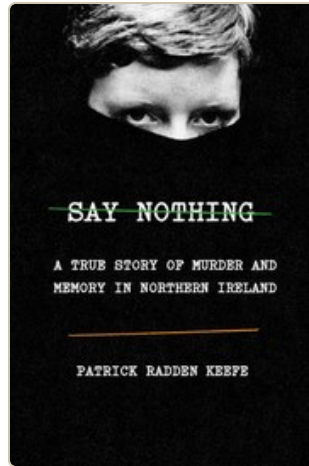


BOOK CLUB NIGHT KIT



Say Nothing

Patrick Radden Keefe

🌙 COZY NIGHT

Patrick Radden Keefe turns decades of Northern Ireland's Troubles into a gripping, deeply human narrative that reads like a novel but is entirely true. It is the rare nonfiction pick that makes a room lean in, go quiet, and then talk for hours.

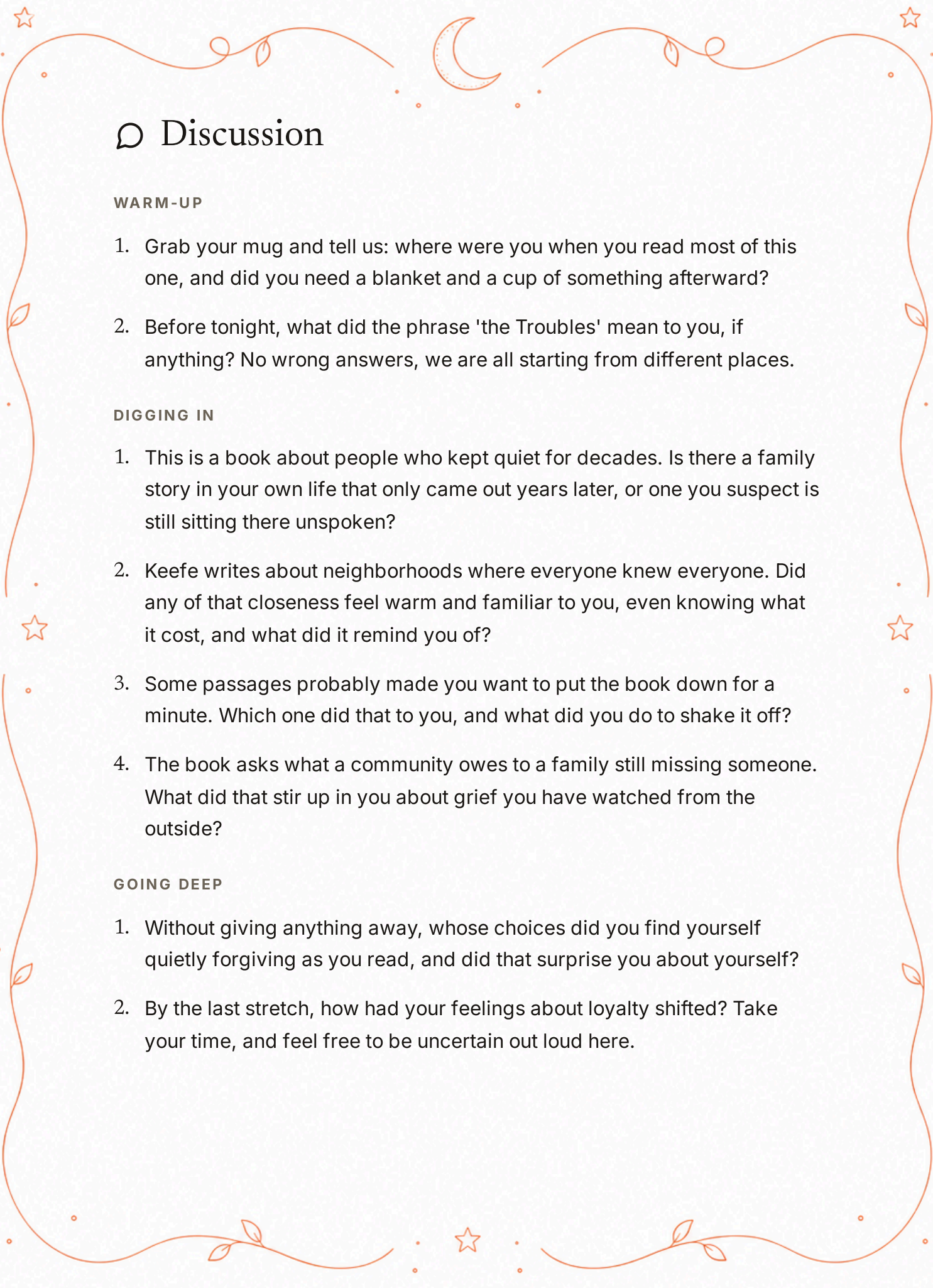
Stew, Soda Bread, and Say Nothing

Come over for a pot of Irish stew, an endless kettle, and a long talk about Patrick Radden Keefe's unforgettable book. Wear something soft, bring your questions, and do not worry if you did not quite finish.

