



GHO STED



BOOK CLUB KIT

TABLE OF CONTENTS



01

Note to readers

02

A letter from the author

03

Author interview

04

Discussion questions

05

Playlist

NOTE TO READERS



SPOILER WARNING

This kit was created for book clubs to use in their discussions of GHOSTED and contains spoilers.

CONTENT WARNINGS

Please be aware that GHOSTED contains content that may be triggering. For a list of content, please see below ...



GHOSTED contains the following content: cancer, lupus, drug and alcohol addiction, homophobia, loss of a baby, 9-11, drowning and death.



A LETTER FROM THE AUTHOR



Each time I decide a book is ready for someone to read, nerves set in. With *GHOSTED*, the nerves are double. For one thing, it's set in the USA - I needed extensive dialogue coaching and proof readers have earned their keep many times over. The other thing is, the characters are as much unlike me as it's possible to get - how could I get inside the head of a 67-year-old waitress and an unemployed Santa?

Then I worked out, people are people. What makes one person tick, often resonates with others.

GHOSTED is what the industry calls a 'seasoned romance' meaning the people on the pages are over 30. Some of them will be on blood pressure meds. They almost all think cops look too young.

The book is about many things - loneliness, addiction, regret - but ultimately one thread joins them together: if we look inside, we'll find a way out. Ghosts hide around every corner, and they don't have to be bad things. But neither must the past rule our future.

The definition of madness is doing the same thing over and over in the hope it might come good. The definition of sadness is never taking a chance.

Mo Fanning

AUTHOR INTERVIEW

How many Santas does the average store get through?

WHAT ABOUT THAT COVER?

I probably worked through 50 possible designs, asking people for input, making up my mind then changing it. Eventually, someone pointed out how it needs to be simple, but tie together the various threads. Most everything happens at sea, so there you go. And the lifebelt matters!

INSPIRATION

I wanted so much to be in New York during lockdown that I started taking virtual tours around Macy's and MoMa. Pretty soon, I found myself in department store Christmas departments, looking at the line for Santa. Somehow, everything came out of that. How many Santas does the average store get through?

WHAT DO YOU HOPE READERS TAKE FROM IT?

That people sometimes need to accept they can't change. They can still love someone without liking them. They can still regret but move on. A second chance at love isn't being disloyal.

IF GHOSTED HAS A THEME SONG, WHAT MIGHT THAT BE?

It's weird but I can't really think of any song that fits better than Leonard Cohen's 'Famous Blue Raincoat'. It's the idea of someone coming by with a memento of the place and person who they once loved and knew so well, but who moved on.

If I can express a preference, I'd like Jennifer Warnes to sing it, please.

WHAT'S NEXT?

I'm going full-on Hollywood with the next book. It's mid-way through being ready. It's the story of how a little too much ambition can be a bad thing - and how the grass isn't ever greener on the other side. It just looks that way.

Get closer and the smell isn't great.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

FAMILY

GHOSTED explores what can happen when coming out to parents goes wrong. The gulf it can leave when ill-considered words hit the wrong target.

It's a book that examines regret - be that between father and son, husband and wife or two strangers who meet for the first time in the strangest of circumstances.



ACCEPTANCE

A key theme to GHOSTED is acceptance - though Silas has spent so many years wishing for the love of his son, he finds out the man he thought he knew has changed out of all shape. He can love his son, but does he need to like him? Is it ever too late to say sorry?

Do we spend our lives loving someone or something that has long since left?

UNCONDITIONAL LOVE

Silas realises he loves his son, but doesn't like him? Is love conditional or can you learn to live with the faults and foibles as Silas claims? Ellen will never truly know what happened on 9-11, she accepts what she's told. Does that change how she feels about her late husband?

CAN PEOPLE CHANGE?

Another area that might spark discussion, touches the continuing bonds we maintain with friends and family long after they leave us or pass.

If we only ever see ourselves in one way, are we able to truly change and allow someone new into our lives?

PLAYLIST



EMPIRE STATE: Fleetwood Mac
THE APPLE STRETCHING : Grace Jones
THE BALLAD OF LUCY JORDAN : Marianne Faithful
ONE MINUTE YOU'RE HERE : Bruce Springsteen
WHITE CHRISTMAS : Bing Crosby
I STILL HAVE FAITH IN YOU : ABBA
YOU MAKE ME FEEL (MIGHTY REAL): Sylvester
SO MANY MEN, SO LITTLE TIME : Miquel Brown
I LOVE THE NIGHTLIFE (DISCO 'ROUND) : Alicia Bridges
I WILL HELP YOU : Ilse de Lange
A NIGHT TO REMEMBER : Cyndi Lauper
ONLY IN MIAMI : Bette Middler
THE FALL OF THE WORLD'S GREAT OPTIMIST : Aimee Mann
FAIRYTALE OF NEW YORK : Pogues featuring Kirsty MacColl
FAMOUS BLUE RAINCOAT : Jennifer Warnes



SEARCH GHOSTED BY MO FANNING