

# COUNTERFEIT HOPE BOOK CLUB KIT

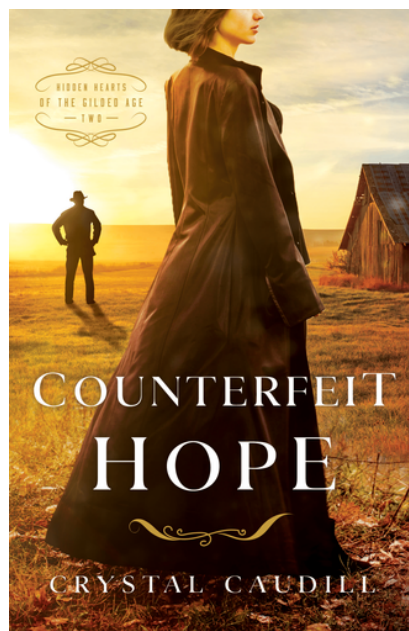
## Letter the Coordinator

Hi fellow book lover!

Thank you for choosing *Counterfeit Hope* as your Book Club's reading choice. Just so you know, I am always eager to meet other readers and it's a possibility that I may join your group either in person or via Zoom. Feel free to drop me a line at [Crystal@CrystalCaudill.com](mailto:Crystal@CrystalCaudill.com) with the subject line Book Club to see if it's possible. If you have any specific questions or needs please let me know. Again thank you for choosing my book out of so many amazing choices to read. It is my prayer that you enjoyed it. Would you do me the honor of leaving a review on your favorite retail site, Goodreads, and/or Bookbub? You wouldn't believe how important reviews are--good or bad. And if you could encourage your group members to do so as well, I'd be so grateful. Thank you again.

May all your reading be blessed!

*Crystal Caudill*



## What's Inside

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- Discussion Questions
- Game Ideas
- Not So Poisoned Berry Pie
- Behind-the-Scenes Fun Facts
- About the Author

## **Discussion Questions - Page 1**

1. Consider Lu, Andrew, Ma Frances, Clint, Priscill, and Cyrus and each of their connections to the theme of “counterfeit hope.” Where did you see these characters putting their hope? How did putting their hope in places other than Christ affect their decisions and actions? How did putting their hope in these things fail them?
2. How did you see Lu grow and change over the course of the story? What about Andrew?
3. Andrew had grown up in a criminal family until his arresting officer took him in and gave him a new life. Andrew occasionally hinted that those first years were challenging for him and the Darlingtons. What challenges do you think he and the Darlingtons faced? How do you think they overcame them?
4. When Andrew discovered his former family was at the heart of the criminal dealings in Landkreis, his two lives collided. What are some of the complex emotions you saw Andrew face in regard to his former family? How do you think you would have felt in his situation? Could you have found forgiveness for each Thorne?
5. Andrew and Lu were forced into a marriage that neither of them wanted. In what ways did God use the situation for their good and His glory? How have you seen God work hard things for good in your own life or in the lives of those around you?

## Discussion Questions - Page 2

6. Do you believe Pastor Newcomb should have filed the marriage paperwork having known the circumstances surrounding Andrew and Lu's marriage? Why or why not?
7. In chapter 16, when Andrew confronted Lu about her stealing and her interactions with men, Lu said she didn't have a choice. Andrew countered by saying she always has a choice. Do you think this is true? Did Lu always have a choice? Why or why not?
8. One of the emotions Andrew struggled with after his family was arrested was guilt for not having shared his faith and not giving his family an opportunity to find forgiveness and hope through Jesus Christ. Do you feel it was his responsibility to do so? If he had shared his faith with the Thornes, how do you think they would have responded?
9. Widow Zachary refused to offer forgiveness for Lu's part in Sheriff Zachary's death. How did that refusal affect Widow Zachary and her daughter? Would you have been able to forgive Lu if you had been in Widow Zachary's position?
10. Andrew claimed Romans 8:24-25 as the verse for their family and explained to Oscar, "Hope is trusting God's promise for our future. We can't see it yet, but because we know Him, we can look forward to heaven, no matter the struggles we face here." How does having that hope in your life affect how you respond to difficulties in life?

## Literary Grab Bag

Fill a large shopping bag or box with objects that could represent characters, events, or settings from *Counterfeit Hope*. Go around and allow members to pull out an object and guess what or who it represents.

Some ideas are: a stuffed dog, dress up handcuffs, a star, a pie pan, something red and white striped like a circus tent, a Bible, an oatmeal packet, a medicine bottle, coins, a bean, or anything else your mind can come up with.

If you want to get your members involved, have them bring an item in a lunch bag and have everyone put their bag in the center. Afterwards, you could share as a group other ideas that could have worked.

## Literary Snowballs

Divide your group into two teams on either side of the room. Hand everyone a piece of paper on which to write a trivia question from the book. An example would be "What was the name of Oscar's puppy?"

Once the questions are written down, crumple the sheets into "snowballs", and at a signal, throw them across the room to the other team. The team who answers the most questions correctly wins.

