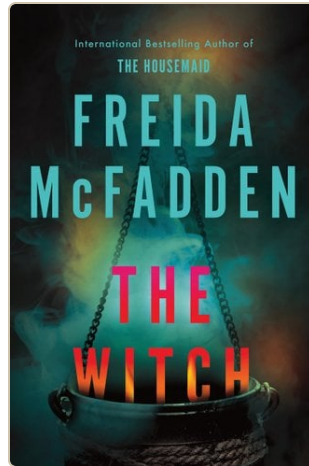


BOOK CLUB NIGHT KIT



The Witch

Freida McFadden

🌙 COZY NIGHT

A down-on-her-luck woman retreats to her family's centuries-old Massachusetts estate and finds the house keeping secrets that reach back to the witch trials of 1692. It is a fast, atmospheric page-turner that practically begs to be read under a blanket and talked about over pie.

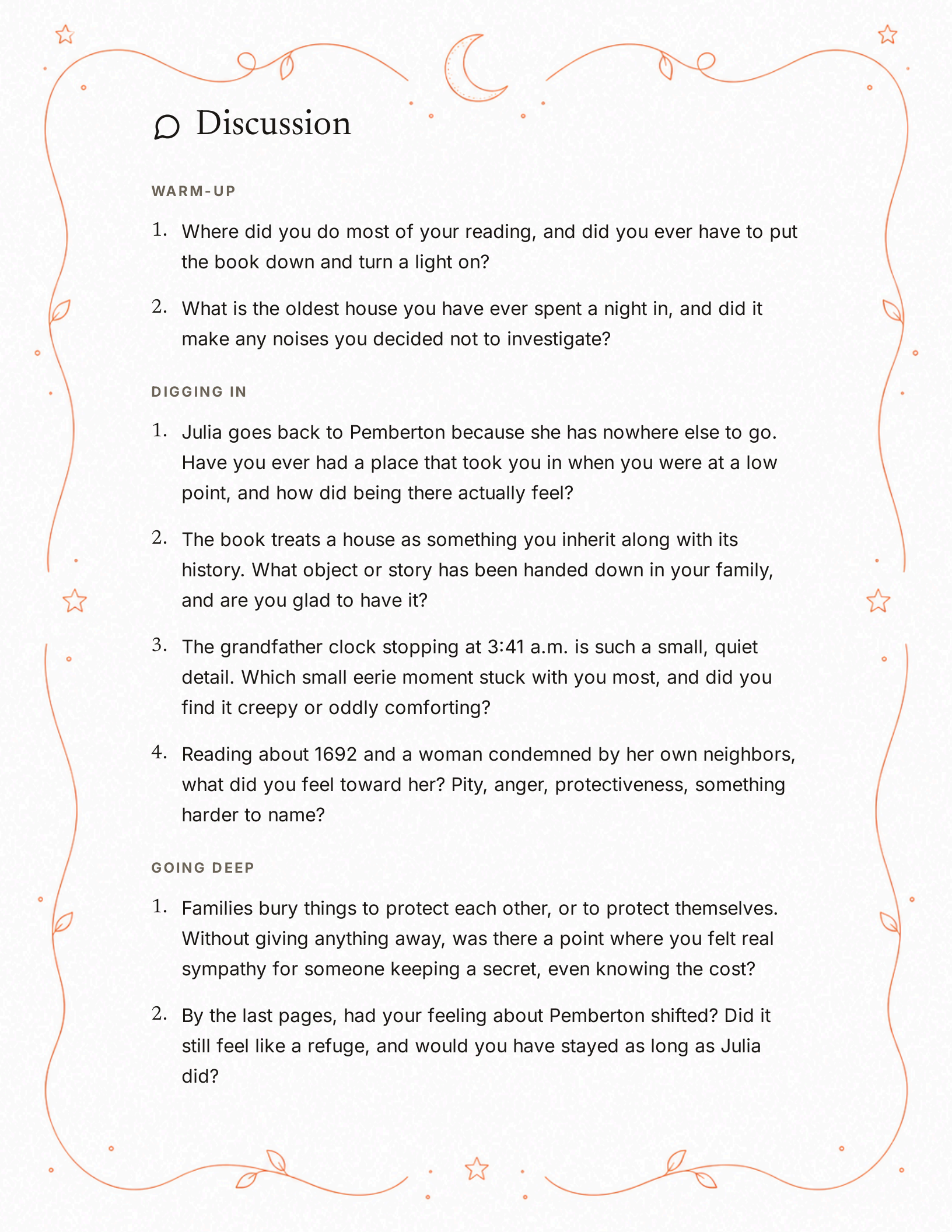
Come In, The Cider Is On

Bring your copy of *The Witch* and your coziest socks. There will be chowder, warm apple crumble, and a long soft conversation about old houses and the things families keep quiet.

