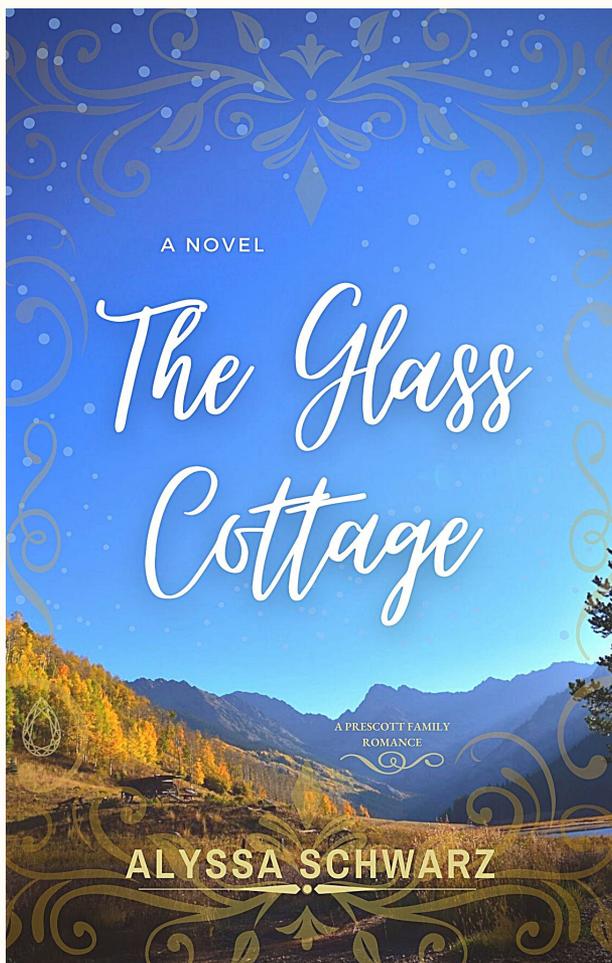


Book Club Kit



Good books. Good food. and Good company

www.AuthorAlyssaSchwarz.com

Dear Book Club Leader,

I want to thank you for the time and heart you give to make such a gift possible. Book clubs are a place to gather and discuss stories, yes—but perhaps more than that, they are a place where friendship and fellowship are born and fostered, and where hearts can flourish. As you'll see in this story, these are treasures I believe in greatly. As a tribute to that, I would love to help make your gathering as special and easy on you as possible, and I hope that the resources included in this packet will do just that.

Inside, you'll find...

- a ready-to-send graphics (just snap a picture with your phone and text these pages to your book club with a text including your meeting's location/time),
- a collection of story-inspired recipes and music to help set the scene for your gathering,
- a collection of trivia and facts about the story setting, the writing process, and more,
- a discussion guide.

Thank you again for bringing *The Glass Cottage* into your circle. I hope you find blessings within the pages.

With joy,

Alyssa

Aunt Josie's Cranberry Apple Pie

It is no secret Aunt Josie has a heart for cooking. Now that Abigail is helping out with the day-to-day goings on at the Glass Cottage, Aunt Josie has decided to put together another little surprise for her great niece—a cookbook of all her favorite recipes. At the top of the list, is her famous cranberry apple pie with Ben's innovative vodka crust. It may have only won third place in this year's pie competition, but she knows the memories are just as sweet.

Ben's Vodka Pie Crust

1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter,
cubed and chilled
2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
2 Tbsp white sugar
1 1/2 tsp salt
1/4 cup ice cold vodka
4-6 Tbsp ice cold water (more or less)

Egg Wash

1 egg
1 tbsp milk

Cranberry Apple Pie Filing

6-7 medium honey crisp apples,
sliced and peeled
1/2 cup fresh cranberries, cut in half (if using
dried cranberries, soak in hot water
for ten minutes and then drain)
3/4 cup white sugar
3 Tbsp cornstarch
1 tsp lemon juice
1 tsp cinnamon
1/8 tsp nutmeg
1/4 tsp salt



Mile-High Sun Tea

My family and I have been making sun tea for years. As a kid, I used to marvel at the amber glow of the afternoon sun glinting through the glass jar, as if the combination of water, tea, and sun were pure magic. I can imagine Aunt Josie perusing through her tea stash for the perfect accompaniment to whichever scone recipe or pie she has baking in the oven.