Scoring:


2 points - to a team for each correct answer

1 point - to the other team for each incorrect answer

## Not So Poisoned Berry Pie

Retrieved from *The New Practical Housekeeping*,  
Home Publishing Company 1890

*Berry-pie.*—Allow two heaping tablespoons sugar and teaspoon corn-starch, or tablespoon flour for each pie, mix thoroughly together, and after lining pie-pan with a good paste, sprinkle one tablespoon of the mixture evenly over bottom, put berries in smoothly, sprinkle over remainder of sugar mixture, and if wanted very rich, bits of butter also, cover with upper crust and bake in moderate oven. A little more sugar or flour is needed for some kinds of berries than others, according to their tartness or juciness. Cranberries will require double the above quantities, and are nice baked with a *Diamond Top* made as follows:



### Crystal's Translation:

#### Ingredients:

- Two heaping tablespoons of sugar
- a teaspoon of cornstarch or a Tablespoon of flour
- upper and bottom pie crust of your choosing
- couple pints of the berries of your choosing
- 1/4 cup cold butter sliced into pats

#### Directions:

1. Line pie pan with crust and preheat oven to 425°F
2. Mix sugar and cornstarch together and sprinkle ONE Tablespoon of the mixture over the bottom crust layer
3. Place fresh berries smoothly in the pie pan.
4. Sprinkle the remainder of the sugar mixture over the berries with a couple of pats of butter laid on top.
- 5., Cover with a top crust and cook for 15 minutes at 425°F. Drop to 350°F and cook for another 30 minutes. (I recommend putting aluminum foil over the top of the crust to prevent overcooking.)
6. Allow the pie to cool completely before eating.

## **Behind-the-Scenes Fun Facts - Page 1**

- Landkreis is a made-up town inspired by the real Stendal, Indiana. Back in the day, Stendal was where many of the family-owned coal miners went to do business. It was a bustling small town, but now is a sleepy little town with a mostly abandoned "downtown."
- The inspiration came from a real case where a gang of counterfeiters had taken over the hills of Pike, Dubois, Warrick, and Crawford counties in Indiana. It took months for the Secret Service and U.S. Marshals to infiltrate and arrest the dangerous gang. One of the Secret Service operatives sold a home remedy to locals that actually healed some minor ailments as his way to gain the trust of the counterfeiters and community.
- The inspiration for Walt being poisoned by poison berry pie came from a giant weed growing in Crystal's backyard with beautiful, plump berries. After researching the plant, she was determined to use it in a story one day.
- Not long after writing the scene where Oscar suffered poisoning from the berries, Crystal was caring for her mother-in-law after a knee replacement. When her mother-in-law asked for a fried egg sandwich, Crystal decided to use one of the eggs that had come from a family member's farm . . . and ended up giving her food poisoning. She didn't know how it happened until she went to make brownies and tasted the batter. They joked that Crystal had intentionally poisoned her for research purposes, but Crystal swears she did not. The jury's still out on whether or not the family really believes her.

## **Behind-the-Scenes Fun Facts - Page 2**

- The Booneville jail really did serve as the Sheriff's residence at the time. In fact, the building still stands and there was a push for a while to have it protected and reopened for tours. The front portion of the house was the residence, and the entrance to the prisoner cells was through the kitchen. The Sheriff and his family were responsible for caring for the prisoners.
- The City of Kansas (now Kansas City) Chief of Police, Thomas M. Speers was a real man who served an unheard-of 21-year term as Chief after having already spent four years elected as Town Marshall. Speers created a "rogues gallery" system of tracking known criminals and preventing them from committing crimes in his town. He knew the face, name, and record of every miscreant listed and they knew him, too, causing them to usually avoid Kansas City at all cost. If their business demanded their presence in the city, they would inform the Chief, be taken in front of the officers at roll call and told if any crimes of their renown were committed, they would be the first one held accountable. In addition to this, Chief Speers often scolded, but did not press charges, against younger promising citizens caught running afoul of the law. It was this that led to the inspiration of Andrew Darlington's being given a second chance.

## About Crystal Caudill



Crystal Caudill is the author of "dangerously good historical romance," with her work garnering awards from Romance Writers of America and ACFW. She is a stay-at-home mom and caregiver, and when she isn't writing, Crystal can be found playing board games with her family, drinking hot tea, or reading other great books at her home outside Cincinnati, Ohio. Find out more at [crystalcaudill.com](http://crystalcaudill.com).

### Some Quick Favorites:

**Movie:** *North and South* (BBC - John Thornton, all the way!)

**TV Show:** *Miss Scarlet and the Duke*

**Authors:** Michelle Griep, Joanna Davidson Politano, Tara Johnson, Erica Vetsch, Grace Hitchcock, and tons more

**Food & Drink:** Hot Tea, ice-cold Ale-8-Ones, and Dark Chocolate

**Hobbies:** Board games with the family, traveling, High Tea

### Connect with Crystal

**Website:** <https://crystalcaudill.com/>

**Newsletter:** <https://bitly.com/CaudillNews>

### Annual Reading Challenge:

<https://crystalcaudill.com/blog/unlockingthepast/>

### Facebook Group:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/crystalcaudillsreadingfriends/>

**Goodreads:** <https://www.goodreads.com/crystalcaudillauthor>

**BookBub:** <https://www.bookbub.com/authors/crystal-caudill>