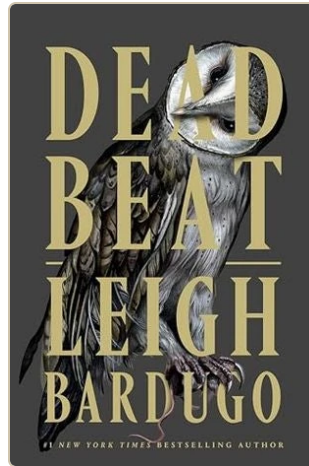


BOOK CLUB NIGHT KIT



Dead Beat

Leigh Bardugo

🌙 COZY NIGHT

The third Ninth House book brings Alex Stern back to Yale's secret societies, where old ghosts, borrowed power, and hard-won friendships collide. It is dark, propulsive, and surprisingly tender about what it costs to keep the people you love.

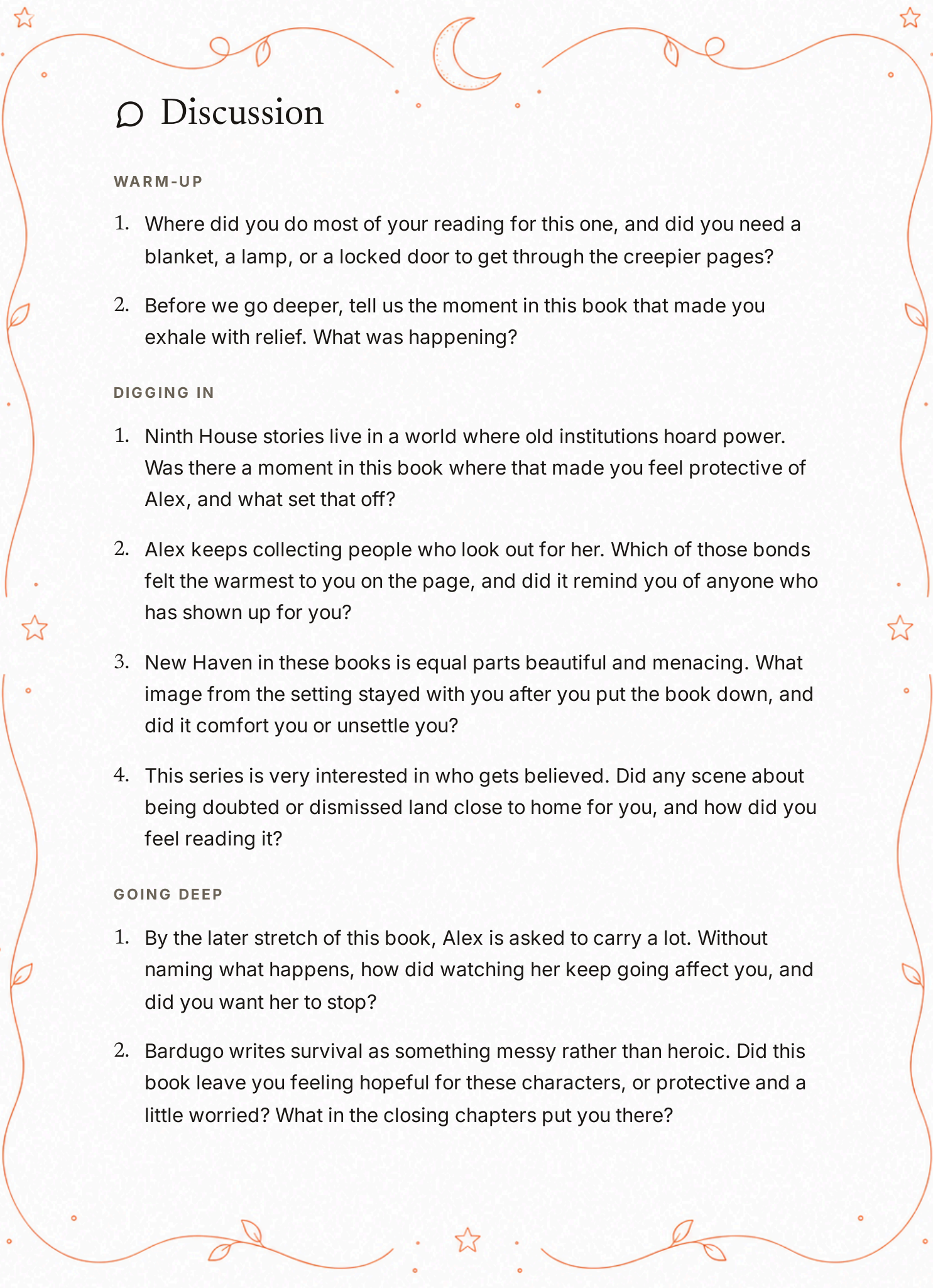
Bring a blanket. We are going back to New Haven.

