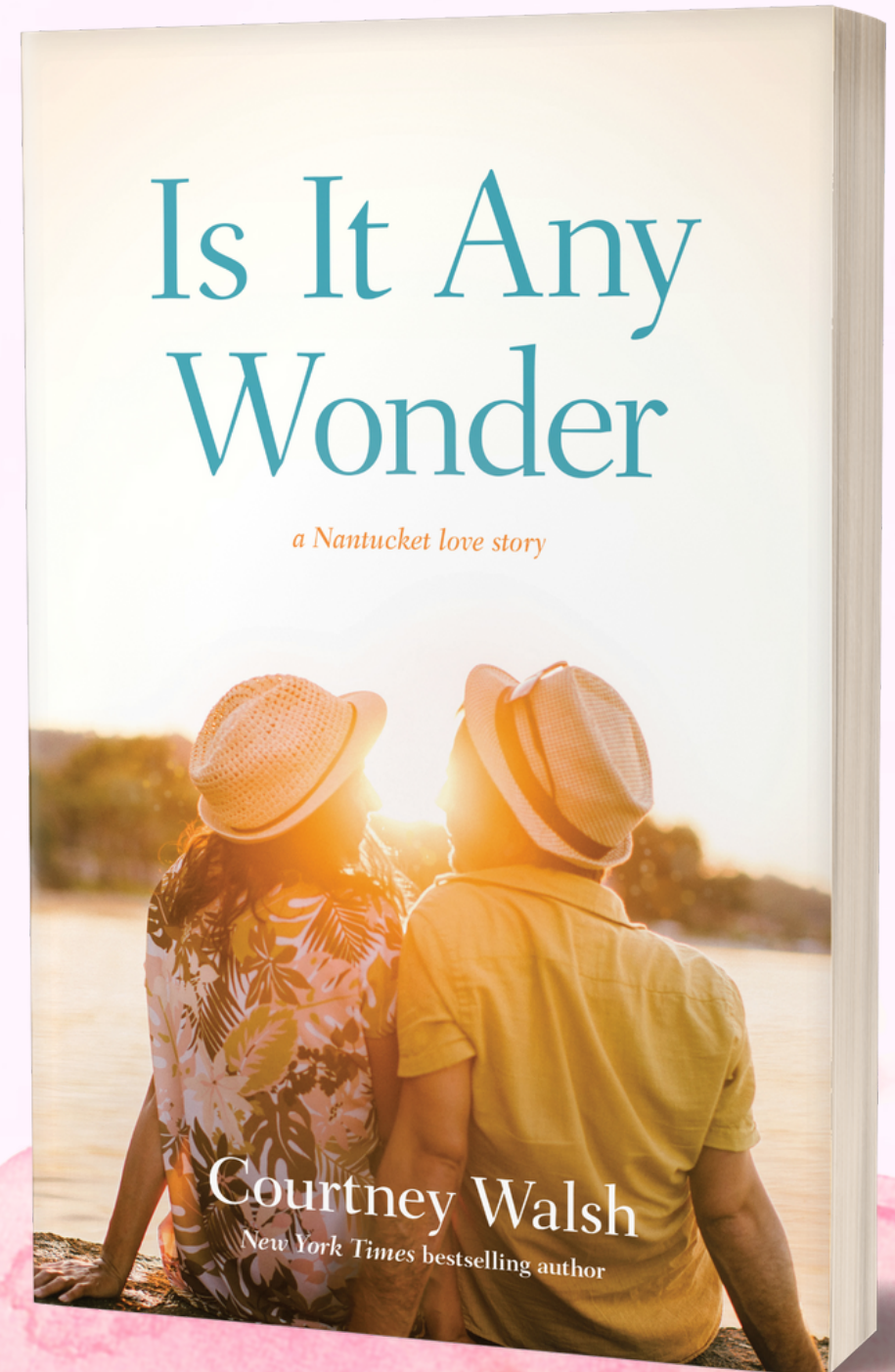


“A story of forgiveness, hope, and enduring ties that proves it’s never too late for a second chance. Courtney Walsh once again shines as a master storyteller.”

