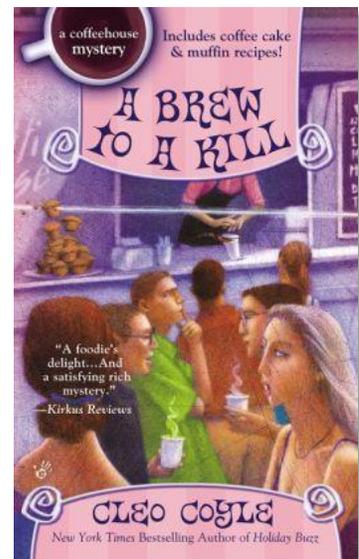


## ***Reading Group Questions Books 11 & 12***

The following questions were designed to help lead a reading group through the events in this book's narrative from beginning to end. Ideas are introduced to help spark discussion and encourage the sharing of thoughts and opinions. Feel free to skip any of these questions or add your own.

### **A Brew to a Kill by Cleo Coyle** **Coffeehouse Mystery #11**

**Story Summary:** When Clare's good friend is run down in front of the Village Blend, she teams up with "Mad Max" Buckman of the NYPD to track down the ruthless driver. But this simple case of hit-and-run spins out of control when Clare discovers that her ex-husband is importing more than coffee beans. Is a Brazilian drug smuggler targeting the Village Blend? And if he is, how in the world is a mere coffeehouse manager going to stop him? Includes recipes for muffins and coffee cakes. *To see many of these recipes, [click here](#).*



1. The prologue introduces readers to "the Driver," a character intent on committing murder. What is the Driver's mood? Are there clues that attach the Driver to the victim? What did the victim do for a living?
2. "Change lanes or run it down..." What do you think the Driver meant by this? Did this idea come up again in the story?
3. Clare's story opens in the middle of a lesson in business management—and Clare is the pupil. What is Madame trying to teach Clare? How well does Clare apply the lesson in the book?
4. When a competing food truck parks right outside the Village Blend, how does Clare react? Competition and rivalry can push us to strive and become even better. It can also bring out the worst in us. How would you feel if you were Clare and the Kupcake Kween parked in front of your store? How would you handle it? Do you have any personal stories of competitors or rivals trying to undercut you (or drive you crazy)? What do you think would be good advice for someone who is in that position and being undermined by a competitor?

5. Esther is a unique character. Did you like her or not? When the two uniformed officers question her, what happens? Why does Clare intervene? How does Clare get Esther to remember the details of the hit-and-run accident?
6. “Mad Max” Buckman of the NYPD’s Accident Investigation Squad makes quite an entrance. What is Clare’s first impression of this detective?
7. Max doesn’t care what Clare sees. He cares about something else she witnessed. What? Why does he care about that? What does it help him prove?
8. Why does Clare end up “investigating” Mad Max along with the case? How does Mad Max change the direction of the story?
9. Why is Clare’s love interest, Mike Quinn, in Washington, D.C.? Why does Clare quiz him about Mad Max? Did anything she learn change your opinion of Mad Max?
10. What does “Two Wheels Good” mean? Do you have an opinion about this group’s philosophy? How about their tactics?
11. Given the conversation Clare has with the Two Wheels Good attorney, why did the killer choose hit-and-run as a means to murder?
12. Two of Clare’s baristas go with her to Chinatown on an “undercover” mission to track down the hit-and-run vehicle. What do the three of them pose as? What do they discover in the bakery? Where does it lead them? How does Clare discovery help her resolve a major problem later in the book?
13. The near fatal hit and run in front of the Village Blend is only the beginning of Lilly Beth’s story. Was Clare’s investigation of the victim as important as her hunt for the killer?
14. What is the Five Points Art Collective? Why is it called “Five Points”? Why is it important to the mystery?
15. Do you blame Matt Allegro for the trouble he and Clare got into with the DEA? What else has Matt done wrong? How did he try to make amends, and did he succeed?

16. The Kupcake Kween and Clare have a bitter rivalry. Was it resolved by then end of the book? How? Were you surprised? And speaking of rivalries, there was another rivalry in the book—between Matt Allegro and Mike Quinn. Did that rivalry entertain you? How?

17. Max comes to Clare near the end of the book and asks for her help. Why? Where do Clare and Madame go as a result? What do they discover?

18. Was Mike Quinn right to involve himself in Clare and Matt's mess? What price did he pay for his involvement? Do you admire him for it or not? What would have happened to Clare if Mike hadn't intervened?

19. There are two major mysteries in *A Brew to a Kill*. What are they? How do they intersect? (Hint: One involves the hit-and-run; another involves Matt's coffee importing business.)

20. Once the mystery is solved, how did you feel about it? Was the victim (Lily Beth) to blame for what happened to her? What about the killer. Did you have any sympathy for the murderer?