Any tea will work in this recipe, or substitute in a handful of your favorite herbs (such as mint) for a unique blend.

You Will Need

1 large glass mason jar

1 teabag for every cup of water (ginger-peach, rooibos, hibiscus, earl grey...)

1 inch fresh peeled ginger, sliced (optional)

Enough water to fill the jar

Honey or maple syrup to sweeten

Instructions

Mix everything together (minus the sweetener), and place the mason jar in a sunny spot on the porch or by the window until the tea turns a deep gold hue. Sweeten with a touch of honey or maple syrup and garnish with a lemon wedge or sprig of mint.



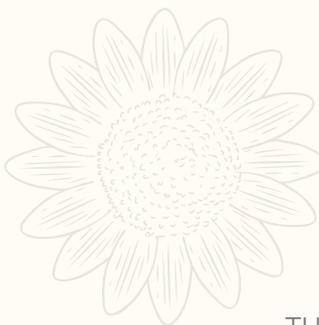
Set The Scene

If you'd like to add a little extra to the setting of your meeting, listen to this Spotify playlist, curated to transport readers to the Colorado mountain town of Buena Vista from the comfort of your own living room. The playlist includes songs inspired by the story's setting, themes, and the characters themselves.

<https://tinyurl.com/fdjxr5mp>

Public Playlist
The Glass Cottage
Alyssa Schwarz • 1 like • 30 songs, 1 hr 49 min

#	TITLE	ALBUM
1	Summer Child Dar Williams	Safe Haven Original Motion Picture Soundtrack
2	Wrap Your Arms Around Me Gareth Dunlop	Safe Haven Original Motion Picture Soundtrack
3	Honeysuckle Carly Pearce	Every Little Thing
4	Forgive Me Friend (feat. Swedish Jam Factory) Smith & Thell, Swedish Jam Factory	Hotel Walls
5	Shut Up and Dance WALK THE MOON	TALKING IS HARD
6	Here Comes The Sun - From The Album "One Man Only" Himanshu Patel	Yesterday (Original Motion Picture Soundtrack)



Trivia

Did you know...

- **While Alyssa was writing *The Glass Cottage***, she and her family took a trip to see the famed ghost town, St. Elmo. Tucked away in a narrow mountain valley, away from highway noise and cell reception, it felt as if we were stepping back in time a hundred years. I'll admit, I couldn't put down my camera, and that was when I saw it... Iris's house. Well, not really her house, but I was so inspired by the humble log cabin with the lace drapes decorating the aged windows, I couldn't help but wonder what her life would have been like living in a mining boom town at the height of the Colorado Gold Rush.
- **In 1886**, the aquamarines from Mt. Antero were first introduced to the mineralogical community by "Nels" Nelson Daniel Wanemaker via a letter from Roselle T. Cross to George F. Kunz. It is debated as to whether or not Wanemaker was the first to discover the blue gemstone on Mt. Antero, but to this day, Antero remains the highest known gem locality in the United States. The largest ever recorded discovery in Colorado was back in 2004, when an amateur rockhound unearthed the incredible. On display at Denver's Museum of Nature and Science, the specimen measures 37 by 25 inches, and includes more than 100 aquamarine crystals and other gems!



