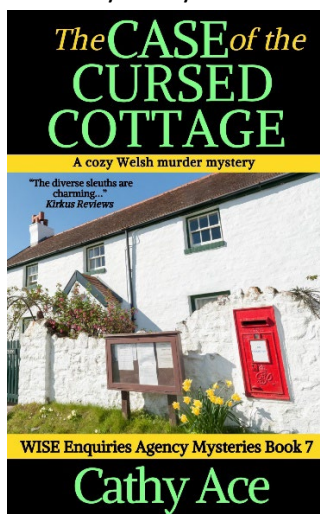


BOOK CLUB QUESTIONS

The Case of the Cursed Cottage

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 Cursed Cottage”

- 1) Do you have a “smart home”? Know anyone who has one? How do you feel about the role of technology within the home? Even if you don’t have a fully-smart home, how do you use technology in your home to make life easier? Would you do more, if you could? What do you do to protect the security of any wi-fi etc. you have at home or on any electronic devices? Should you do more? Do you feel you should find out more about it? If so, what local facilities are there for you to be able to do so?
- 2) The effect of a home upon a young person can sometimes be unfathomable to adults. What are your memories of your childhood home/s? Good and bad, do you think they have influenced the way you have built a home for yourself and your family, as an adult? If you could recreate something from your memories of your childhood home, what would it be, and why would you want others to experience it now? Do you still live in or close to your childhood home? Is that something you like? If you’ve moved away, have you ever returned? How did that make you feel?
- 3) Christenings can be controversial, as can other ceremonies designed to welcome children into a religious group. They can also lead to great tensions within families for all sorts of reasons. Your thoughts on why this happens?
- 4) Annie and Tudor are starting to find their feet as a couple in later life; what challenges face those who get together in their fifties that don’t have to be considered by new couples in their twenties or thirties...and how do those in their fifties have an advantage over younger couples?

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Thank you for choosing to read this book!