

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

8. Dilly Knox, Alan Turing, Margaret Rock, Valerie Glassborrow-- Bletchley Park was stocked with many eccentric and interesting real-life figures from history. Which was your favorite and why?

9. Beth makes the decision not to warn Mab and Osla about the coming air raid on Coventry. Was she right to uphold her oath, or should she have found a way to warn her friends? Could you have forgiven her if you experienced what Mab and Osla did?

10. The traitor argues that giving information to the Russians was an act of patriotism, not treachery, because the Russians were Britain's allies during World War II, the prime minister wasn't sharing enough information with them, and passing intelligence saved Allied lives and ultimately helped defeat Hitler. Do you agree or disagree?

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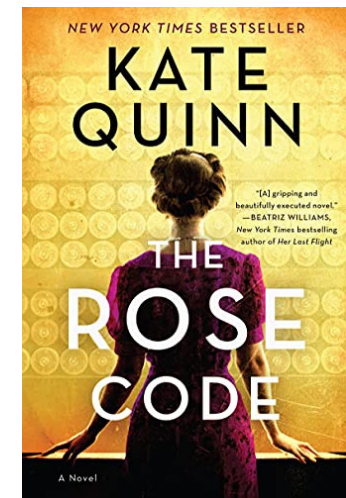
11. In the final confrontation, the Mad Hatters are able to unmask the traitor and turn them over to MI-5 for justice. Were you satisfied with their fate, or did you hop for something different?

12. The codebreaking process had many stages, from cryptanalysis (Beth's job), to machine decoding (Mab's job), to translation (Osla's job), not to mention registration, filing, and analysis. Do you think you could have been a codebreaker? What job do you think you would have been given, if recruited to Bletchley Park?



WEST BABYLON LITERARY CLUB

THE ROSE CODE



BY KATE QUINN

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SUMMARY

Joining the elite Bletchley Park codebreaking team during World War II, three women from very different walks of life uncover a spy's dangerous agenda years later against the backdrop of the royal wedding of Elizabeth and Philip.

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

Kate Quinn is the New York Times bestselling author of *The Huntress*, *The Alice Network*, the *Empress of Rome* Saga, and the *Borgia Chronicles*. All have been translated into multiple languages. She and her husband live in San Diego with three rescue dogs.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Did you come to *The Rose Code* with any preconceptions about the Bletchley Park codebreakers? Or were their achievements and history completely new to you?

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2. Very little physical danger threatens Bletchley Park throughout the war, but the strain of secrecy imposes a different kind of pressure on its workers. Discuss the impact of lying to friends and loved ones about work, keeping quiet when being taunted about the lack of wartime contribution, and being unable to seek outside help for the stresses of codebreaking. How do you think you would function under such pressure? Do you think you could keep such a secret, not just during the war but for the rest of your life?

3. Fun-loving Osla struggles continually to do something important with her life and skills, but is dismissed over and over again as just a silly girl. How have such stereotypes changed for modern women? How have they remained the same?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

4. Self-made Mab sees a gentlemanly husband as her ticket out of East End poverty--not just for herself, but for Lucy. How do her goals shift over time, and why?

5. Shy Beth flowers from a bullied spinster to a star cryptanalyst. How did your opinion of her change throughout the book?

6. Books and literary discussions provide a welcome distraction for Mab, Osla, Beth, and the rest of the Mad Hatters throughout the war. How do book clubs and a love for reading remain important in troubled times?

7. Osla's romance with Prince Philip is doomed to failure, given his ultimate fate as consort to the future Queen Elizabeth II. Did you root for them anyway? What about the other couples--Mab and Francis, Beth and Harry?