

# LITTLE EVE BY CATRIONA WARD

## NIGHTFIRE READING GROUP GUIDE

01. What causes the bond between Eve and Dinah to fluctuate throughout the novel? How might their relationship have been different if their survival had not been continually at stake? What are the most significant differences in their personalities?
02. What does *Little Eve* illustrate about the development of a child's sense of self? How does gender affect what Eve and Dinah believe about their place in the world? What is it like for Abel to grow into manhood in a household where Uncle has absolute control and most of the inhabitants are female?
03. When Dinah is released after five nights of Wane, she flings her arms around Uncle, and the others join the embrace. "Uncle is the name for *home* in our minds and hearts," Evelyn observes. How does Uncle exploit the extremes of abuse and devotion, hunger and sweet honey, to manipulate his clan? How is he able to create a home from which they do not want to leave, despite the horrors?
04. What is the root of Mr. Black's bond with Eve? What injuries, emotional and physical, is he trying to heal in himself?
05. When Mr. Black is with young Evelyn and sees the headline saying that Hamish Buchanan has been hanged, he says, "An eye for an eye." Evelyn thinks to herself that Hamish "paid the price for my power." In her mind, how is the balance of power maintained? How does she experience guilt, and how does she define justice and purity?
06. How does Nora's status shift throughout the novel? What does her story say about the nature and limitations of maternal instincts?
07. In what ways is Alice a prisoner in every aspect of her life? What does it take for her to finally be free? How does life at Altnaharra change after her departure?
08. How did you react to the reality of Elizabeth's bird hospital?
09. What does the novel demonstrate about truth and memory? How does the structure of the storytelling in *Little Eve* escalate the suspense?
10. Raised in the heart of the Loyal community, seemingly far removed from the secrets of Altnaharra, Jamie and Sarah nonetheless endured multiple tragedies. Who is ultimately to blame for their suffering? Who are the novel's most innocent characters?
11. What makes the time period of the Great War and its aftermath an excellent backdrop for this tale?
12. How is Rose distinctly different from the women of Altnaharra, yet able to create a kind of kinship? How does the introduction of Rose, as well as the arrival of Mary, create a new pathway of hope? What turning points do they spur?
13. In what ways does Altnaharra itself become a character in the novel? How does the natural world of the island, along with the history of the weather-beaten castle and its imposing gate, reflect the varied generations that have lived there over the years?
14. Catriona Ward masterfully depicts the contradictions of the human psyche. Discuss the ways in which *Little Eve* enhances your experience of her other fiction that you have read.

GUIDE WRITTEN  
BY AMY ROOT  
CLEMENTS

