



# Book Club Kit

## A Note From Trish

Dear Reader,

At the very beginning of *A WEALTH OF DECEPTION* antique and art dealer, Edie Brown, tells about reluctantly creating a memory box after the death of her beloved grandparents:

*“When I was seventeen, my grandparents died in a plane crash. A single-engine plane. Within sight of our house. The therapist suggested I create a memory box dedicated to them. I didn’t tell her I’d already declared the field where they went down a living memorial, at least in my mind. Instead of opening my heart, I bristled and did as she asked, gluing photographs, newspaper articles, and other odds and ends into the craft store box she provided. Then I closed the box’s lid and scrawled orange and red flames on the outside, crayons snapping under the ferocity of my grip.”*



Despite her general dislike for the therapist and aversion to the project, creating the memory box has a profound influence on her life, not only helping her through the traumatic loss but instilling in her a sense of empathy toward others suffering from horrific and life-altering experiences.

Later in the novel, when Edie discovers a disturbing collage with a questionable provenance, her art therapy experience is a large part of what drives her to untangle the mystery of who really created it.

For me as the author, this interplay between Edie’s traumatic backstory, art, and healing made the perfect springboard for the novel’s plot. I asked myself, given Edie’s past, what type of art or antique related crime would challenge her the most? From there, I developed the emotionally raw collage she discovers. Next I created a cast of troubled characters each with their own difficult story to tell.

Most importantly, I wanted *A WEALTH OF DECEPTION* to end with an uplifting sense of redemption and that right had triumphed over hardship. In other words, like the process of healing through art therapy, I wanted the story to help Edie and other characters she comes to care about to find their way past trauma and to a place where they can rebuild their lives.

I hope you enjoy this book club kit, which includes discussion questions, an awesome recipe, some photos from my own antiquing adventures, and a conversation with Kala. Thank you for reading, sharing, and reviewing!

- Trish

## Discussion Questions:

The questions below have some spoilers for A WEALTH OF DECEPTION. Please come back to this page after you've finished reading and are ready to enjoy discussion.



1-Do you have a favorite character in A WEALTH OF DECEPTION? Have you changed your feelings about any character since reading book one in the series, THE ART OF THE DECOY?

2-Most of the towns in the Scandal Mountain Antiques Mystery series are real. However, sometimes locations within those towns are fictional—Checkerberry Assisted Living, Sterling Gallery, The Well-being Center. Did this bother you or did those fictional locations seem real while you were reading?

3-Edie defines outsider art as, “...works made by people who live outside the mainframe of society and don’t have formal training...”. The definition of ‘outsider art’ and ‘folk art’ are much debated by professionals in the art world. What do you think separates and defines the two categories?

4-If you owned an antique shop and the alarm went off in the middle of the night, would you rush out and confront the intruder(s) or wait for the police to arrive? Do you think Tuck and Edie’s reactions fit their characters?

5-What do you think about the Lefebvre men? Do you think the complication of Edie and Tristan Lefebvre's relationship as teenagers is something that often occurs in small towns?

6-Do you think Vicki Tuckerman's impulsive marriage and surprise pregnancy had an effect on her and Edie's relationship?

7-Did you wonder about the extra shoes in Anna Gorin's entryway?

8-What did you think was happening when Edie looked through the window at Shane's house and saw the woman? How did you feel about Edie's mistrust of Shane at this point, and again later when she believes he joined the FBI without telling her? Were you surprised when Shane told her the truth?

9-What do you think about Jimmy Zaninelli? Is he a good friend to Edie and someone she can trust, or is he a morally gray character?

10-Where you familiar with NFTs before reading this book? Do you think they qualify as art?

11-Do you think Alder Scranton Meadows should be held responsible for her actions or was she a victim?

12-At the end of the novel, Stanislav Volkov donates valuable works of art to the show. Later, Edie gives the painting of Madonna and Child to Erik. Were you surprised by these events, or do you feel they were predictable, given the characters' personalities?

13-Were you satisfied by Evita Volkov's fate at the end of the novel?

14-What do you think will happen to Erik Volkov in the future? What do you think might have happened if Edie hadn't seen the collage and decided to investigate?

15-What mysteries linger at the end of this novel, and what do you think might be resolved in the next book?