Kristy Woodson Harvey, *USA Today* bestselling author of *Feels Like Falling*

BOOK CLUB KIT





Dear Reader,

Thank you. From the bottom of my heart, I want you to know how much you mean to me. Knowing how many books there are for you to choose from, it humbles and amazes me that you would choose to spend time reading one of mine. It means the absolute world to me.

I think one of the best things about being an author has been getting to know many of you- I've met some of you in real life, and many are simply "online friends," but you all make my days brighter, and I'm grateful to you for that.

As seems to be a theme in many of my stories, forgiveness plays a large part in this one. Maybe it's because it's something I'm constantly striving to get right, or it's an area of my life that needs regular care and attention. Either way, it's a lesson worth keeping at the forefront of my mind, and I hope that maybe you can relate as Cody and Louisa grapple with their past mistakes, the guilt and shame they still feel over what they've done.

And I especially hope the unconditional love and sacrifice Cody in particular experienced resonates with you and that you know in your soul that you are equally as loved.

I sincerely hope you enjoyed this Nantucket love story, and I would love to know what you thought of it. I truly love to hear from my readers, especially when I get to know you a little better! I invite you to stay in touch by signing up for my newsletter on my website- courtneywalshwrites.com-or by dropping me a line via email: courtney@courtneywalshwrites.com.

With love and gratitude to you,

Courtney

Louisa's Top Tips for Hosting a Book Club

By Courtney Walsh



Read the article below from Louisa (courtesy of Courtney) and consider how you might set the stage for your next book group discussion. If you aren't meeting in-person, consider how you might adapt these tips for virtual gatherings.

As an event planner, I am all about little details and special touches when it comes to making an event memorable. Hosting a book club is a great opportunity to get your friends together—why not find ways to make each meeting a memory in the making? You can do that with a few easy steps.

1.) If you haven't already, set some guidelines for your group. It helps to be clear about what the group will do at book club. It may seem self-explanatory, but not everyone knows what to expect at a book club, so you'll want to make it clear. Maybe even define everyone's roles within the group. Is the host handling everything from start to finish? Will you do dinner or just focus on drinks and desserts?

2.) Use the book to inspire your theme. A book centered around the ocean, for instance, is just begging for a nautically inspired event. A book set in a bakery would be an excellent opportunity to try a wide assortment of delicious treats.

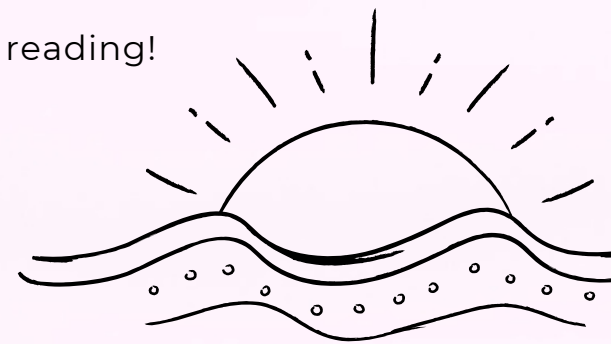
3.) Once you've got your theme, consider a fun tablescape or other décor to highlight some key aspects of the book you're discussing. Reinforce your theme in the colors and containers you choose for serving your guests. Consider printing out discussion questions and putting them in a container at the center of the table. Throughout dinner, participants can draw from the bucket and conversation can commence.

4.) A party favor isn't necessary, but it would be a fun way to remember the book and the time spent with friends, food, and good conversation. These little gifts can be themed to the book or take a more general approach, as gifts for readers are widely available. Another thought would be to have a small gift exchange, where everyone brings a little gift to add a bit of festive fun to the party.

5.) It's tempting to tell your guests they don't need to bring anything—after all, you're hosting—but book club is about being involved. Having everyone contribute something to the gathering not only takes the pressure off of you, it allows for the entire group to feel like they're a part of something fun and unique. Why not involve your fellow book clubbers in various aspects of the plans? One person could create a book-themed playlist to be played while another person may handle printing out discussion questions for the group, etc. Think of the aspects your club wants to include and utilize each member to bring it to life.

I hope you're able to infuse some creativity into your next book club event, but remember, it's always best to keep it simple. The real point of book club is getting everyone together, and as long as that happens, it will be a success!

