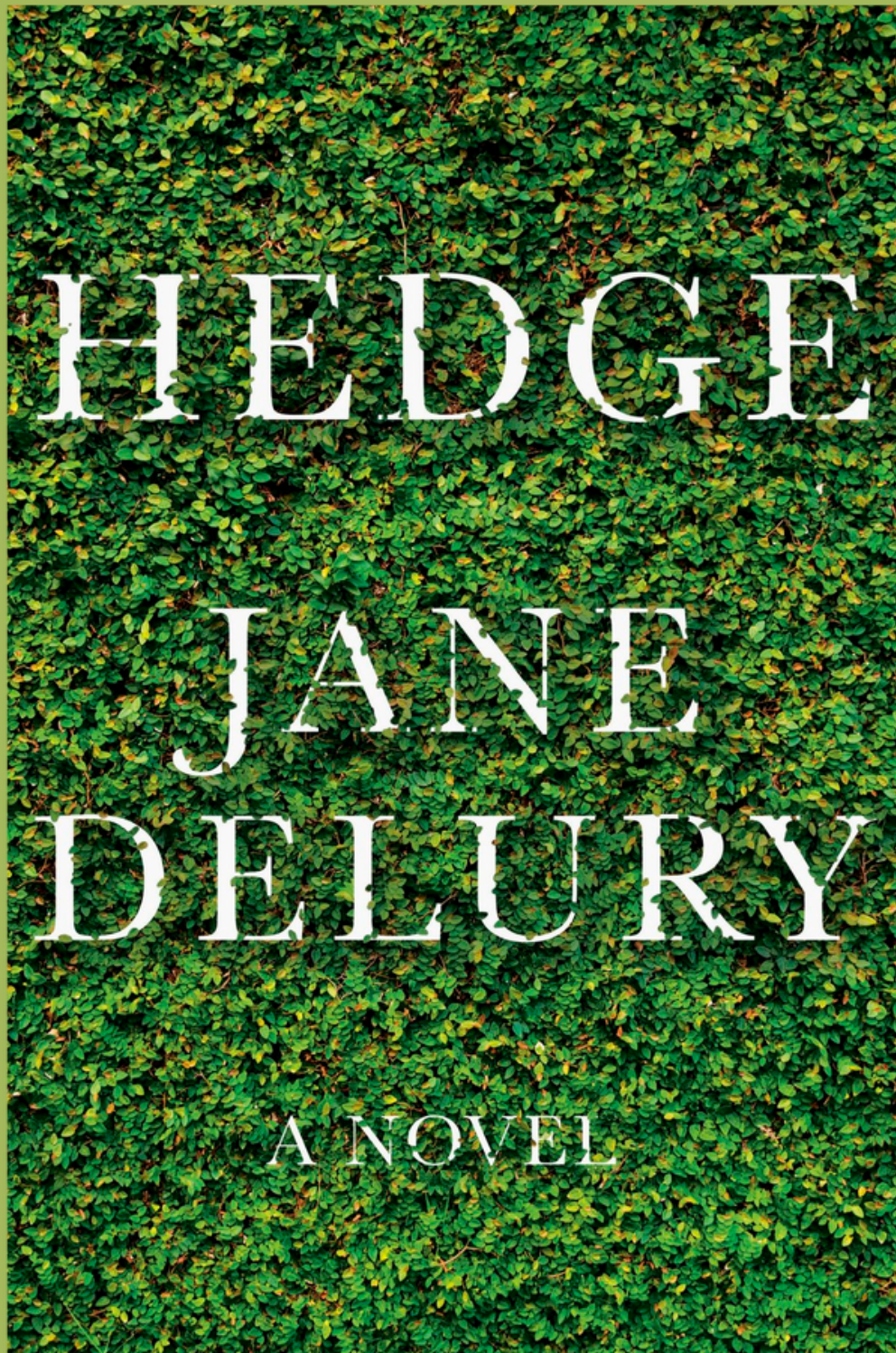


BOOK CLUB KIT



HEDGE

JANE
DELURY

A NOVEL

GET READY TO HOST YOUR BOOK CLUB!

We're so glad you've decided to host a *Hedge* book gathering! Inside this kit you'll find a Q&A with Jane, a reading guide to help prompt your discussion, some garden-inspired cocktails, a flower pressing activity, and more. Stories are best when shared, and we hope your time together is fun and engaging!