Reading level: Easy

Best for: A club that loves a spooky, propulsive read but wants the night itself to feel soft, warm, and unhurried





Discussion

WARM-UP

1. Where did you do most of your reading, and did you ever have to put the book down and turn a light on?
2. What is the oldest house you have ever spent a night in, and did it make any noises you decided not to investigate?

DIGGING IN

1. Julia goes back to Pemberton because she has nowhere else to go. Have you ever had a place that took you in when you were at a low point, and how did being there actually feel?
2. The book treats a house as something you inherit along with its history. What object or story has been handed down in your family, and are you glad to have it?
3. The grandfather clock stopping at 3:41 a.m. is such a small, quiet detail. Which small eerie moment stuck with you most, and did you find it creepy or oddly comforting?
4. Reading about 1692 and a woman condemned by her own neighbors, what did you feel toward her? Pity, anger, protectiveness, something harder to name?

GOING DEEP

1. Families bury things to protect each other, or to protect themselves. Without giving anything away, was there a point where you felt real sympathy for someone keeping a secret, even knowing the cost?
2. By the last pages, had your feeling about Pemberton shifted? Did it still feel like a refuge, and would you have stayed as long as Julia did?

🍷 On the table & to sip

TO EAT

🏠 **Bubbling pot of New England clam chowder with oyster crackers**

Thick, buttery, unmistakably Massachusetts coastal comfort. Make it ahead, keep it warm on the stove, and let people ladle their own.

🍷 **Harvest apple crumble with cinnamon whipped cream**

Old-orchard dessert that smells like an ancestral kitchen the moment it comes out of the oven. One pan, nearly impossible to ruin.

🍞 **Soft rosemary and brown butter dinner rolls**

Rosemary was a colonial-era herb of protection and remembrance, which is a nice quiet nod to 1692 while still being just warm bread with butter.

TO SIP

🍷 **Mulled cider with cinnamon sticks and orange peel (no alcohol)**

Simmer it in a pot before guests arrive so the whole house smells like a Massachusetts autumn. Non-alcoholic and endlessly refillable.

🍷 **Spiked hot buttered rum**

A genuinely colonial New England drink, rich and sleepy and perfect for a night about old houses.

🍷 **Chamomile and honey nightcap tea (no alcohol)**

For the 3:41 a.m. jokes, and for anyone who read the last hundred pages too close to bedtime and needs the opposite of that.

Run of show

7:00

Door open, mugs out

Cider already simmering, blankets on the arms of chairs. No agenda for the first half hour, just let people land.

7:20

Chowder and rolls

Serve buffet-style from the stove. Eating first means nobody is discussing a haunting on an empty stomach.

7:45

Warm-up round

Go around with the two warm-up questions. Oldest-house stories always get the room laughing, which is exactly the tone you want.

8:05

The heart of it

Work through the theme questions. Let tangents about family and old houses run. This is the good part, do not rush it.

8:40

Crumble and the deeper two

Dessert and tea arrive, then the two deep questions. Remind the group to keep the ending vague for anyone still finishing.

