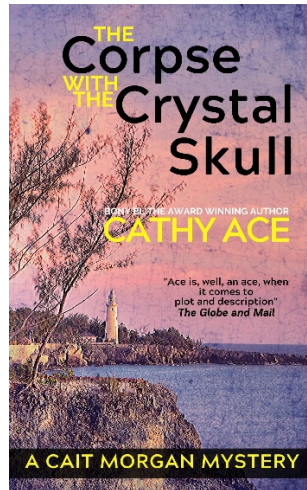


BOOK CLUB QUESTIONS

The Corpse with the Crystal Skull

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 Crystal Skull"

1. The book is set on a luxury estate in Jamaica. Is anyone in the group from Jamaica, or of Jamaican heritage? Has anyone in the group visited Jamaica? (How about a Jamaican-themed evening?) How do the experiences of Jamaica within the group compare with what's described in the book (hopefully not the murders!)?

2. Like all the Cait Morgan Mysteries, this is a closed-circle mystery – one where only a small number of people could have “dunnit”. However, this book also contains a second puzzle – a locked room problem, where it seems impossible for anyone to have got into the room where the body is found to have “dunnit”, or to have got out again after having “dunnit”. Do you prefer a closed circle mystery, or are you a fan of the locked room mystery? Or do you like it this way – with both to solve? Why is that? What are your favorite locked room mysteries?

3. This book refers to Ian Fleming and his Bond books. Have you ever read them? Have you ever seen the movies? If you’ve done both, do you prefer the books or the movies? Why? What do you feel are the critical differences? Do you think the books (and movies) can survive re-examination today? If so, why? If not, why not? (And then, why not allow yourselves to segue into a heated debate about which actor has played the “Best Bond” on screen!)

4. Cait’s facing up to turning fifty in this book. If you’re not yet fifty, how does the prospect of becoming that age make you feel? If you’re over fifty, how did you feel when you reached that age, and how has your perspective changed since then? Does anyone in the group over fifty want to give some advice to people in the group who are under fifty? What do you wish you could go back and say to your forty-nine year-old self?

5. Cait faces some uncomfortable situations in this book; she has to consider how she interacts with so-called “friends” in her life, and – possibly worse still – she has to consider if those people might be capable of murder. “Every killer had parents; every killer probably has a best friend.” Can we ever know the complete truth of a person, even if we believe we know them well?

The Corpse with the Crystal Skull: ISBN 978-1999223069 (e-book), ISBN 978-1999223052 (paperback)

Author: Cathy Ace

Publisher: Four Tails Publishing Ltd.

Year of publication: 2020

Thank you for choosing to read this book!