21. Aspects of this mystery show the colorful diversity of New York's food and ethnic culture. Did you learn anything new while reading this book?

22. What do you think will happen at the end of this story with some of the characters—Max, Lily Beth, Clare, Quinn, and Matt? What would you like to see happen?

23. The next book in the Coffeehouse series takes place during New York's glittering holiday season and features special holiday recipes. Are you interested in seeing how Clare Cosi solves the murder of a professional baker's assistant in ***Holiday Buzz***?

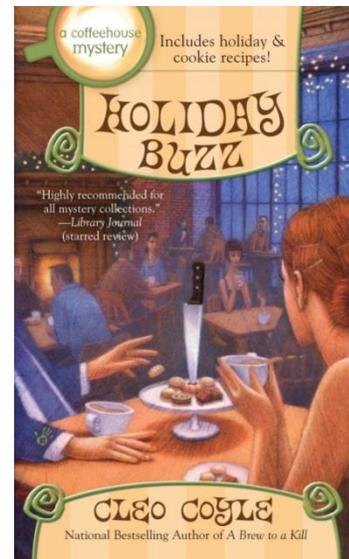
**Final Note:** Cleo Coyle enjoys hearing from readers. She invites you to post to her on her "Coffee Talk" message board (in the upper right column) of her online coffeehouse at [www.CoffeehouseMystery.com](http://www.CoffeehouseMystery.com) or write to her at [CoffeehouseMystery@gmail.com](mailto:CoffeehouseMystery@gmail.com).

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### **Holiday Buzz by Cleo Coyle** **Coffeehouse Mystery #12**

**Story Summary:** Holiday time is party time in New York City, but the celebration is over at *The Great NY Cookie Swap* when Clare discovers the battered body of a young baker's assistant. To catch the girl's killer, Clare must investigate "Saint Nick," crash a pro-hockey party, and dodge a pair of reality TV divas. *To see the many holiday and cookie recipes featured in this culinary mystery, [click here](#).*



1. The prologue opens with a scene in the shadows of an ice skating party in New York's beautiful Bryant Park. During this party, a young woman is murdered. What did you learn about the victim in the prologue? What about the murderer?
2. The author begins Chapter 1 with a quote from *The Little Match Girl*. Is there a little match girl in ***Holiday Buzz***? What did she use matches for? Why does this become important in the mystery plotline?
3. As the story opens, the author turns back the clock, and begins "Earlier that day..." We are introduced to coffeehouse manager Clare Cosi and some of her staff. What did you think of Tucker Burton? How about Esther? Did you like Moirin? Was the Secret Santa gift exchange an important element to mention here? Why?
4. Clare clashes with the lead investigator at the crime scene. What is Clare's first impression of Fletcher Endicott? Is the feeling mutual? Did you find the man's second career interesting? Ironic? When Clare accidentally discovers a possible murder weapon, how does Detective Endicott react? Do you think he was intimidated or embarrassed?

5. At the holiday bash, Clare and company encounter a pair—or is it two pairs?—of reality TV divas called the Double Ds. Tuck thinks they are fabulous, Clare not so much. How do you feel about the Double Ds? Have you seen television reality shows that feature women like these?
6. Were you surprised by barista Dante's reaction to Moirin's demise? Did Dante's feelings about his co-worker surprise you? Did it make him look guilty?
7. Clare and company resort to masquerade and espionage in order to meet the man they suspect was Moirin's boyfriend, Dave. What surprised you more about the character: Dave's age? Or his previous occupation? Did you ever encounter a formerly famous person now leading a completely ordinary life?
8. Were you surprised by Endicott's theory that The Christmas Stalker worked at the Village Blend? Did you buy his evidence? Or did you believe Clare?
9. Ed Rayburn, one of the Double D's husbands, comes to the Blend looking for Tucker. Why was it a scary moment? What did you think he wanted? What do you think of the mess Tucker ultimately got himself into with the Double D's?
10. Do you think the second murder was committed by the same person who killed M? What made Clare think the murderer was a woman instead of a man?
11. What shocked you more, the killer's identity or the reason Moirin was murdered? Did you feel M was pushing the moral envelope, or did you understand and sympathize with her motives?
13. In the epilogue we learn that Clare's Christmas present for Mike went the way of Mike's present for Clare. Why didn't it matter that these expensive gifts were lost?
14. In the next book in this series, Clare Cosi unwittingly saves the life of a young genius billionaire who thanks her by giving her an amazing job. He asks her to create the most expensive coffee blend on the planet. But the billionaire's world is not only full of cutting edge luxuries. It's poisoned with deadly rivalries, and Clare gets caught in the tangle. Are you interested in reading ***Billionaire Blend***?

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