We are given a lot of background information in the book on Ruby, the hotel, Old Orchard, etc. It can be a little confusing (especially coming at you so quickly at the beginning), but we need all this detail. The story is well-written and engaging with entertaining characters (especially Honoria Belden). You will find that not everything is solved in this first book. We will have to see how things play out during the course of the series. The mystery was complex and had a neat twist that I do not believe many people will expect. I give Whispers Beyond the Veil 4.5 out of 5 stars (I more than liked it, but I was able to solve the mystery and expected the twist). If you enjoy unique, historical mysteries, I believe you will enjoy Whispers Beyond the Veil. I look forward to reading the next book in A Change of Fortune Mystery series.

I received a complimentary copy of the novel in exchange for an honest evaluation. The comments and opinions expressed are strictly my own.

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### **Alison McMahan says**

Energetic, lightly humorous, evocative of summertimes of long ago. Ending felt a bit rushed. A good start to a promising series. Looking forward to more.

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### **Mlpmom (Book Reviewer) says**

I love historical fiction, I always have and when you combine that love of history with a bit of paranormal woo hoo you truly have one fun story that every bit as hard to put down as it was fascinating.

Told in an era of time where spiritualists were seriously becoming popular and just about anything seemed to go, this was a fun tale that not only brought a touch of history to it but was completely entertaining as well with a slight edge of romance and a mystery that will keep you guessing until the end.

This was a great read that was just what I was hoping it would be and left me wanting the next book. I think this will be a really fun series that everyone will love.

\*ARC copy provided by the publisher in exchange for an honest review.\*

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### **Leslie says**

An intriguing protagonist in a fascinating time and place, and a solid mystery. A very promising start to a new series!

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