If you're new to hosting a book event, don't worry! We've got you covered. Here's what you'll need to do to get ready for your gathering:

- Determine if you'll meet virtually or in-person.
- Save the date!
- Reach out to your local bookstore. You can direct your guests to purchase the book through the store ahead of time or coordinate with the store and have them sell the books at your event.
- Invite friends! Make sure your guests know they're welcome to attend even if they haven't read or finished the book!
- Plan to have some food and drinks, but don't stress about this! Keep it easy by stopping at Trader Joe's for cheese and crackers. Or go all out with homemade snacks and treats and some of our garden-inspired cocktail recipes. You could also divide and conquer by asking a few close friends to bring an appetizer or dessert!
- Relax and have fun! Book clubs are enjoyable because of the connections, not the cocktails or the charcuterie board. Allow everyone a chance to share or ask questions. Be mindful of those who haven't had a chance to read the book by discussing the themes rather than the specifics.



HOST YOUR NEXT BOOK CLUB IN NATURE!

The warm weather is here and what better way to celebrate than to take your book club outside and enjoy the fresh air. *Hedge* is the perfect book to pair with an outdoor excursion!

An outdoor book club can be as easy as your own backyard or balcony. All you need is a few chairs and a sunny day. Nature will do the rest!

Don't have an outdoor space at home? No problem – there are plenty of accessible places in nature waiting for you.

Go to your local park. Bring a few blankets, find a park bench, or just sit right on the grass. Find a local botanical garden or orchard. A local vineyard is also a great place to meet and talk all things *Hedge* with a glass of wine in hand!

Here are some resources to help you find the best place for your outdoor book club:

- Park Finder: <https://findyourpark.com/park-finder>
- National Park Index: <https://www.nps.gov/findapark/index.htm>
- American Horticultural Society events: <https://ahsgardening.org/gardening-resources/events-by-region/>
- American Public Gardens Association: <https://www.publicgardens.org/>
- Orchard Directory: <https://www.orangepeppin.com/orchards>
- All Trails: <https://www.alltrails.com/>
- Recreation.gov: <https://www.recreation.gov/>



MAKE A GARDEN-INSPIRED COCKTAIL

Let's continue with the garden and plant theme for this book event and craft some fresh cocktails for you and your guests to sip on! If you've taken our suggestion and are heading outdoors for your book gathering, we're including recipes for pitcher cocktails to make it easy to make, transport, and serve. Which one will you make first?

1

Hibiscus Mezcal Pitcher Cocktail

For the cocktails:

3 cups mezcal
1 medium lime
Ice
1½ cups lime juice
1½ cups water
½ cup orange liqueur, such as Cointreau or Triple Sec
Ice

For the hibiscus syrup:

1 cup water
1 cup sugar
1 cup dried hibiscus flowers



Make the hibiscus simple syrup:

Place water, sugar, and dried hibiscus flowers in a small saucepan. Stir and bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Reduce the heat to low and simmer, stirring occasionally, for 15 minutes. Remove the pan from the heat and let sit until completely cooled, about 1 hour. Pour through a fine-mesh strainer set over a small bowl, and press on the solids to release as much liquid as possible. Discard the solids. Refrigerate until ready to use.

Make the cocktails:

Pour the hibiscus syrup into a pitcher. Add 3 cups tequila or mezcal, the lime juice, water, and orange liqueur, and stir to combine. Cut lime into wedges or wheels. To serve, fill each glass with ice and garnish with a slice of lime, and then pour in the margarita. Serves 6-7.

(Recipe from [The Kitchn](#))

MAKE A GARDEN-INSPIRED COCKTAIL

2

Bourbon Strawberry Smash

Ingredients:

2 cups fresh strawberries, hulled and cut up
¼ cup simple syrup
Juice of 3 lemons (9 Tbsp)
¼ cup fresh mint leaves
18 oz (2¼ cups) bourbon
2 cups club soda, chilled
Crushed ice



For the simple syrup:

In a small saucepan, heat and stir ⅓ cup sugar and ⅓ cup water until sugar dissolves. Remove from heat and cool. Cover and chill up to 2 weeks. Makes ½ cup.