Good luck! And happy reading!



Q&A With Courtney Walsh

Q. THIS STORY CENTERS ON THE COUPLE'S SHARED GOLDEN BIRTHDAY—WHY DID YOU CHOOSE TO MAKE THIS CONCEPT A KEY PIECE OF THE STORY?

A. I don't really believe in fate, but I do love that there's a bit of that feeling of something being "meant to be" if two people are connected by a golden birthday. It has a tiny bit of a magical element to it, which I think lends itself so well to romance. :)

Q. THIS BOOK DEALS WITH DIFFICULT FAMILY HISTORY. WHAT DID YOU LEARN ABOUT FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS AND HOW THEY AFFECT ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS FROM WRITING THIS STORY?

A. I think it's interesting as an adult to explore family relationships, because no matter how old you get, the impact of your family is still really, really evident. Family secrets and hurts and trauma changes and shapes us into who we are. I was listening to a speaker recently and she said, "What you don't deal with in your late twenties will come back to haunt you in your fifties." And I think that's true. If you don't unpack your childhood, it'll keep coming back—and because we care so much what our families think, it definitely informs who we choose to love.

Continued on next page 

Q. WHAT ROLE DOES FAITH PLAY IN THIS STORY?

A. I think faith comes into play in every story I write, whether it's overt or more subtle. I tend to really lean in to the theme of forgiveness because I've had to learn over and over how crucial it is—to forgive others, to forgive ourselves, to not grow bitter when someone hurts or wrongs us, or even to not foster anger with God when life doesn't go as planned. These are all things both Cody and Louisa are learning and wrestling with. I feel like these are the kinds of universal things we can all relate to because for whatever reason, no matter how much we know we need to forgive, it's never easy to do.

Q. WHAT DO YOU HOPE READERS WILL BE INSPIRED BY IN THIS NOVEL?

A. I always want my books to feel like an escape, especially from the realities of life these days. I want readers to feel uplifted and hopeful and whisked away to a stunning location where they can get lost in a love story. But deeper than that, I hope that readers are challenged to forgive. Not only anyone who might've wronged them, but themselves. I think oftentimes forgiving ourselves is much, much harder than forgiving someone else.

Q. WAS THERE A CHARACTER IN THIS NOVEL THAT YOU ESPECIALLY ENJOYED CRAFTING?

A. I always love writing older, wiser, feistier characters, so Maggie was definitely fun to write in this story. But I really enjoyed writing Louisa. I think writing a character who is a little quirkier than my other heroines was particularly fun.

"Courtney Walsh's books always capture my heart! I love her poignant plotlines, quaint, small-town settings, and the romance she skillfully weaves through the pages."

*Becky Wade, author of *Stay With Me**

Cody's and Louisa's Epic Playlists

Read this article below by Courtney Walsh with your book group to gain more insight into Louisa's and Cody's personalities. Then discuss: what's one thing you now understand better about these characters?

Okay, so maybe their playlists aren't epic, but both Cody and Louisa have very particular tastes in music.

Louisa likes her music a tiny bit eclectic, while Cody is more of a classic rock guy. Louisa would favor a singer in a coffee shop, while Cody would likely need to travel through time to see his favorite band perform. Though each has their own preferences, somehow, when you put all their music together on one playlist, it creates a unique blend of tried-and-true favorites and whimsical hidden gems.

Louisa's Top Five Most Played Songs

- 01** The entire soundtrack from the animated movie *Ratatouille*, especially the song "Le Festin," which is in French. She can't help it—there's something about this music that transports her straight to Paris, and she imagines a whole life for herself there, one that starts with a fresh pastry and steaming espresso every morning.
- 02** "Sit Still, Look Pretty" by Daya. Mostly because it has this lyric: "I'm never gonna be that girl who's living in a Barbie world," which Lou completely identifies with.
- 03** "New Soul" by Yael Naim, a plinky little song Louisa first heard in a commercial. She loved it so much, she immediately looked up the artist and downloaded it on iTunes.

