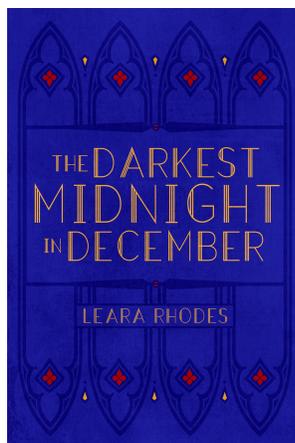


Book Club Discussion Guide for *The Darkest Midnight in December* by Leara Rhodes
www.leararhodes.com

The Darkest Midnight in December is a novel about how an Irish woman leaves family and friends in New York to seek an accounting career in Savannah, Georgia in 1906 when women were not known to have careers. Her sought-after independence leads her to live in a boarding house with women who are first generation Americans of Irish parents and who are studying to be nurses in a special program started by the Sisters of Mercy at St. Joseph Hospital. The lessons she learns includes why the shipping firm hired her, and how a career with marriage can be problematic. Her challenges increase when she learns she will be losing her job, her room and board, and has family who depend on her.

Irish heritage for readers of *The Darkest Midnight in December* can be discussed through the following questions:

1. The Kilmore Christmas carol begins the story. Why is it central to Sharon making her final decision?
2. How were the songs in the book used to focus on Irish heritage?
3. What was the relationship between Savannah and County Wexford?
4. How was immigrant work described in the book?
5. The Irish in Savannah formed societies. Why was Sharon interested in knowing about these?
6. The Irish language was used to link Sharon with her Irish heritage. How was it used?
7. The shipping company was an Irish firm. What did Sharon like about it being Irish and what did she not like?
8. How did Savannah show its Irish heritage in 1906?
9. Dance connected Sharon and Connor. How did Sharon remember dance?
10. Memories played a role in the book. What memories were linked to Irish heritage?



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