In a 2-quart glass pitcher, using a muddler or wooden spoon, mash strawberries, syrup, lemon juice, and mint leaves together. Add bourbon and club soda. Stir in ice to fill pitcher. Garnish each drink with additional mint sprigs. Serves 6.

(Recipe from **Better Homes & Gardens**)

MAKE A GARDEN-INSPIRED COCKTAIL

3



Basil Lemon Drop

Ingredients:

6 fresh basil leaves
3 cups vodka
1½ cups simple syrup
Ice cubes

For simple syrup:

In a small saucepan, combine 1 cup water and 1 cup sugar. Cook and stir over medium heat until sugar dissolves. Chill until ready to use. Makes 1½ cups.

Muddle basil leaves in a large pitcher. Stir in vodka, lemon juice, and simple syrup. Serve over ice. Serves 8.

(Recipe from **Better Homes & Gardens**)

MAKE A GARDEN-INSPIRED COCKTAIL

4

Peach Elderflower Gin Cocktail

Ingredients:

¾ cup gin
½ cup elderflower liqueur
½ cup lime juice
Simple syrup
3 ripe peaches, thinly sliced
Generous handful of mint
1½ cups sparkling water
Crushed ice
Thinly sliced peach and mint leaves
for garnish

For the simple syrup:

½ cup water
½ cup sugar



Add water to a medium saucepan and bring to boil. Add the sugar and stir until dissolved. Remove from heat and let cool completely.

To make the pitcher, add the gin, elderflower liqueur, lime juice, and simple syrup to a large pitcher. Stir to combine. Add the peaches, mint, and sparkling water and stir to combine. Let it sit in the fridge for at least an hour to let the flavors blend. Serve in glasses filled with crushed ice. Garnish with peach slices and fresh mint if desired. Serves 4.

(Recipe from [Spices in My DNA](#))

READING GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE:

1. What was your first impression of Maud when you started *Hedge*? What intrigued you about her?
2. Why do you think Maud was so drawn to historic gardening? How did gardening help her cope with all that was happening with her family?
3. What was it about Gabriel that drew Maud to him? Do you think their relationship would have lasted if their summer had turned out differently?
4. Peter is regularly insistent that their separation is a “trial separation” even though Maud was ready for a divorce. Why do you think their expectations for their marriage were so different? How did their differing opinions impact Ella and Louise?
5. Starting on page 83, Maud believes that Ella is flirting with Gabriel and otherwise “acting strange.” How did Ella’s behavior change?
6. Ella's disappearance and subsequent reaction to Gabriel when she’s found leads Maud and Peter to believe that something horrifying happened between Ella and Gabriel. Did their reactions seem reasonable to you? How would you have responded in a similar situation?
7. At the beginning of Chapter 10, the reader finds Maud working at The Presidio, still married to Peter, and supporting Ella through her recovery. How do you think Maud changed after the events at Montgomery Place? How did her family change?
8. How do Ella’s revelations about her self-harm and mental health shift Maud and Peter’s marriage? Going back, do you notice any subtle hints from the author regarding Ella’s struggles?



READING GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE:

9. On page 153, the reader learns that Maud has kept secret what happened between her and Gabriel from Peter. How do you feel about this decision? How do you think this impacts her family?

10. When Maud first meets Alice Lincoln, Alice is abrupt and almost seems bored with Maud. Later Alice invites Maud to her home for some gardening advice, and they become friends. Did you anticipate this relationship? How is this relationship different from Maud's relationship with Gabriel? How is it similar?

11. On page 221, Ella has a relapse. In the midst of caring for Ella, Maud discovers that Louise has also been struggling. Did you notice Louise struggling? Did the author leave any hints as to Louise's wellbeing?

12. While hiking with Alice, Maud thinks, "I'm madly in love with my children. But why can't I have more than one mad love?"

Do you think people can have more than one mad love? What do you think Maud is referring to here—her work, or a partner other than Peter? Or both? How has the idea of having more than one mad love existed in other parts of the book?

13. In Chapter 19, Alice's partner, Gloria, arrives at Maud's home to confront Maud, and it leads to Ella finally admitting that she saw Maud and Gabriel's clandestine encounter that summer at Montgomery Place.

Do you think Gloria was right to confront Maud? Why do you think that moment led to Ella's confession? Did you anticipate that Ella's confession was coming? Why or why not?



