



OFFICIAL BOOK CLUB KIT

The Good Dead of Partridge

Discussion questions, group activities, host notes, and author information

THE QUESTION AT THE CENTER OF THE STORY

If the people who caused harm had to return and repair it, would the living forgive them?

WELCOME TO PARTRIDGE

A Note for Your Group

This guide discusses the premise and opening chapters without revealing the planned ending

Partridge looks like a familiar small town. It has a diner, a courthouse, a tired Main Street, and neighbors who know too much about one another. Then Roxanne Mercer and Jerry Voss arrive. Their first victim returns carrying a red toolbox and an urgent need to repair every home he neglected. The next dead man starts canceling foreclosures. Soon the question is no longer why the dead returned. It is whether repair changes what they deserve.

Start Here

- Genre. Darkly funny supernatural mystery.
- Setting. Partridge, Missouri, population 2,814.
- Core themes. Guilt, accountability, complicity, forgiveness, community, and repair.
- Content. Murder, domestic hardship, corruption, contaminated water, and moral conflict, presented without graphic gore in the opening chapters.

OPENING QUESTION

Would you rather live in a town where nobody stays dead, or a town where everybody knows your business?

Quick Character Guide

Character	What to Watch
Roxanne Mercer	Precise, impatient, and convinced her list makes the world better.
Jerry Voss	Charming, anxious, sentimental, and starting to question everything.
Sheriff Nadine Bell	A practical investigator facing witnesses who refuse to remain bodies.
Earl Pickett	A cruel landlord returned as Partridge's gray skinned handyman.
Mabel Ruiz	The diner owner who responds to the impossible by pouring coffee.

BOOK CLUB DISCUSSION

Ten Questions Worth Arguing About

Choose six for a 60 minute meeting, or use all ten for a longer event

1. Roxanne believes she sees people clearly enough to decide who deserves punishment. When does moral certainty become its own form of harm?
2. Jerry loves Roxanne, fears losing her, and keeps helping her. How much responsibility belongs to the person who follows?
3. Earl says dying did not change him. It made his shame impossible to ignore. Do you believe remorse was already part of him?
4. The returned grow stronger through service and weaker through selfishness. If redemption had visible consequences, would it still count as a moral choice?
5. Sheriff Bell knows who committed the murders, yet the victims cannot accuse their killers. What does justice require when the law and the harmed people point in different directions?
6. Mabel welcomes the dead before the rest of Partridge does. What makes her response brave, practical, or reckless?
7. Roxanne thinks punishment should hurt. Jerry begins to see memory and repair as punishment. Which view did the opening chapters make more persuasive?
8. Partridge starts benefiting from people who caused serious harm. Does useful work earn forgiveness, or does it only begin repayment?
9. The dead remember emotions more clearly than facts. Which emotional memory would reveal the most about Roxanne, Jerry, or you?
10. If your group created a mandatory redemption list for Partridge, what harm would you assign, what repair would you require, and who would decide when the work was complete?

BEST CLOSING QUESTION

Who changed most in your eyes during the opening chapters, the dead, Jerry, Roxanne, or the town?

MAKE IT INTERACTIVE

Three Group Activities

Built for in person, virtual, and hybrid book clubs

The Red Toolbox

Give each person a card. Write one harm a fictional Partridge resident caused on the front. On the back, assign the repair work. Read the cards aloud and vote on which repair is fair, impossible, or overdue.

Roxanne's List

Create two columns. In the first, list actions that deserve punishment. In the second, list actions that might repair the harm. Discuss where your group agrees, and where repair feels insufficient.

Mabel's Table Six

Choose one person to play Mabel. Each member arrives as a character and explains why Mabel should serve them coffee, send them away hungry, or make conversation mandatory.

Partridge Menu

- Gas station coffee, served in mismatched mugs.
- Lemon pie, suitable for the living and decorative for the dead.
- Powdered doughnuts, Jerry's preferred investigative food.
- Cinnamon gum, included as a memory prompt for later discussion.

LOW EFFORT HOST IDEA

Place a red toolbox or red box in the center of the table. Let members drop in questions as they arrive.

FOR BOOK CLUB ORGANIZERS

Why This Book Works for Groups

A clear premise, divided loyalties, and questions with no easy answers

Immediate debate

Readers quickly divide over Roxanne, Jerry, punishment, complicity, and whether useful work changes what a harmful person deserves.

Accessible entry point

The supernatural rules are simple. The moral questions grow more complicated with every return.

A memorable gathering

The diner, red toolbox, black notebook, faded Buick, and mandatory redemption theme give hosts easy food, decor, and activity ideas.

Author event potential

The story supports conversations about writing morally complicated characters, balancing humor with death, and turning a town into a character.

Group Order Invitation Copy

READY TO INVITE YOUR READERS

Bring your group to Partridge. Ask about group orders, signed bookplates, virtual author visits, and custom discussion sessions for libraries, senior communities, writing groups, and book clubs.

Suggested Group Buyers

- Public library book clubs and Friends of the Library groups.
- Independent bookstores and ticketed reading series.
- Senior living communities and lifelong learning programs.
- Mystery, horror, speculative fiction, and humor book clubs.
- Ethics, restorative justice, sociology, and creative writing groups.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

M.E. Hollis

Author of The Good Dead of Partridge



M.E. Hollis writes darkly comic mysteries about small towns, bad choices, and the stubborn possibility of redemption. She grew up in the Missouri Ozarks, where family stories often arrived in three conflicting versions and at least one person warned her not to repeat them. Before turning to fiction, Hollis worked in community newspapers and nonprofit communications. Both taught her how quickly a town's public story can separate from its private truth. She now lives outside St. Louis with a senior rescue dog, a collection of diner mugs, and enough notebooks to make any investigator nervous. *The Good Dead of Partridge* is her debut novel.

Invite M.E. Hollis

For group orders, interviews, appearances, or virtual book club visits, add the official contact details before release.

CONTACT FIELDS TO COMPLETE

Website. Email. Publication date. Retail link. Group order terms.