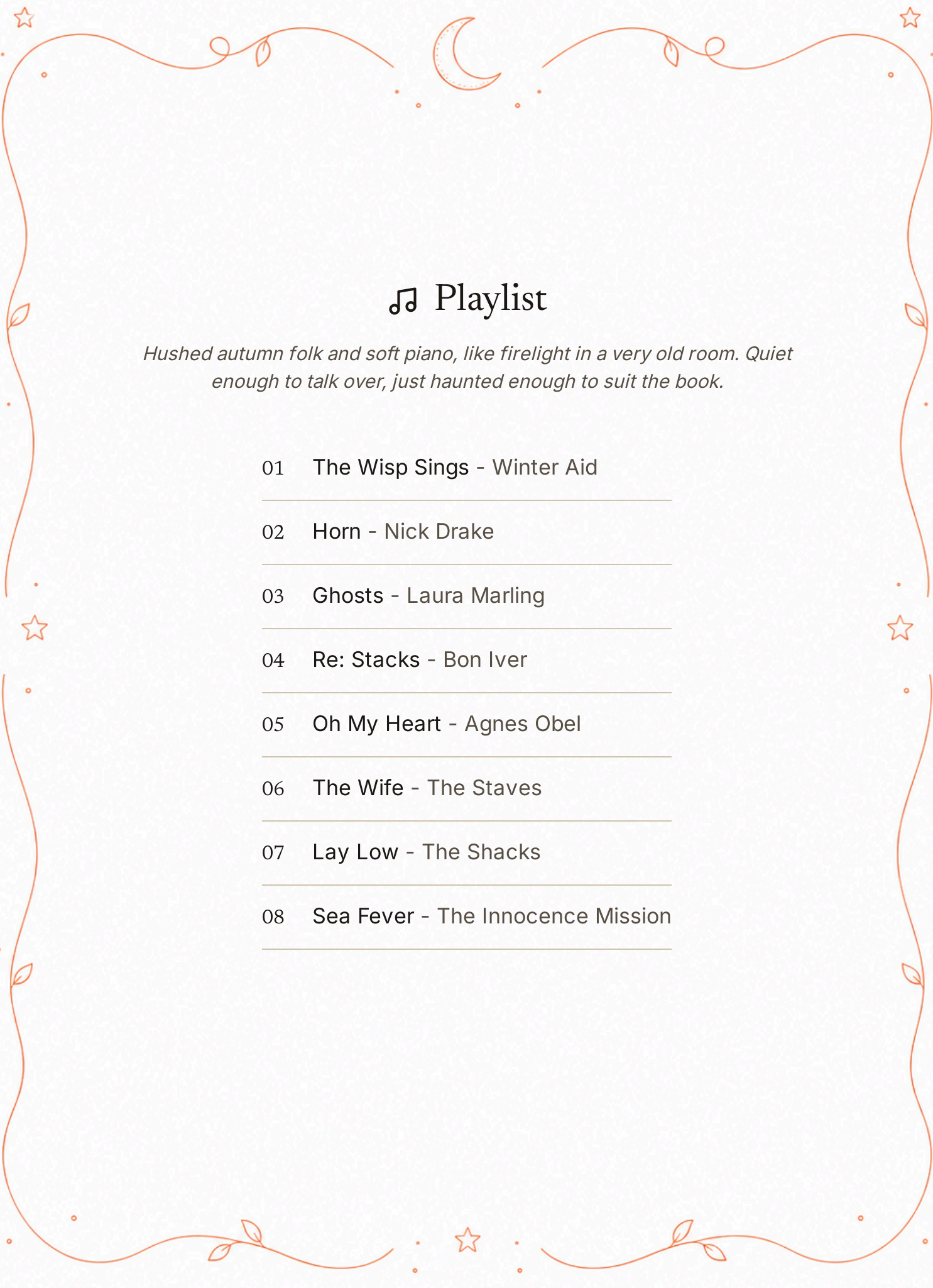
9:10

Trivia, scorecards, soft landing

Low-stakes trivia round, fill out scorecards, pick the next book. Send people home with a bookmark and leftovers.

HOST TIPS

- Say out loud at the start that spoiling the ending is off limits until everyone confirms they finished. It lets the slow readers relax and actually talk.
- Cook everything the day before. Chowder is better reheated, crumble reheats fine, and you want to be sitting down when the first guest arrives, not stirring.
- Keep one lamp low and a candle or two going, but do not go full haunted house. The point is cozy with a shiver underneath, not a jump scare.



♪ Playlist

Hushed autumn folk and soft piano, like firelight in a very old room. Quiet enough to talk over, just haunted enough to suit the book.

