



Take a Break Book Club

Discussion Guide for *The Hunting Party* by Lucy Foley

November 2021

Author Background

Lucy Foley was a fiction editor in the publishing industry until her debut historical novel *The Book of Lost and Found* became a bestseller and allowed her to write full-time. She wrote two more historical fiction novels before trying her hand at crime fiction. *The Hunting Party* is her first crime novel followed by *The Guest List* published last year. As a fiction editor Foley gradually became convinced she might succeed as an author despite her lack of any writing experience or creative writing education.

The setting for *The Hunting Party* is based on a country estate the author visited several times in the Scottish Highlands. When, on one of her visits, she was warned that heavy snowfall could mean complete isolation from the outside world, she was inspired to write a crime novel in the tradition of the country house murder mystery. As a reader she had always enjoyed mystery novels and hope her own readers feel the same thrill of suspense and surprise with *The Hunting Party*.

The Hunting Party is Foley's first crime novel and will keep you guessing at every twist and turn in this fast-paced plot.

Check out the eAudiobook and eBook on OverDrive/Libby with no holds November 1-30 here <https://bit.ly/3pbijFL>

For more information on Lucy Foley and her works check out Fantastic Fiction excellent website!

<https://www.fantasticfiction.com/f/lucy-foley/>

Discussion Questions, Facts, and Activities

1. Why do you think these specific narrators were selected (4 women, 1 man). All characters were in the 1st person except Doug – any thoughts on why Foley made that decision?
2. A Modern Country House Murder Mystery... Lucy Foley was inspired to write *The Hunting Party* when she saw a TV movie version of Agatha Christie's *And Then There Were None* - a traditional "country house murder mystery" otherwise known as a "closed circle mystery." This writing device was not uncommon during the Golden Age of detective fiction (the first half of the 20th century) and means simply that there is a group of known suspects, one of which must certainly have committed the crime rather than any unknown or outside perpetrator. The group of suspects are cut off from the outside world, are usually wealthy or upper class, and, most importantly, all have the means or motive to commit the crime.

As you can see *The Hunting Party* is very much a modern version of this classic mystery style. Watch for our list of Read Alikes at the end of the month if you are inspired to read more of them....

3. According to *The Book Trail* (www.thebooktrail.com), the lodge featured in the novel is not real, but it was very much inspired by Carrour Lodge in the Scottish Highlands (www.corrour.co.uk), which is where Lucy Foley herself visited and got some inspiration. Carrour Lodge's website says that it "can trace its history back to the early 1800's and the Victorian passion for all things Highlands-related. The very first Carrour Lodge, now referred to as Old Carrour, was built on an elevated site overlooking Rannoch Moor." Take a look around the

website (www.corroure.co.uk) to get a feel for the setting of the narrative (and maybe even some wishful, post-pandemic travel inspiration)!

4. The group of friends came across at times as quite selfish and self-absorbed. Who did you like the best (Nick, Mark, Emma, Julien, Katie, Miranda)? Do you think you would have been friends with any of them in real life?
5. The cold, snowy, and extremely isolated setting of *The Hunting Party* plays a huge role in the creating the overall atmosphere of the story. If you were going to write your own mystery, tell us what kind of setting would you choose and why.
6. We find out there is a murder victim in the first two pages, but we don't know which of the one of the group it is until the same moment the murderer is revealed. Did you guess correctly who the victim was? If so, was it a gradual realization or did a specific incident or bit of information make you sure?
7. A good ending is essential in any mystery or crime thriller: it should ease up on tension, answer questions, and tidy up loose ends. What did you think overall about the ending of *The Hunting Party*? Did it accomplish those goals in your mind?

Readalikes:

The suspicion at Sanditon by Carrie Bebris <https://bit.ly/3FYZDPv>

The Guest List by Lucy Foley <https://bit.ly/30EkyHr>

The Party by Robyn Harding <https://bit.ly/2YYnqxV>

Lockdown: a novel of suspense by Laurie R. King <https://bit.ly/3BWm0T9>

An Unwanted Guest by Shari Lapena <https://bit.ly/3aMw6KB>

Devil's Breath: a Max Tudor Mystery by G.M. Malliet <https://bit.ly/3G5wfgC>

Malibu Rising by Talor Jenkins Reid <https://bit.ly/3vtbu3l>

Forget You Know Me by Jessica Strawser <https://bit.ly/3DWzIWD>

In a Dark, Dark Wood by Ruth Ware <https://bit.ly/3BT4IX7>

The Interestings by Meg Wolitzer <https://bit.ly/3AYKMRb>