- 04 When Louisa is really stressed out, she likes to dance around her little cottage and has even been “caught” by potential clients. She can’t help it. Dancing is an excellent way to manage stress. If you try it, she recommends the song “Brand New” by Ben Rector. And she dares you to stay in a bad mood while listening to it.
- 05 “Nancy Mulligan” by Ed Sheeran. Lou isn’t sure what she likes more about this one: the story of Ed’s grandparents or the traditional Irish pub melody. Put them both together and you’ve got a song she can’t get out of her head.

Cody’s Top Five Most Played Bands

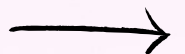
Cody believes in assessing music by an entire body of work, rather than a single song. After all, it’s easier to write one good song than it is to create album after album of excellent music.

- 01 The Beatles. Not to be unoriginal, but seriously, does it get any better? You can’t argue with greatness.
- 02 Billy Joel. Classic rock at its absolute best. Cody especially likes Billy Joel because he seems like a guy he could sit down and have a drink with. Unassuming. A guy’s guy. But crazy talented, which, he supposes, might make him a little less accessible.
- 03 Mumford & Sons. Maybe it’s the banjos, but this music speaks to Cody’s soul. Makes him want to climb mountains or live in the great outdoors.
- 04 Bon Jovi. And for this one, he does have a favorite song—“It’s My Life,” which makes him want to get up and do something awesome.
- 05 Lastly, Otis Redding, specifically “Try a Little Tenderness.” Because his dad used to play it to make his mom smile.

Discussion Questions

- 1 Louisa is weighed down by shame and guilt over choices from her past. How much of this guilt is appropriate conviction, and how much is misplaced? By the end of the story, how has Louisa learned to work through this shame and guilt? What could that process look like in your own life?
- 2 When Cody is assigned to the Nantucket Coast Guard station, he must return to a place that holds painful memories. How does he respond? Have you ever been forced to go somewhere that was difficult for you to face? What was that experience like?
- 3 In a memory from Louisa's childhood, a thunderstorm catches Daniel Boggs off guard as he's grilling outside. As the rain pours down, he tells Louisa, "That's God making everything new. No matter what, he can always make things new." In this story, how do Louisa and Cody see God giving them second chances and making old things new? How have you seen this in your own life?
- 4 Cody keeps track of the people he failed to save by adding hash marks to his tattoo. What danger is there in having a tangible reminder like that always in front of you? What benefits are there to re-membering the past—and learning from it?
- 5 Throughout the story, several characters struggle to forgive themselves and others. How does this struggle play out in the experiences of Cody, Louisa, Marissa, Warren, and JoEllen? Think of a time you had to work hard to forgive yourself or someone else. How did that process impact you?
- 6 One of the main reasons Louisa and Eric's relationship ended was because he didn't believe in her. Why was that a deal breaker for Louisa? What factors are most important to you in a healthy relationship?
- 7 Manny Wirth has a difficult time knowing how to relate to God after the accident that put his son, Jackson, in a coma. He writes, "Believing it was human error and not something God allowed to happen to our son is easier. Because if God simply turned his face in Jackson's hour of need, where does that leave us?" How can you maintain your faith in God when you or someone you love is suffering? Where have you seen God at work in the difficult circumstances of your life, even if you don't understand them?

Continued on next page



ABOUT COURTNEY WALSH



Courtney Walsh is the author of *Is It Any Wonder, If for Any Reason, Just Look Up, Just Let Go, Paper Hearts, Change of Heart*, and the Sweethaven series. Her debut novel, *A Sweethaven Summer*, was a *New York Times* and *USA Today* e-book bestseller and a Carol Award finalist in the debut author category. In addition, she has written two craft books and several full-length musicals. Courtney lives with her husband and three children in Illinois, where she is also an artist, theatre director, and playwright. Visit her online at courtneywalshwrites.com.

