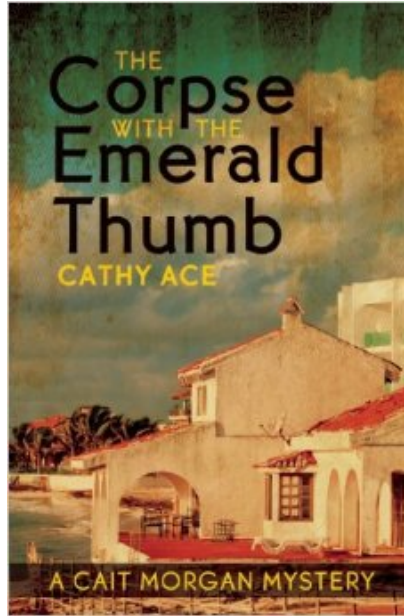


## BOOK CLUB QUESTIONS

# The Corpse with the Emerald Thumb

by Cathy Ace



### ***General topics:***

1. Which character would you most like to invite to join your Book Club for this meeting? Why?
2. Which character would you cross the street to avoid? Why?
3. If you were casting a movie of this book, who would you cast in which parts?
4. Cait's pretty sure of herself, until she isn't. She's pretty bossy, until she's scared. She's got a photographic memory, but forgets things. She likes to take charge, but turns to Bud for support. She's comfortable with her weight, but tries to joke about it before others can mention it. She loves to smoke, but knows it's bad for her. Why are we humans so contradictory? Are you? How? Why? List some other fictional characters who are defined by contradiction.
5. The world famous "Detection Club", whose members included Agatha Christie, drew up "rules" for mystery novels. One of them was that a clue that could help solve the case must not be concealed from the reader. What were the clues that helped Cait solve the case? How many of them did you spot as you were reading? When did you solve the case?

***Relating specifically to “The Corpse with the Emerald Thumb”***

1. The book is set on the Pacific coast of Mexico. Has anyone in the group visited that region? If so, what types of horticulture did they see, and what surprised them? Margarita tends a lush rose garden not far from an arid blue agave plantation. What micro-climates exist in your own home area? How do local gardeners make use of them?
2. Has any member of your group ever taken part in a tequila tasting? What did they think of the different types and grades of tequila? Could they tell the difference? Is it something you might like to do as a group?
3. What’s your favorite Mexican food? Least favorite? What about a Mexican-themed evening for your group discussion? Do you have local Mexican restaurants...and are they “authentic” or “made to attract local clientele”? Do Mexican people own them, run them and do the cooking there? How do they feel about the dishes on their menu? Would they make them differently if they were preparing them for their family?
4. Cait clearly feels she’s “fallen through the looking glass” and has the Edward Lear “Alice” books on her mind; parallels can be found throughout the book. Have you read the “Alice” books as an adult? As a child? What do you recall of them? Fancy reading them again? Which parallels did you spot? Did those parallels add an extra dimension to the book for you?
5. Cait’s determination to save Bud is immediate, and relentless. How far would you go to save someone you love? What about if it put your life in danger?
6. Cait realizes that Bud has kept facts about his professional life from her. Is secrecy within a relationship always a bad thing? Is it a reality in most relationships, or even a necessity? Is Bud’s secrecy understandable? Given Cait and Bud’s personalities, do you think it’s sustainable?
7. Al claims that there’s a lack of awareness and understanding of Mexican artistic achievement. Do you think he makes a valid point? Why do you think that is? What do you know of Mexican art? Do any members of the group have access to books/resources that show Mexican art, that they could share at the meeting?

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Thanks you for choosing to read this book!