Soup, pizza, warm cider, and the third Ninth House book. Come as you are, finished or not, and we will keep the lamps low and the cookies coming.

Reading level: Moderate

Best for: A club that loves atmosphere and characters they can worry about, and does not mind a little darkness with their tea





Discussion

WARM-UP

1. Where did you do most of your reading for this one, and did you need a blanket, a lamp, or a locked door to get through the creepier pages?
2. Before we go deeper, tell us the moment in this book that made you exhale with relief. What was happening?

DIGGING IN

1. Ninth House stories live in a world where old institutions hoard power. Was there a moment in this book where that made you feel protective of Alex, and what set that off?
2. Alex keeps collecting people who look out for her. Which of those bonds felt the warmest to you on the page, and did it remind you of anyone who has shown up for you?
3. New Haven in these books is equal parts beautiful and menacing. What image from the setting stayed with you after you put the book down, and did it comfort you or unsettle you?
4. This series is very interested in who gets believed. Did any scene about being doubted or dismissed land close to home for you, and how did you feel reading it?

GOING DEEP

1. By the later stretch of this book, Alex is asked to carry a lot. Without naming what happens, how did watching her keep going affect you, and did you want her to stop?
2. Bardugo writes survival as something messy rather than heroic. Did this book leave you feeling hopeful for these characters, or protective and a little worried? What in the closing chapters put you there?

☕ On the table & to sip

TO EAT

☺ **Loaded New Haven style white clam pizza (or a pan pizza version)**

New Haven is famous for its pizza, so it is the most on-theme comfort food you can set on the table. Bake it, slice it small, let people graze.

☺ **Bowl of slow simmered tomato and white bean soup with buttered bread**

Warm, forgiving, and easy to make ahead. It gives the night that dark-winter-in-New-England feeling without any fuss.

☺ **Cinnamon sugar snickerdoodles served warm**

A soft, homey cookie for the gentler side of the book. Good for the moments when someone needs a bite of something kind between creepy scenes.

TO SIP

☕ **Mulled cider with orange and star anise (no alcohol)**

Non-alcoholic, smells like the whole house is being looked after, and matches the New England autumn mood of the setting.

☕ **Hot toddy with honey and lemon**

Warm whiskey for the students-out-past-curfew feeling, and it doubles as the thing you hand someone who just got spooked.

🍷 **Spiced red wine (stovetop mulled wine)**

Dark, ruby, faintly ceremonial, a friendly wink at old societies and their rituals. Keep it low and slow on the stove all night.

