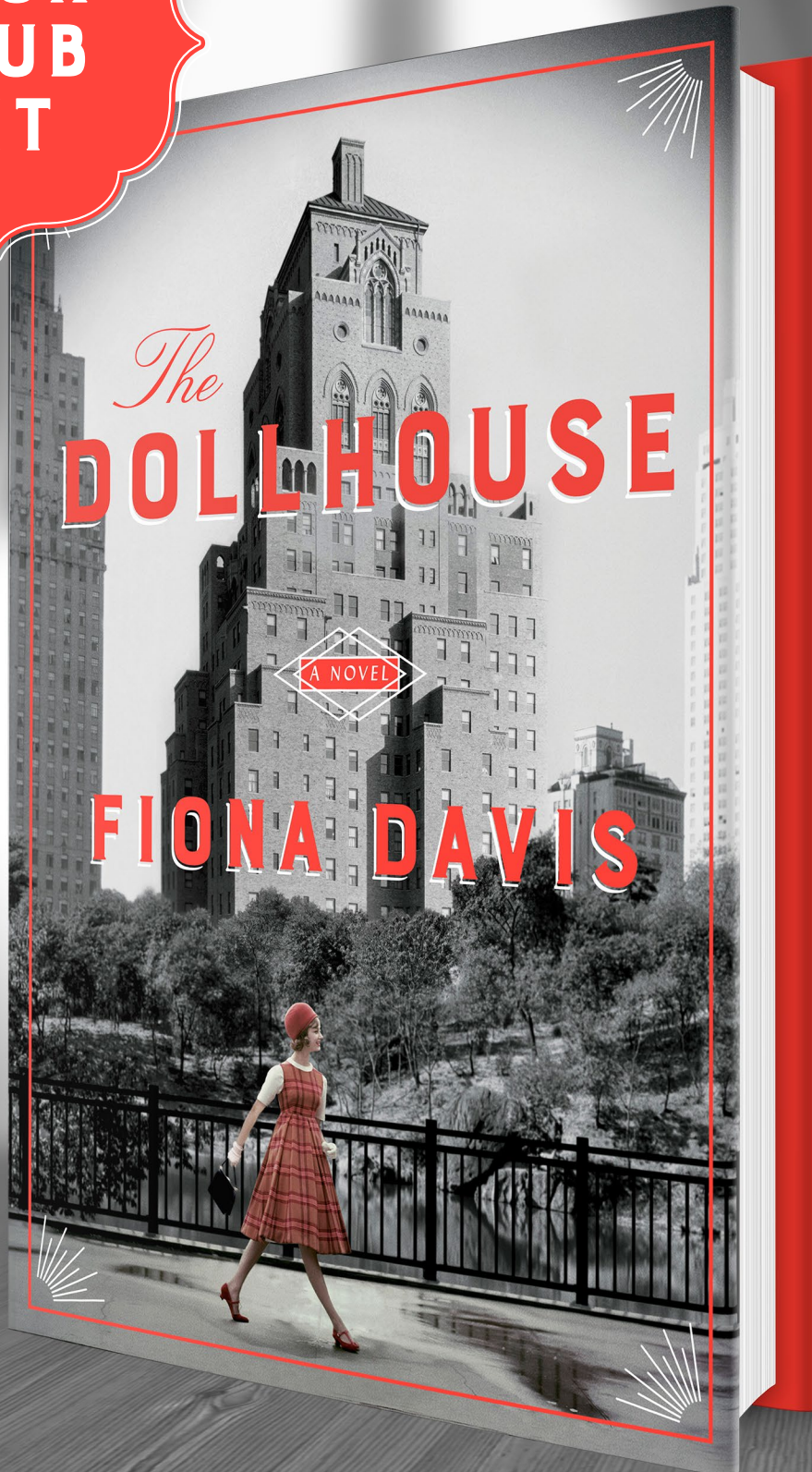


**BOOK
CLUB
KIT**





DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. When Griff returns home from work, Rose ponders if, as a man, he ever wondered “whether his face was too shiny, his hair curling unreasonably, or if his crow’s-feet had possibly deepened overnight? He entered the room as an agent of change, a man who made the news. Not as the pleasant-featured girl who simply reported it.” Do you think her comments reflect the current climate women in the workplace experience? Why or why not? How is this different from or similar to Darby’s time?
2. Why was Darby attracted to Esme as a friend? What characteristics did Esme espouse that Darby desired? Is Esme a foil for Darby? If so, then what does Stella represent? Which one of these three characters would you rather be in the story and why?
3. What did you think of young Stella’s plan to find the wealthiest, handsomest man she could? Do you think it was a mark of codependence or independence? Why or why not? Did your impression of Stella change from the 1950s to 2016? If so, how and why?
4. What did you think about how *The Dollhouse* portrays the darker, seedy underbelly of the New York City jazz scene in the 1950s? Does it still retain its glamour? Why or why not?
5. Why do you think Esme kissed Darby? Was it a sexual kiss? What did it mean to each woman?
6. Do you think Rose is justified in her skewering description of the modern startup workplace and startup CEO? Do you think it accurately reflects the modern culture of these workplaces?
7. Put yourself in Darby’s shoes. Would you have gone back home after being expelled from Gibbs? Why or why not? What did you think of Darby’s plan? How did it differ from Esme’s? What do these differences reveal about their friendship?
8. What did you think of Esme in the end? What different factors of her life played in to her desperate final actions? Is she a character to be pitied, vilified, or something much more complex? How did she change Darby, for better or for worse?
9. What did you think of Rose’s concerns about her future after her breakup with Griff? Were they justified? Was Rose fair in how she viewed the lives of the elderly Barbizon women?
10. What do you think of the older women’s lives now? Are they a symbol of feminism or a dying breed? What are the advantages and disadvantages of being one of the original Barbizon inhabitants?
11. Is Rose an accurate portrayal of the modern-day woman? Do you think Rose was too opportunistic in her desire to become a news-breaking journalist? Was she too desperate for Griff’s attention? What choices would you have made in her place and would those choices have been difficult?