READING GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE:

14. Ella's confession about seeing Maud and Gabriel together leads to the end of Maud's marriage, something she has wanted from the beginning of the book, but not at all in the way she expected.

Why do you think it was that moment that finally ended Maud and Peter's marriage? Did you expect that Maud and Peter would eventually get divorced? How does this reveal and ultimate divorce differ from Maud's ideal scenario?

15. After Maud and Peter start talking about their divorce, Maud goes to see Gabriel in Las Vegas.

Do you think this closure was important for both Maud and Gabriel? Why or why not? How do you think seeing him helped Maud move forward?

16. How has Maud changed throughout the book? What kind of impact did her different workplaces have on her? What kind of impact did the people she meet there have on her?

17. How is Ella different at the end of *Hedge*? What do you think Maud and Peter learned about parenting from this experience?

18. What did you learn about womanhood and motherhood from this book? How did *Hedge* make you think differently about your own mother? About yourself?



PRESSED FLOWER BOOKMARKS

The setting of *Hedge* brings to life the beauty of gardens and an appreciation for nature. To celebrate the gardens in *Hedge* as well as our love of reading, we have the perfect activity for your next book club: homemade pressed flower bookmarks!

HOW TO PRESS YOUR FLOWERS

First things first, you need to collect your flowers or leaves.

What to consider:

- Size: The flowers need to be small enough to fit inside a bookmark
- Shape: Flowers that are easily flattened work best - avoid thick, more rounded flowers
- Color: What colors do you like the best? This is entirely up to you!

What you'll need:

- Fresh flowers or leaves
- Heavy books or weights

Steps:

1. Pick your flowers or leaves (fresh flowers work best!)
2. Place your flowers (slightly spaced apart) in a heavy book
3. If you have a heavy weight, place it on top of the book (or more heavy books!)
4. Wait at least two days before checking on your flowers. If you want them a bit drier, leave them for another day or two.
5. Once pressed, remove the flowers
6. Congrats! You are ready to make your bookmark!



START YOUR OWN GARDEN



A Wildflower Meadow

Jane likes to experiment in her garden, throw down seeds, and try things here and there. One experiment that worked well and that she repeats every year is a wildflower container garden.

Here's how to make your own:

1. Fill a container—the bigger the better—with potting soil.
2. Sow a packet of wildflower seeds.
3. Water when you remember!
4. Before you know it, off they go! You now have your own portable wildflower meadow.

START YOUR OWN GARDEN



A Succulent Garden

If you aren't much of a gardener, just don't have Maud's green thumb, or have little time for gardening, don't worry! Succulents require minimal nurture and very little water to thrive and fill your home with a beautiful touch of nature.

Here are five easy steps:

1. Get a container with drainage holes or drill some into the bottom of your chosen container.
2. Cover the drainage holes with a piece of plastic window screening or a piece of landscape fabric.
3. Fill your container with succulent potting mix (up to about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch below your container's rim). You can also make your own by blending equal parts regular potting soil, coarse sand, and perlite or pumice.
4. Remove your succulents from their nursery pots, plant them into the soil (do not overcrowd them), and gently pack potting soil around each.
5. Water every other week and prune when needed! That's it!



START YOUR OWN GARDEN



A Basic Terrarium

Make your own “garden under glass” that adds not only a beautiful decoration to your home, but a fascinating ecosystem to watch in awe.

Let’s review the steps:

1. First things first, choose your container! You can use any glass or plastic container with a wide mouth, from aquariums and goldfish bowls to bell jars and mason jars.
2. Next, choose your plants! Some plants that work best in terrariums are small ferns, Lucky bamboo, Polka dot plant, African violet, Pothos, Club moss, and Creeping fig.
3. Next it’s time to add the drainage layers to your terrarium. Start with a 2-inch layer of gravel or crushed stone at the bottom. Then add a $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch of activated charcoal on top of that. Next is the moss and potting soil. Add as much of the potting mix as you can (at least a couple of inches).
4. Now you can add your plants! Create mounds where you want your plants to go, remove them from their nursery pots, and plant each in its hole. Gently pat the soil down around them.
5. Time to decorate! Add small figurines, shells, or decorative stones among your plants to create your perfect garden oasis in a jar.
6. Use a spray bottle to dampen the plants (but don’t soak them!) and let them grow!