Reading level: Moderate **Pages:** 536

Best for: A club that loves narrative nonfiction and does not mind a heavy subject softened by good company and a warm kitchen.





Discussion

WARM-UP

1. Grab your mug and tell us: where were you when you read most of this one, and did you need a blanket and a cup of something afterward?
2. Before tonight, what did the phrase 'the Troubles' mean to you, if anything? No wrong answers, we are all starting from different places.

DIGGING IN

1. This is a book about people who kept quiet for decades. Is there a family story in your own life that only came out years later, or one you suspect is still sitting there unspoken?
2. Keefe writes about neighborhoods where everyone knew everyone. Did any of that closeness feel warm and familiar to you, even knowing what it cost, and what did it remind you of?
3. Some passages probably made you want to put the book down for a minute. Which one did that to you, and what did you do to shake it off?
4. The book asks what a community owes to a family still missing someone. What did that stir up in you about grief you have watched from the outside?

GOING DEEP

1. Without giving anything away, whose choices did you find yourself quietly forgiving as you read, and did that surprise you about yourself?
2. By the last stretch, how had your feelings about loyalty shifted? Take your time, and feel free to be uncertain out loud here.

On the table & to sip

TO EAT

Irish stew with soft baps

Lamb, potatoes, and carrots in one forgiving pot. It is the archetypal Belfast kitchen-table meal and it simmers happily while people arrive.

Soda bread and wheaten bread with salted butter

A staple of Northern Irish homes across every divide, warm from the oven, easy to make, and exactly the thing to tear apart while talking.

Apple tart with cream

A homey Irish bake for the back half of the night, sweet and gentle after some heavy conversation.

TO SIP

Strong tea with milk (endless pot) (no alcohol)

The book is soaked in kitchens where tea gets made no matter what is happening. Keep a pot going all night. Non-alcoholic and the true heart of the table.

Irish coffee

Whiskey, coffee, brown sugar, and a float of cream. Warm, indulgent, and something to hold with both hands.

A pint of Irish stout

Pub culture runs quietly through this story. One slow pint fits the mood better than anything fussy.

Run of show

7:00

Tea and a warm welcome

Stew on low, kettle on, bread out. No agenda for the first half hour, just let people settle in with a mug.

7:30

Bowls and warmups

Serve the stew and run the two warmup questions while everyone eats. Keep it light, nobody has to be profound over dinner.

8:00

Theme questions by the fire (or lamp)

Move to the softest seats in the house. Work through the four theme questions slowly, letting silences sit.

8:40

Tea refill and trivia break

A deliberate breather. Run the trivia informally, no teams, no scoring unless the group wants it.

9:00

Apple tart and the deep two

Dessert and Irish coffees. Ask the two deep questions once people are warm and full.

9:30

Scorecards and soft landing

Fill in scorecards, read a few aloud, hand out bookmarks, and let the night trail off naturally.

HOST TIPS

- This book is heavier than a typical cozy pick, so lean hard on the physical comforts: lamps instead of overheads, blankets on the couch, food that keeps coming. Warmth in the room gives people permission to go somewhere sad.
- Say out loud at the start that nobody needs to have finished, and that 'I do not know how I feel about it' is a complete answer. It takes the pressure off immediately.
- Have a map of Belfast handy, printed or on a tablet. People will want to orient themselves, and it becomes a gentle, low-stakes group activity rather than a quiz.



🎵 Playlist

Low, fireside Irish folk and hushed contemporary ballads. Kept quiet under conversation, mournful but never grim.

- 01 The Parting Glass - The High Kings

- 02 She Moved Through the Fair - Sinead O'Connor

- 03 Raglan Road - Luke Kelly

- 04 Zombie - The Cranberries

- 05 Danny Boy - Sinead O'Connor

- 06 Northern Sky - Nick Drake

- 07 Only Our Rivers Run Free - Christy Moore

- 08 Take Me to Church - Hozier



✧ Trivia

1. What is Patrick Radden Keefe's day job publication, where he is a staff writer? (The New Yorker.)
2. In what year was Say Nothing first published? (2018.)
3. Which Northern Irish city is the primary setting of the book? (Belfast.)
4. The book's title comes from a well-known poem by which Nobel Prize-winning Northern Irish poet? (Seamus Heaney, from his poem 'Whatever You Say, Say Nothing.')
5. The oral history archive at the center of the book's reporting was housed at which American university? (Boston College, in what became known as the Belfast Project.)
6. Which 1998 agreement is generally regarded as the end of the Troubles? (The Good Friday Agreement (also called the Belfast Agreement).)
7. Which other bestselling work of narrative nonfiction did Keefe write about the Sackler family and OxyContin? (Empire of Pain.)
8. Say Nothing was adapted in 2024 into a limited series for which streaming platform? (Hulu (FX's Say Nothing).)

📖 Bookmarks

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



☆ Rate the book

How much it moved me ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

How hard it was to put down ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

Kindness of the storytelling ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

Comfort-food pairing ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

Would I press it into a friend's hands ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

One word for how I felt closing this book: _____

The moment I had to stop and stare at the wall: _____

Who I want to talk to about this next: _____

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