# POPOVER RECIPE!

I headed downstairs and into the kitchen. Tuck was already up, cotton apron protecting his belly as he pulled a batch of muffins from the oven.

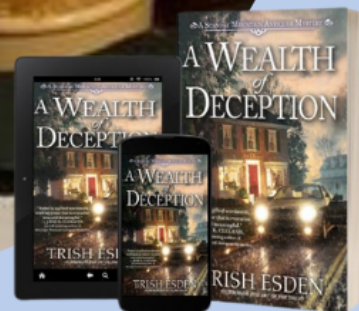
I sniffed the air. "Raspberry and white chocolate?"

"Blackberry. I picked them down by the airstrip a little earlier."

"Did you sleep at all?" I asked.

"Required five hours." He nodded at the yearbook in my hand. "What's that about?"

-A Wealth of Deception  
Scandal Mountain Antiques  
Mystery #2



In the Scandal Mountain Antiques Mysteries, Edie's uncle Tuck is the best cook in the household. Unfortunately, unlike Tuck, I'm not known for creating amazing muffins. I do, however, make amazing popovers that are extra tall and yummy.

To download my secret recipe, follow this link: <https://bit.ly/3gl1sOK>

## A conversation with Kala Acosta:

Hi there! My name is Kala Acosta and I'm Scandal Mountain Fine Arts and Antiques' one and only employee. Edie Brown is my boss now, but it was her mom who hired me only days before she went to prison for art forgery. I'm grateful for a bunch of things, mainly that Edie's mom didn't do a background check on me. Edie and I've become such good friends that maybe she won't check either. It's hard to say for sure, Edie's much more astute than her drama-queen mom.

Enough about that, I prefer to look on the bright side. And I do love it here. Edie and her uncle Tuck have put me in charge of the shop's online sales. I absolutely go crazy over collectable and vintage things—trolls, games, midcentury thingamabobs, barware...I have a weakness for junk jewelry and anything sparkly. See No Evil monkeys are one of my very favorites. And big hoop earrings, overalls, scarves, and anything purple—and my laptop. What I don't like are cops, though Edie's boyfriend Shane is a Vermont State Police detective and he's cool. There's also a cute newish officer on the Scandal Mountain Police Department by the name of Cristina Hopkins. But I really can't say anything more about her, I'm seeing someone else.

The only thing better than working in the antique shop and the fact that I get free room and board (like the entire third floor attic is my private getaway), is the high-stakes and dangerous mysteries the three of us have been embroiled in. They've allowed me to keep my special research skills honed. I'm not just talking about creating whiteboards listing suspects and motives, but I get to do deep dives on the dark side of the web to find out important tidbits. This mystery solving gig is a real rush.

I'm hoping to stay with Edie and Tuck for the long haul. That is, if they don't pressure me about where I came from—'cause that's something I'm not telling.



My name is Kala and I am magnificent!



[www.TrishEsden.com](http://www.TrishEsden.com)

**Woman's World Book Club**

*This week's best new books*

**Historical Romance**  
**Secret Service of Tea and Treason**  
 by India Holton

**COZY MYSTERY**  
**A Wealth of Deception**  
 by Trish Esden

**Fiction**  
**FIVE FIRST CHANCES**  
 by Sarah Jost

**LIFE AND OTHER LOVE SONGS**  
 by Anissa Gray

**TIME TRAVEL**  
**Five First Chances**  
 by Sarah Jost

**FAMILY SAGA**  
**Life and Other Love Songs**  
 by Anissa Gray

**Nonfiction**  
**Love Me as I Am**

...ing author India Holton, for her romantic, ing capers—and her ows suit. Alice, known for the Agency of r Note Takers, is a case as the agency es of an assassination e working with her Bixby, Agent B. But undercover as a must ignore their crack the case!

Secret plots, art and a dash of romance...this mysterious, alluring saga has it all! When Edie Brown discovers an unsettling dark collage by an artist only known as Vespa, she teams up with Uncle Tuck and Kala to uncover the truth behind that art—and the eerie danger that surrounds it. But she stumbles upon darker secrets and an underground where some are willing to kill for their schemes.

A whimsical, mesmerizing love story unfolds when Lou realizes she might be stuck on a wrong path...until, she finds herself back in time at a night years prior. Now, with to fix her mistakes, she noticing that each into the past, her with one person once just lives Is this person make her on the



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<https://trishesden.com>