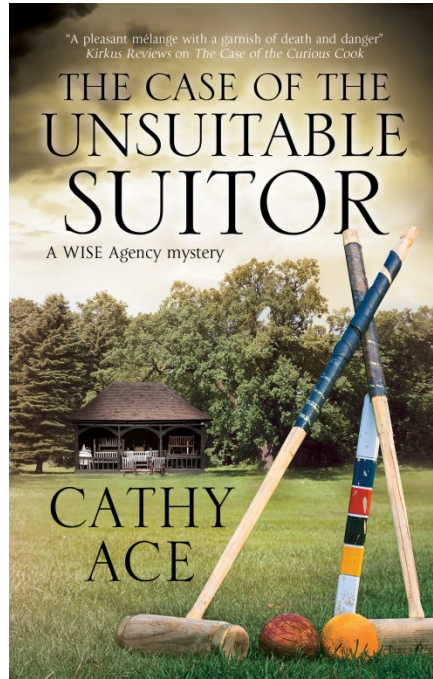


## BOOK CLUB QUESTIONS

### The Case of the Unsuitable Suitor

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 relating specifically to "The Case of the Unsuitable Suitor"**

1) Part of this book is set in Wales, where the WISE Enquiries Agency is based, and part of it takes place in Ireland. Christine Wilson-Smythe's family (her father being a viscount) is a member of the "landed gentry" in Northern Ireland, which is part of the United Kingdom. The differences between the British north, and the independent south (Eire), of the island of Ireland, as well as those between Protestants and Catholics, have lingered - causing bloodshed - for hundreds of years. Has this book made you think about those differences, and how they might impact the coziest/most idyllic of lifestyles, differently?

2) In this book, we see how a someone who tells a person they are attractive, becomes more attractive to that person; it's how Huw Hughes's attention-giving managed to make him so desperately attractive to so many women over the years. Is it normal to enjoy being with someone who makes you feel "special"? Do you think there's a possible built-in danger when that attention is diverted, or removed? Do you know anyone who is always referred to as "charming"? If you know them well, is this something they just "use" to their advantage, or is it a true reflection of their entire personality? What do you think is the difference?

3) Two very different styles of policing are highlighted in this book: both operate in rural areas, but each has a different set of circumstances, and history, to deal with. Do you see differences like that where you live? Are you used to having an armed police presence in your community, or an unarmed one? Can you imagine how it would be if the alternative were the case?

4) In this book we meet a retired village doctor, and a comment is made that it's difficult for doctors to socialize happily with people they've seen in their "less than fully dressed state". Are any of you a doctor, who can speak to this? Do you think this is true? Do you know if your local doctors socialize with their patients, or do they mix only with those whose health they do not personally oversee? Do local doctors play a big role in your local community? Do you feel vulnerable if you encounter your doctor in a social setting?

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**Author: Cathy Ace**

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Thank you for choosing to read this book!