- **How do you say Buena Vista, Colorado?** Buena Vista is properly pronounced “BEW-na Vista”. The town’s name has been pronounced “BEW-na Vista” instead of the Spanish “BWAY-na Vista” ever since it was founded. Its nickname is “BEW-nie.” It all came about at a meeting in 1879, when residents and property owners in the area at the convergence of Cottonwood Creek and the Arkansas River held a meeting to create a formal community. They had been told that would help attract a railroad line (eventually it attracted three). Two names were proposed by attendees: Collegiate Peaks, after the mountains in the area, and Buena Vista, which means “beautiful view” in Spanish, certainly an appropriate description. Alsina Dearheimer, the resident and property owner who suggested the name Buena Vista, certainly knew how the Spanish words were pronounced, her first husband having been a language and music professor. But she insisted that the pronunciation for the town name be Americanized into “BEW-na,” borrowing the first syllable of the English word beautiful. Her suggestion carried the day. An interesting anomaly was born, and Dearheimer became known as the Mother of BEW-na Vista. To this day long time residents carry on the tradition and say “Bewna Vista”. If it is hard for visitors to swallow, it is suggested they just say “BEWNIE” or BV.
- **During the summers,** my family and I would drive up to Buena Vista where they lived, and we would stay a week or two on the ranch. We had a blast exploring the hills, chasing down new rocks to climb, and roasting marshmallows over the fire pit for s’mores. I think it’s only natural I thought to write a series about a family of cousins and set my first book within that quaint mountain town.



Discussion Guide

1) Have you ever experienced a time in your life where it felt like your whole world was turned up-side-down? If you could put yourself in Abigail's shoes, would you chose to move back home and help Aunt Josie restore her antiques shop, or would you do something different?

2) Ben adopted Charlie in Seattle and brought him back to his hometown. Have you ever had a pet? Did it ever get into trouble like Charlie?

3) Does your family have any antiques or special heirlooms? Do you know the stories behind them?

4) What do you think of Aunt Josie and Uncle Jack's story? Would you want to travel the world and live in new exciting place, or would you rather plant down roots and stay in your hometown?

5) Does your town have any unique fall traditions? Hayrides, apple picking, festivals, or maybe even their own pie making competition? What is your favorite fall recipe or dessert?

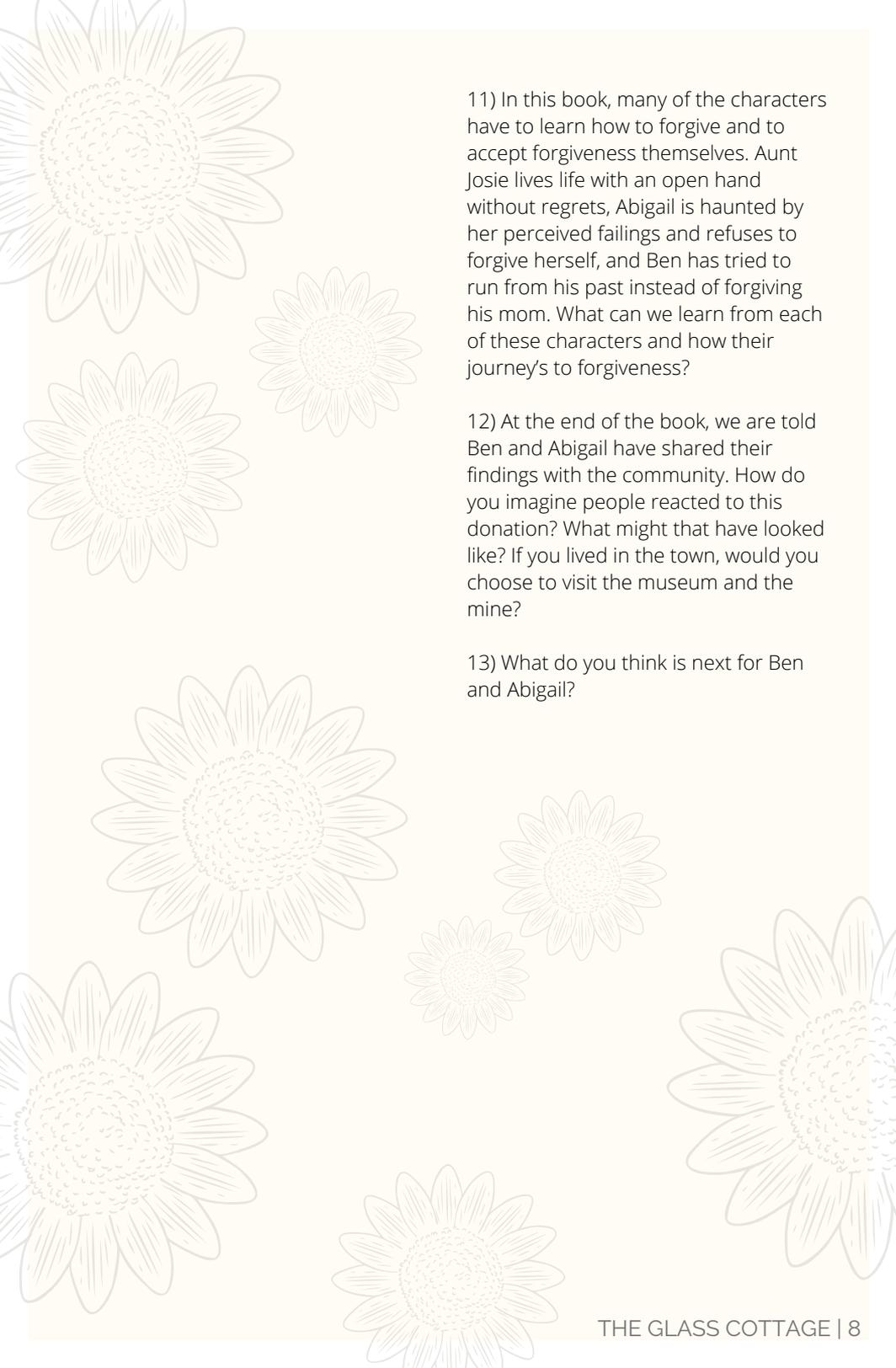
6) Abigail's greatest fear is losing those closest to her. How do you think this has influenced her career as a historian? How has your past influenced your life?