Tips for maintaining your terrarium:

- Terrariums do best in spots that receive plenty of filtered light (but not in direct sunlight!).
- Every few weeks, you can feel the soil. If it’s dry, add some water.
- Watch out for condensation on the top. Take the top off at least once a month to help with airflow or if you added too much water.

Whichever garden you choose, the results will be beautiful. Join Jane and Maud by bringing a little bit of nature into your home!



Q&A WITH JANE

1. What inspired you to write a novel about motherhood, relationships, and love?

When I wrote *Hedge*, I was in the middle of a life transition after a divorce in my early forties. My daughters were young, and we were figuring out our unit of three, creating new traditions and finding the rhythms of our home. I was also without a partner for the first time in twenty years, trying to stand on my own two feet financially and emotionally. Those were my priorities, but as it happened, I met a fellow writer and found myself falling in love. Don lived in Philadelphia, so we were long distance for the first years, mostly together on my weekends without my girls. I lived a split existence and was always aware of balancing my roles and priorities, including that priority of finding a new independence. I think the character of Maud was born of that challenge, which all turned out very well for me, by the way!

2. What was your writing process like? Do you feel most inspired at a certain time in the day?

I have a full-time teaching job, which not only fills my days but also keeps me in editing mode. During the academic year, I find it hard to let go and write spontaneously and bravely as you need to do with first drafts. I try to reserve Friday mornings to write—first thing with a lot of coffee! But my big pushes on *Hedge* came during summer and winter breaks when I would write—and rewrite—for four to six hours a day. I wrote the first draft of the book in my garden one summer. I gave myself breaks every half hour to prune a vine or forage for cherry tomatoes and raspberries.

3. Alice was one of the most unexpected characters in the book. Had you always intended to include her story, or did she only occur to you after Part One had been written?

Alice was there from the start. I wanted Maud to spend time with a woman who had stepped out of the roles assigned to her as a child and who wasn't a mother. Alice pays a price for her freedom, but she accepts that cost. Maud is always trying to live up to standards she in many ways rejects. She learns a lot from Alice and vice versa. Also, I'm fascinated by women who don't feel the need to play nice all the time, so I loved writing Alice's character.



Q&A WITH JANE

7. What advice would you give someone who wants to write their own novel?

I'd suggest spending time with your characters before thinking too much about the story. Let your characters wander down side streets. If you get to know them well enough, they'll lead you to their contradictions, secrets, and mistakes. They'll knock on a door, and you won't know why and when it opens. The story will start to form. Outlines and analysis become important eventually, but in those first days, shadow your characters. And accept that some of those streets will be dead ends.

8. What kind of research did you do while writing *Hedge*?

Despite loving to garden, I'm not a great gardener like Maud. So I needed to read about gardening and watch experts at work. As for garden restorations, I made several research trips to Monticello, a cradle of garden restoration in the USA. The archeology and grounds team were incredibly helpful. Additionally, I read about other garden restorations, especially in England where Maud is trained. I have hundreds of articles on my computer and several shelves of books. And it didn't end with gardens! I read about the first people of the Bay Area, about the history of Spanish settlement, about Juana Briones, about sculpting with metal, about the history of the Hudson Valley. On my visits to Montgomery Place, I had a group of generous experts to help me out as well. I loved doing all that research, even though most of it didn't end up literally in the book.

9. What are some of the books you've been reading recently? Any books you're looking forward to?

I'm a huge fan of Olga Tokarczyk's novels and am looking forward to reading *The Books of Jacob* this summer when I'll have more time to read longer books. Recently, I've read and loved Claire Keegan's *Small Things Like These*, Ross Gay's *The Book of Delights*, and Rachel Cusk's *The Country Life*.

10. Are you doing more writing? What other projects are coming up for you?

I'm superstitious about answering this question, but I'll try not to be coy. (I fear that if I talk about a work-in-progress, it will harden and crumble to dust!) I'm working on a longer something that will decide whether it's a novel or not at some point. It was inspired by a trip I took to Ireland with my mom and daughters to visit my grandmother's childhood village. And I'm always writing short stories. I have a couple new ones and the draft of a novella. All of these shorter works are linked by the Baltimore Museum of Art's gorgeous collection of impressionist paintings that was amassed by the iconic Cone sisters.



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Maud's Playlist

Alice's Playlist

Ella's Playlist