



North Woods

Daniel Mason

A single house in the western Massachusetts woods becomes home to centuries of dreamers, lovers, eccentrics, and ghosts in this lyrical, season-soaked novel.

Reading level: Moderate

Best for: clubs that love quiet, beautiful books and unhurried conversation

Discussion

WARM-UP

1. Curl up and tell us: where were you when you did most of your reading of this one, and did the woods seep into that space?
2. Which season in the book felt the most comforting to spend time in, and why did it pull you in?

DIGGING IN

1. Was there a chapter or voice that felt like a warm hug, the kind you wanted to linger inside a little longer?
2. The house holds so many lives. If your own home could quietly remember its past residents, what do you hope it would whisper about you someday?
3. Mason writes about apples, mosses, beetles, and birdsong with such love. Did any of his small natural details make you notice something new in your own surroundings this week?
4. Which inhabitant of the house did you find yourself wishing you could pour a cup of tea for, and what would you want to ask them?

GOING DEEP

1. The book lingers on how grief, longing, and love echo across generations. Did reading it shift how you think about the people who came before you in your own life?
2. By the time you closed the book, did you feel more peaceful or more wistful about how time passes, and what part of the story left you feeling that way?

On the table

- 🍷 **Warm apple crumble with cream**
A nod to the orchard at the heart of the book, homey and a little indulgent
- 🍲 **Slow-simmered squash and white bean soup with crusty bread**
New England harvest comfort, easy to keep warm on the stove all evening
- 🥞 **Sharp cheddar, honeycomb, and walnut board**
Rustic farmhouse nibbles evoking the woods, the bees, and the hearth

To sip

- 🍷 **Mulled cider with cinnamon and clove (no alcohol)**
Spiced, steaming, and orchard-sweet, perfect for a cozy circle
- 🍵 **Honey chamomile tea (no alcohol)**
Gentle and soothing, like a quiet afternoon at the window
- 🍷 **Hot toddy with bourbon, honey, and lemon**
A nightcap that warms you from the inside, fireside-ready

Run of show

- 7:00** **Soft landings**
Greet guests with mulled cider and let them settle in slippers or socks before anything starts
- 7:15** **Soup and stories**
Serve the soup and bread while people share where and when they read the book
- 7:40** **Warm-up questions**
Move through the two warm-up prompts gently, no need to go in order
- 8:00** **Wander the woods**
Pick three or four theme questions based on what the group seems drawn to
- 8:40** **Crumble and deep talk**
Bring out the apple crumble and ease into the deeper questions over dessert
- 9:15** **Trivia, scorecards, goodnights**
Light, playful close with trivia, scorecards, and bookmarks to take home

HOST TIPS

- Lower the lights and use lamps or candles. The book breathes better in soft light.
- Invite guests to bring a cozy throw or wear something soft. It sets the tone instantly.
- Let silences sit. With this book, people often need a beat to find what they want to say.

Playlist

Hushed folk, fingerpicked guitars, and woodsmoke-soft strings for a slow evening indoors

- 01 Re: Stacks - Bon Iver
- 02 The Trapeze Swinger - Iron and Wine
- 03 Holocene - Bon Iver
- 04 Pink Moon - Nick Drake
- 05 Blackbird - Sarah McLachlan
- 06 Casimir Pulaski Day - Sufjan Stevens
- 07 If It Be Your Will - Leonard Cohen
- 08 Wildflowers - Tom Petty

Trivia

1. Who is the author of North Woods? (Daniel Mason)
2. In what year was North Woods first published? (2023)
3. In which U.S. region is the novel primarily set? (Western Massachusetts, in New England)
4. The novel follows the inhabitants of what kind of central structure over time? (A single house in the woods)
5. Daniel Mason is also known for a debut novel about a piano tuner. What is its title? (The Piano Tuner)
6. Besides writing fiction, what is Daniel Mason's profession? (He is a psychiatrist and professor at Stanford)
7. North Woods incorporates many non-prose forms. Name one. (Letters, poems, ballads, medical case notes, or nature illustrations (any one))
8. Which fruit and its orchard recur as a quiet motif throughout the book? (The apple)

Rate the book

Coziness ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

Atmosphere ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

Language and Imagery ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

Emotional Warmth ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

Reread-ability ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

One word for how this book made me feel: _____

The chapter I want to crawl back into: _____

A small thing in nature I will notice now: _____

YOU'RE INVITED

Come to the House in the Woods

Wool socks encouraged. We are gathering for soup, cider, apple crumble, and a slow, warm chat about Daniel Mason's North Woods.



Plan your own book club night

Scan the code or visit bookclubnight.com

Made with Book Club Night