

The Fortune Teller

Discussion Questions

1. Jon says at the end of the story, regarding determinism, "...the *appearance* of choice is choice enough." Do you agree? Does it not matter if determinism is real or not?
2. In the story, they mention the phrase from Dostoyevsky's "The Brothers Karamazov," which says, "If there is no God, everything is permitted." What does this phrase mean? What does it mean in the framework of determinism? Do you agree with this statement?
3. Is it possible to believe in cause-and-effect relationships, and still believe in free will? How?
4. Is the fortune teller evil? Does she deserve to be abused? What in the story supports your opinion?
5. The exact transcription from the television was enough to convince both men the remainder of the letter was legitimate. Would that be enough to convince you the fortune teller was real and cause you to take the same actions as Jon and Michael?