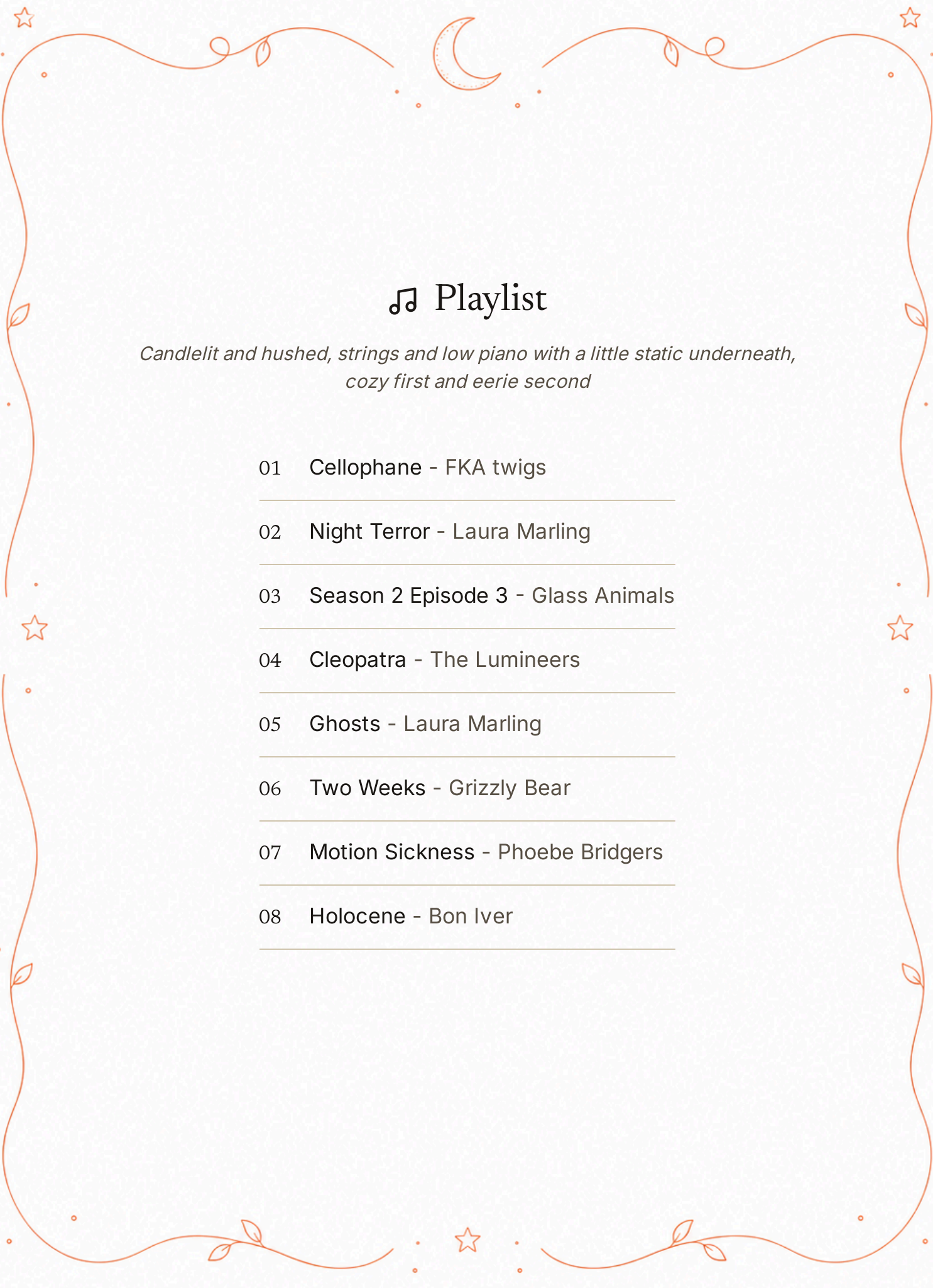


Run of show

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| 7:00 | Doors, soup on the stove
Lamps only, no overheads. Hand everyone a mug of mulled cider as they walk in and let people drift. |
| 7:20 | Warm-up circle
Ask the two warm-up questions while people eat. No one has to have finished the book to answer these. |
| 7:45 | Pizza and theme questions
Bring out the pizza and work through the four theme questions. Let tangents happen, they are the point. |
| 8:20 | Cookies and the deep two
Warm the snickerdoodles, pour the toddies or mulled wine, and move into the two deep questions. |
| 8:45 | Trivia, low stakes
Read the trivia out loud as a group game. No teams, no scoring unless someone insists. |
| 9:05 | Scorecards and soft landing
Fill out scorecards, share one-word answers around the room, then pick the next book and let people linger. |

HOST TIPS

- Say up front that half-finished readers are welcome, and put the deep questions last so anyone still reading can bow out gracefully without feeling caught.
- Keep food self-serve and continuous rather than a sit-down meal. People talk more honestly with a mug in their hands.
- If the room gets heavy on the darker themes, pivot to a bookmark line or a trivia question. A cozy night needs a soft exit ramp, and you are the one who provides it.



🎵 Playlist

*Candlelit and hushed, strings and low piano with a little static underneath,
cozy first and eerie second*