Clockwise from left: The Barbizon Hotel for Women; the view of New York City from the top of the hotel; a bedroom inside the Barbizon

12. Did Rose's story mirror Darby's story? Why or why not? What differences and similarities did you notice between the two characters? How do you think each woman changed and grew over the course of the novel?
13. Several people take on different identities or present themselves to the world in a not-entirely-truthful way in *The Dollhouse*. What purpose did these identities serve and how do you think they helped or hurt the various characters in the end?

14. How do you think the presence of food and delicacies—the different textures, spices, and smells—plays into the plot and texture of the book? How does it illuminate or obscure aspects of the two time periods? What was your favorite meal?
15. What do you think about how Darby handled things with Sam after her skirmish with Esme? What would you have done? How do you think Darby's life would have been different if she'd made a different choice?

MOROCCAN LAMB BURGERS

Ground lamb mixed with Moroccan spices makes wonderful gourmet burgers. Enjoy these addictive patties with the refreshing mint and lemon yogurt sauce and sliced cucumbers. Serves 4 to 8.

2 pounds ground lamb	½ teaspoon ground coriander	1 teaspoon sea salt
1 small onion, finely diced	½ teaspoon ground cumin	½ teaspoon ground black pepper
1 small carrot, finely diced	½ teaspoon ground cinnamon	¼ cup dried currants
2 garlic cloves, minced	¼ teaspoon whole fennel seeds	1 large egg, lightly whisked
1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil	¼ teaspoon ground turmeric	3 tablespoons coconut oil

1. Place lamb in a large bowl and set aside.
2. Heat a large sauté pan over medium heat and add the olive oil. Add onions and a pinch of sea salt and sauté for 5 minutes, until soft and opaque.
3. Add carrot and sauté another 5 minutes.
4. Add garlic and sauté for another 1 to 2 minutes.
5. Sprinkle in the coriander, cumin, cinnamon, fennel seeds, and turmeric. Reduce heat so spices do not burn and stir gently until spices stain the vegetables and become very aromatic, about 2 to 3 minutes.
6. Pour the vegetable sauté over the lamb and stir to combine thoroughly. Add salt and pepper.
7. Fold in the currants and egg, making sure all ingredients are thoroughly combined.
8. Form meat into 3-inch round patties and place on a parchment-lined baking sheet.
9. Heat a 10-inch skillet on high and add 2 tablespoons of coconut oil. As oil melts, swirl pan around to coat the bottom. Pan should be hot before cooking burgers. To test, place a teaspoon-size bit of burger on the pan. If it sizzles, the pan is ready. If it sizzles and spits, the pan may be too hot and the oil will smoke, burning the burgers before they are cooked through. If that happens, remove the pan from the heat for a couple of minutes before proceeding.
10. When pan is the proper temperature, place burger patties 2 inches apart and cook for 2 to 3 minutes on each side or until burger sears and releases easily from the pan with a spatula. Flip burger and cook other side. When internal temperature of lamb burgers is 155°F transfer to a serving platter or plate. Repeat until all burgers are cooked.

Spices appear throughout *The Dollhouse*, adding texture, layers, and (no pun intended) flavor to the plot. Here's an chance to experiment with them in your own kitchen.

MINTY LEMON YOGURT SAUCE

A freshening sauce for any heady, savory meal. Perfect on lamb burgers. Yields 2 cups.

1 pint Greek-style plain whole-milk yogurt • ½ lemon, zest and juice

½ cup fresh mint leaves, torn into small pieces • Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

Mix all ingredients together in a medium-size bowl; cover and refrigerate until ready to use.



1. BETHESDA FOUNTAIN, CENTRAL PARK



2. TENDER BUTTONS

The inspiration for the button shop in the book

3. BARBIZON 63

The former Barbizon Hotel for Women has become an upscale condo



4. AMERICAN ACADEMY OF DRAMATIC ARTS

Once located at Carnegie Hall; it has since moved downtown



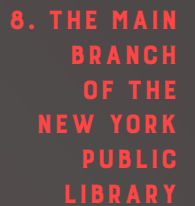
5. GRAND CENTRAL STATION

6. LA BOÎTE

Biscuits & spice store owned by Lior Lev Sercarz; the inspiration for Sam's passion in *The Dollhouse*

7. CAFE BRITTANY

No longer in existence



8. THE MAIN BRANCH OF THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

9. HECTOR'S CAFETERIA

A popular lunch spot in the '50s

10. THE KATHARINE GIBBS SCHOOL

After moving near Bryant Park, the school closed in 2009

11. SMALLSLIVE JAZZ CLUB

Venue that inspired the Flatted Fifth



12. WASHINGTON SQUARE PARK

The Dollhouse tour of
NEW YORK CITY