7) When Ben meets Abigail by the lake, he quotes Isaiah, saying, "Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand." When in your life have you had to cling to God for His strength and guidance? Are you still?

8) In Abigail's and Ben's research, they stumble upon a secret. Have you ever learned something about your own family that surprised you?

9) After their rescue, Abigail finds out it was Tom Suthers who called for help. How might you imagine she reacted at the news? Have you ever known someone to go out of their way to help someone, even when it wasn't easy for them? Have you ever been that person?

10) After their rescue, Abigail finds out it was Tom Suthers who called for help. How might you imagine she reacted at the news? Have you ever known someone to go out of their way to help someone, even when it wasn't easy for them? Have you ever been that person?



11) In this book, many of the characters have to learn how to forgive and to accept forgiveness themselves. Aunt Josie lives life with an open hand without regrets, Abigail is haunted by her perceived failings and refuses to forgive herself, and Ben has tried to run from his past instead of forgiving his mom. What can we learn from each of these characters and how their journey's to forgiveness?

12) At the end of the book, we are told Ben and Abigail have shared their findings with the community. How do you imagine people reacted to this donation? What might that have looked like? If you lived in the town, would you choose to visit the museum and the mine?

13) What do you think is next for Ben and Abigail?

A Closing Note

As my grandma used to say: “Don’t let the fear of hard work stop you from trying.”

Throughout the writing of *The Glass Cottage*, God taught me a lot about what it means to listen to and follow His guidance, and the many ways in which He speaks to us at different times in our lives. Our paths rarely turn out the way we expect, but maybe that is a good thing. How else would we discover the wonderful things He has planned for us if we were only limited by our own imagination?

When the world seems to pull at us from all directions, leaving us questioning and worried about the future, it is all the more important we understand what it means to trust God. Even with the unknowns.

He is the ultimate story writer, and I hope readers of *The Glass Cottage* will be able to sympathize with Abigail’s and Ben’s story of redemption and second-chances.

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come:
The old has gone, the new is here!”
—2 Corinthians 5:17

Until next time,

Alyssa

The background of the entire page is a scenic landscape. It features a clear, bright blue sky at the top. Below the sky, there are rolling hills and mountains. The foreground is dominated by a field of tall, golden-brown grasses. In the middle ground, there are more hills with trees that have turned yellow and orange, suggesting autumn. A small wooden structure, possibly a barn or shed, is visible on one of the hills. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and natural.

Thank You!

Thank you so much for the honor of spending this time together, in story and in discussion and fellowship! And thank you, once more, for the heart you pour into nurturing friendships through the gift of a book club!