



Hello dear reader! I am so glad you're here. Book clubs are the best, aren't they? Good reads, good friends, good food and beverages. What's not to love?

Here are a few questions to help whoever is in charge keep everyone on task. (Be honest, how many meetings have ended and the book was never discussed?!) I am also happy to visit your group in person (if nearby) or via Zoom. Thank you for choosing MORE THAN A THIEF. It is an honor to be a part of your reading journey.

With warmest regards,

Beverly Patt

MORE THAN A THIEF - DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What was your first impression of Victoria? How did that impression change throughout the course of the novel? How did Victoria herself change by the end of the book?
2. Much of Victoria's life was dictated by social conventions. Which was the most irritating to her? Had you been living in Victoria's day, which societal rule would you find the most difficult to stomach?

3. Besides Victoria, how did social class affect the other characters in this story?
Do we face similar challenges today? Discuss.
4. Lizzie Borden and many other characters in the story were real people. Had you heard of Lizzie or the Borden murders before reading this book? How did your impression of her change (if at all) by the end of the story?
5. Truth, reputation and feminism are all major themes in the novel. Which one was the most significant to you and why? Were there any other overarching ideas you noticed? What did you take away from this story overall?
6. *More Than A Thief* is written from a third-person point of view. Did that help or hinder your connection to Victoria as a character? How might a different perspective have affected your enjoyment of the book?
7. For much of the novel, Victoria is consumed with keeping her thieving tendencies a secret, and yet she is not the only one with something to hide. Who else is withholding confidential information and what are their motivations for keeping silent?
8. As Victoria's investigations uncover disturbing possibilities about her friend Lizzie, she begins to wonder if she knows her friend as well as she'd thought previously. Do you think we can ever fully know someone? Why or why not?
9. In Chapter Twenty, Mr. Robbins tells Victoria, "This is my house, don't forget. What goes on inside and outside it affects my reputation." Reputation was a common theme in this story, with Victoria's, her father's and Miss Lizzie's being the most obvious. Who else had a reputation to uphold, either personal

or professional? Are we as concerned about our reputations now as people were in the 1890s?

10. After being declared Not Guilty, Lizzie was asked what she planned to do. Her answer? “I just want to go home.” Discuss the possible reasons Lizzie might have had in choosing to live out the rest of her life in Fall River. Would you have done the same?

BONUS QUESTIONS

If this book led to a series, how would you envision it? What characters would you like to see more (or less) of? If you could name the series, what would it be? I'd love to hear your thoughts! Drop me a line at beverlypatt@gmail.com

If you'd like occasional updates on this book, on other books I am writing or on other writing topics, please sign up for my newsletter (at the bottom of any of my website pages).

Thank you for reading *More Than A Thief*. I appreciate it more than you could know.

Beverly Patt



Penelope's Famous Peach Pie

(Thanks to friend and baker extraordinaire Amy S. for her recipe, stored in her brain!)

For the crust, combine the following ingredients:

- 2 c flour
- 1/2 c Crisco
- 1/2 c milk.

Roll dough out thin on floured board. Use 1/2 for top crust, 1/2 for bottom.

Place bottom crust into a greased pie dish.

In a large bowl, combine:

- 2 T tapioca
- 3 heaping T cornstarch
- 3 heaping T flour
- 1 1/2 c sugar

Fold in:

- 2 T of butter, cut into small pieces
- 8 ripe peaches, peeled and sliced

Place entire mixture into bottom crust.

Sprinkle with cinnamon and add a little lemon juice from fresh lemon.

Place top crust on, pinch edges.

Dab top crust with cold mild and sprinkle with sugar.

Use fork to poke holes in crust for steam to escape.

Bake at 350* for 45 minutes, or until crust is golden brown. It's a good idea to put aluminum foil in the bottom of oven before baking to catch drips (altho, in Penelope's day, she'd have used tin foil). :)

Let cool and serve with topping of your choice. Enjoy!