01 The Wisp Sings - Winter Aid

02 Horn - Nick Drake

03 Ghosts - Laura Marling

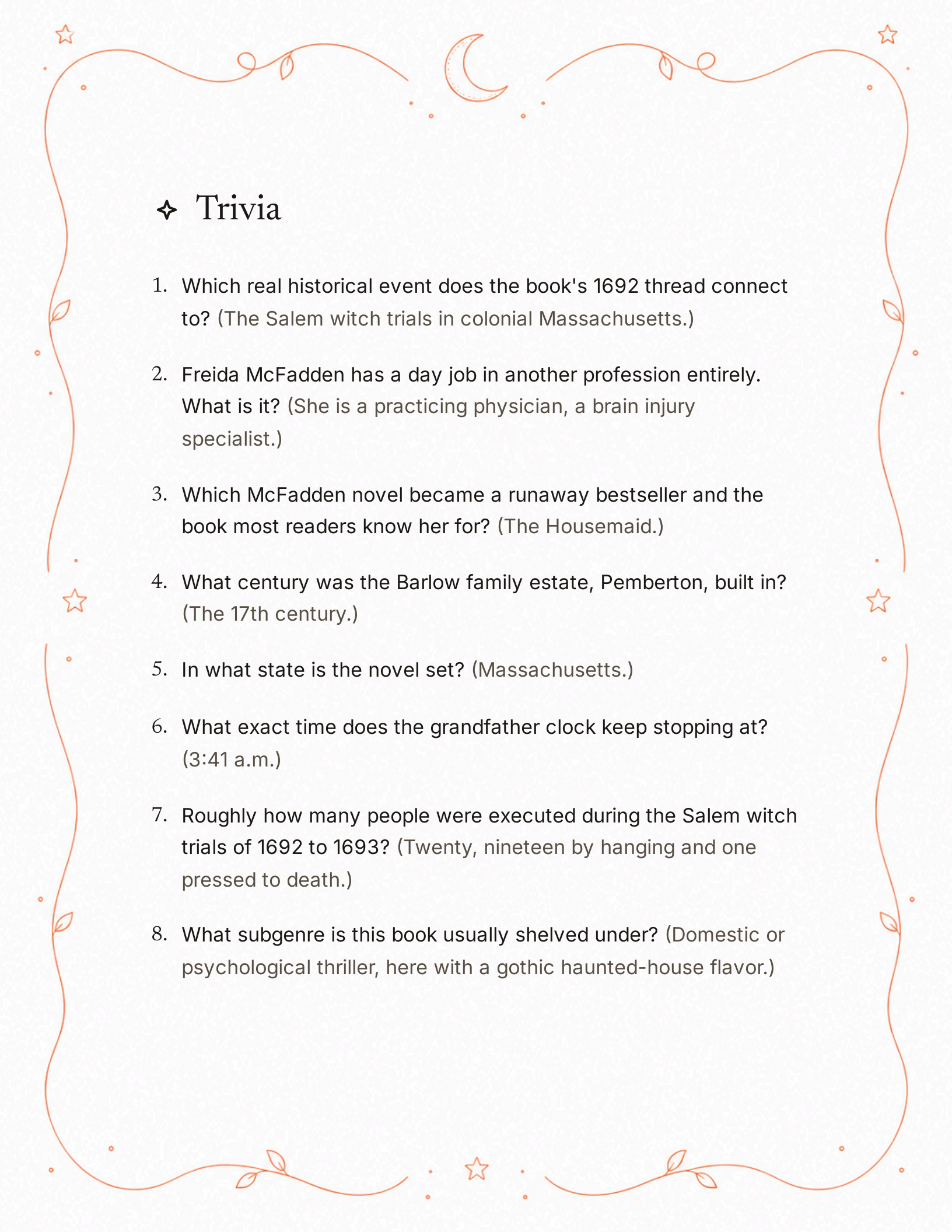
04 Re: Stacks - Bon Iver

05 Oh My Heart - Agnes Obel

06 The Wife - The Staves

07 Lay Low - The Shacks

08 Sea Fever - The Innocence Mission

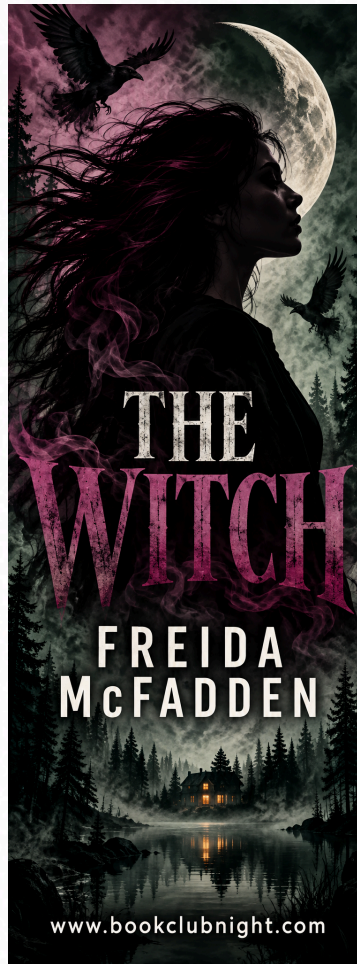


✧ Trivia

1. Which real historical event does the book's 1692 thread connect to? (The Salem witch trials in colonial Massachusetts.)
2. Freida McFadden has a day job in another profession entirely. What is it? (She is a practicing physician, a brain injury specialist.)
3. Which McFadden novel became a runaway bestseller and the book most readers know her for? (The Housemaid.)
4. What century was the Barlow family estate, Pemberton, built in? (The 17th century.)
5. In what state is the novel set? (Massachusetts.)
6. What exact time does the grandfather clock keep stopping at? (3:41 a.m.)
7. Roughly how many people were executed during the Salem witch trials of 1692 to 1693? (Twenty, nineteen by hanging and one pressed to death.)
8. What subgenre is this book usually shelved under? (Domestic or psychological thriller, here with a gothic haunted-house flavor.)

☐ Bookmarks

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



☆ Rate the book

Coziness of the dread

☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

Could not put it down

☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

Goosebump moments

☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

How much I cared about Julia

☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

Would reread in October

☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

One word for how this book left me feeling: _____

The moment I had to stop and look up from the page: _____

Who in my life I am handing this to 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