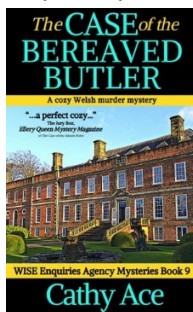


## BOOK CLUB QUESTIONS

### The Case of the Bereaved Butler

by Cathy Ace



#### GENERAL:

- 1) In this book you met the four women who staff the WISE Enquiries Agency. With whom did you most readily identify, and why? Do you think the women have a good group skill-set for their chosen occupation? What about their “additional member”?
- 2) These women are at different stages in their lives and come from very different backgrounds. They also have differing family responsibilities and relationships. Do you think that women have to juggle family, life, and a career in a way that differs from men? Why/why not?
- 3) Are any members of your group Welsh, Irish, Scottish or English? Any ancestry from those areas? Each woman has a different sense of her own “national” identity – do you? What influences that for you? Do you think that differs between men and women, or does age and background play a more vital role? (How about having a meeting with distinctly Welsh, Irish, Scottish or English food and drink?)
- 4) There’s an interplay in these books between old traditions and new technology. By their nature traditions tend to remain the same, whereas technology brings new challenges. How do you find that new technology has changed your own life? What traditions do you adhere to?
- 5) The class structure in Britain is quite unique to that world. If you’re a British group, how do you think that affects your lives, if at all? If you’re not a British group, what takes its place?
- 6) These women all display some measure of strength, and some measure of vulnerability or weakness in the books. What were the most noticeable to you?
- 7) If you were to cast actors (dead or alive) to play these roles, who would you choose, and why?

### **Questions specifically relating to “The Case of the Bereaved Butler”**

- 1) This book touches upon a thought-provoking topic: addiction, and how those who are addicted, or are affected by addiction, react to the situation. There’s also the question about how best to help those who are addicted. Despite the challenges, how about airing this one out?
- 2) Christine was faced with making a life-changing decision in this book. Considering her character, do you think she’s made the right one?
- 3) The evacuation of British children from urban areas that were likely to become targets for bombing during World War Two to areas where they were more likely to be safe has many layers, and perspectives. There’s a great deal of online information about what happened in the UK. What about where you live? Were lives affected in the same way? Different ways?
- 4) The celebration of culture known as an Eisteddfod is a specifically Welsh tradition. What happens, if anything, in your part of the world to celebrate your local culture? How does it differ from, say, twenty years ago? Is more or less done now? Are local traditions being revived in your area to bring together cultural activities? Is that a good or a bad thing? What are the events’ roots and origins?
- 5) If an employee asks for help – how far would you go to help them? What if a family member did the same? How do the bonds of “responsibility” differ from the bonds of blood?
- 6) So...money is no object...would you like your own butler? If so, what would you want them to do for you? How would having one change your life? And what parts of your life would you want to keep completely private?

#### **The Case of the Bereaved Butler:**

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**Author: Cathy Ace**

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Thank you for choosing to read this book!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cathy Ace". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.