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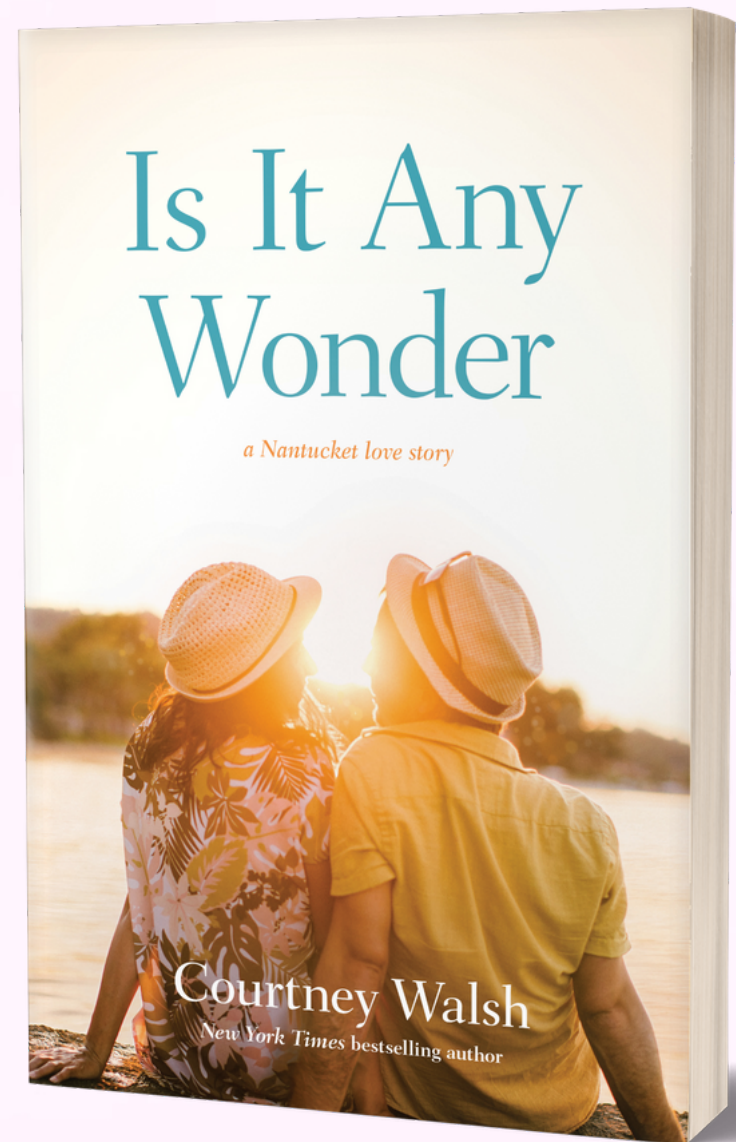


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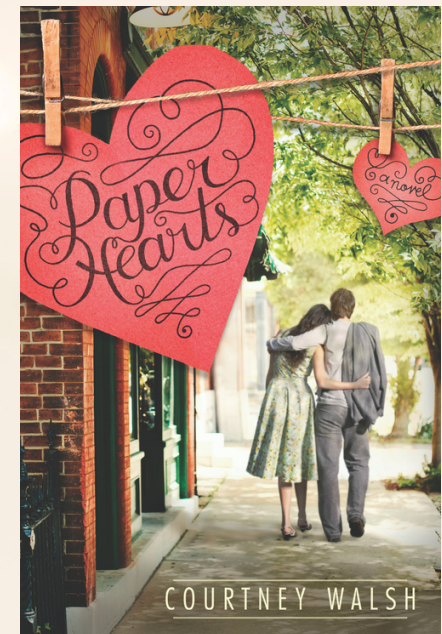
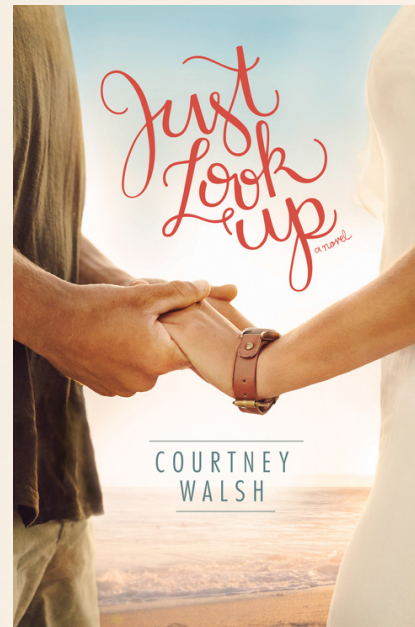
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