- 01 Cellophane - FKA twigs

- 02 Night Terror - Laura Marling

- 03 Season 2 Episode 3 - Glass Animals

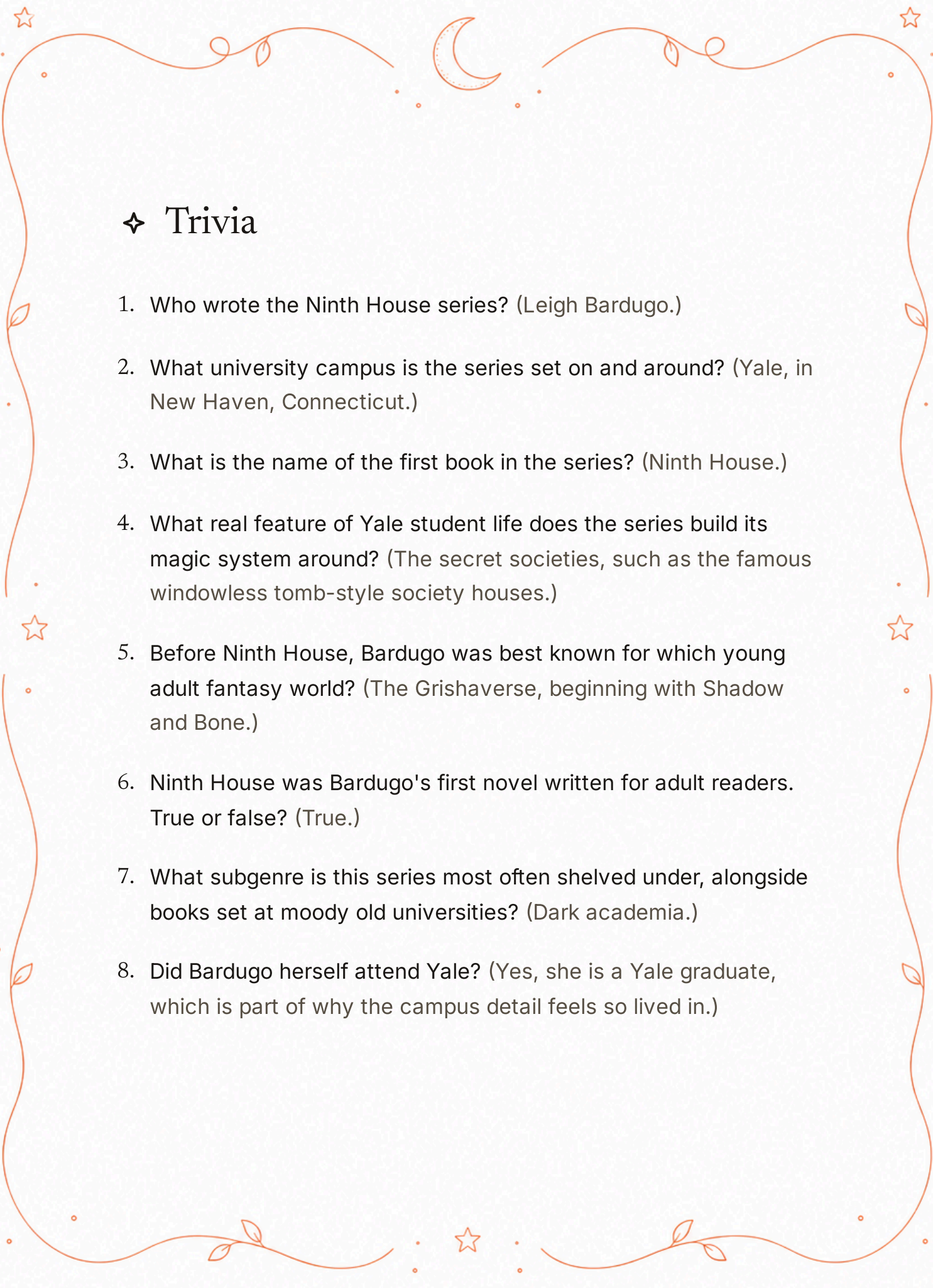
- 04 Cleopatra - The Lumineers

- 05 Ghosts - Laura Marling

- 06 Two Weeks - Grizzly Bear

- 07 Motion Sickness - Phoebe Bridgers

- 08 Holocene - Bon Iver



✧ Trivia

1. Who wrote the Ninth House series? (Leigh Bardugo.)
2. What university campus is the series set on and around? (Yale, in New Haven, Connecticut.)
3. What is the name of the first book in the series? (Ninth House.)
4. What real feature of Yale student life does the series build its magic system around? (The secret societies, such as the famous windowless tomb-style society houses.)
5. Before Ninth House, Bardugo was best known for which young adult fantasy world? (The Grishaverse, beginning with Shadow and Bone.)
6. Ninth House was Bardugo's first novel written for adult readers. True or false? (True.)
7. What subgenre is this series most often shelved under, alongside books set at moody old universities? (Dark academia.)
8. Did Bardugo herself attend Yale? (Yes, she is a Yale graduate, which is part of why the campus detail feels so lived in.)

□ Bookmarks

Print, cut, and tuck one at every seat, a small keepsake from the night.



☆ Rate the book

Coziness of the reading experience

☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

Atmosphere

☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

Characters you worried about

☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

How much your heart raced

☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

Would reread on a rainy night

☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

One word for how this book left me feeling: _____

The scene I would want to be comforted through: _____

Who I wanted to hand a cup of tea to: _____

THAT'S A WRAP

Thank you for coming

We hope the company was good and the conversation even better. Until the next chapter.



Plan your own book club night

Scan the code or visit **bookclubnight.com**

Book Club Night