

An Excuse For Murder

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The Wild Rose Press

ISBN: 978-1-5092-2517-0

Discussion questions for AN EXCUSE FOR MURDER

1. *An Excuse For Murder* is told from the perspective of Gary Fenris, a haunted former bodyguard who commits murder, and from the perspective of Kate Rowan, a bookstore owner who discovers the body. What do you think of the structure of the novel? Is this a traditional murder mystery?
2. Which character would you most like to have tea (or coffee) with at The Old Firehall Café?
3. Marcus accuses Kate of living in a fairy-tale world. "Leave that house and you might be free." What is the significance of the fairy-tale house in *An Excuse For Murder*?
4. After Roselyn reads the letter from her husband, she tells Kate, "Sometimes it's the silent words, those that are left unsaid, that mean the most." Can you relate to this? What do you think was written in the letter?
5. "Vengeance. It was hard to blame a man for that." Do you agree with Gary? How do you feel about how crime is punished in *An Excuse For Murder*?
6. Roselyn Marsh fills her house with strangers to keep the ghosts at bay. How does she atone for the past?
7. Barbara Fradkin, author of the *Inspector Green* mysteries, says, "Kate Rowan is the perfect heroine for our times." Do you agree? What are Kate's strengths and weaknesses?
8. Kate dreams of fictional heroes. Why do they frighten her?
9. In Gary's dream, his father teaches him how to carve a hunting dog from wood. He tells Gary to concentrate on the shape of the air around the animal. "It's the dark that matters," he says. "Look at the shadows, that's what you want to carve away." What does this dream reveal about Gary?
10. "The guitar-driven sound of blues rock was playing on the stereo, turned down low." Music is important to Gary. What songs do you think would be on his playlist and why?
11. What do you think the future holds for Kate and Gary?

