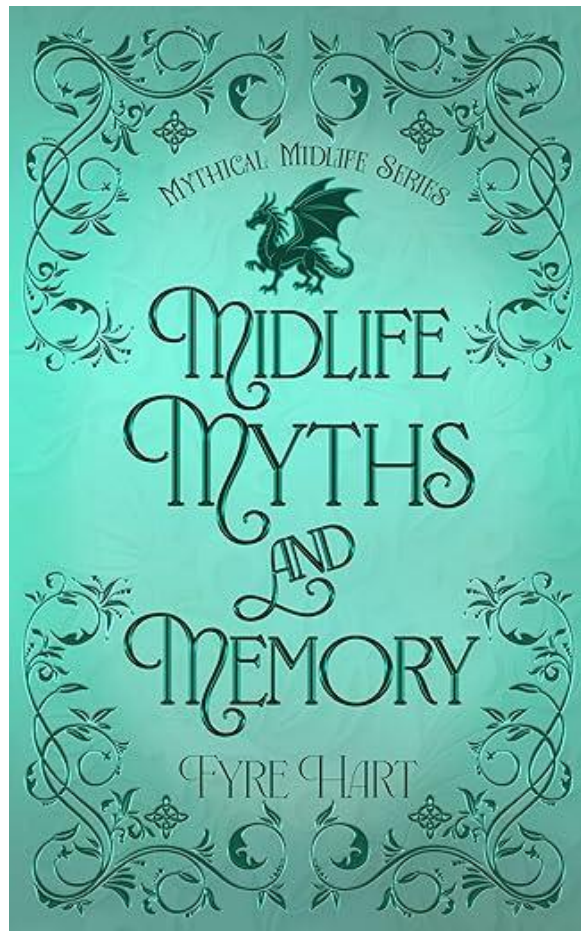


Book Club Packet for

Midlife, Myths & Memory

by Fyre Hart



About the Story

When Neris McIntyre loses her job and relationship in one crushing week, she travels to Scotland to scatter her mother's ashes—only to discover that her mother's stories about a hidden island of mythical beings were true. On Aileandra Isle, she faces three ancient trials that test not just her courage, but her understanding of grief, identity, and belonging. Along the way, she meets allies like Winnie and Eirian—and enemies like Ruarc—while uncovering the truth of her magical lineage.

Themes to Explore

- **Midlife Transformation** – How does Neris's journey mirror the emotional and spiritual reinvention that often comes in midlife?
- **Grief & Legacy** – In what ways do her mother's secrets shape Neris's understanding of love, loss, and self?
- **Self-Trust & Intuition** – How does Neris learn to trust her instincts in a world where logic and magic intertwine?
- **Power & Identity** – How does discovering her magic change the way she sees herself—and her past?
- **Feminine Wisdom** – How do characters like Winnie and Queen Serela represent different kinds of wisdom and strength?

Blessing of the Elements

(Traditional Gaelic Blessing)

Deep peace of the running wave to you.

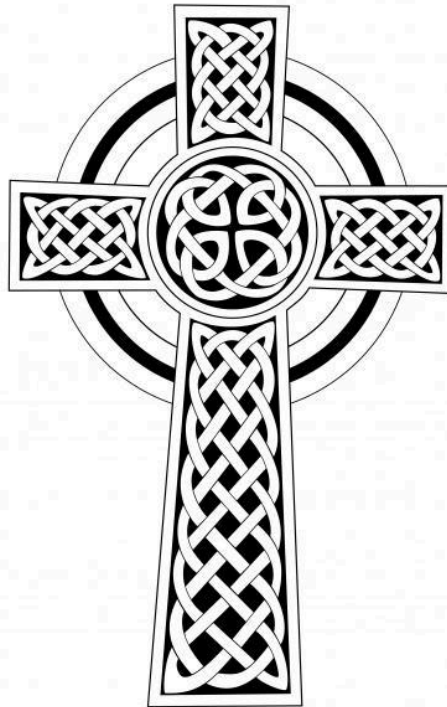
Deep peace of the flowing air to you.

Deep peace of the quiet earth to you.

Deep peace of the shining stars to you.

Deep peace of the Son of Peace to you.

This blessing is sometimes attributed to the Carmina Gadelica, collected by Alexander Carmichael in the 19th century in the Scottish Highlands.



Discussion Questions

Loss & Identity

1. In Chapter 1, Neris describes losing her job as more painful than losing her boyfriend. Why do you think that is? What did her work represent in her identity?
2. Neris says, "*If she didn't have that, who was she?*" How much of our identity is tied to our roles? Have you ever experienced a moment where you had to redefine yourself?
3. How does grief function in this book? Is it something to avoid, survive, transform through, or something else?
4. Neris initially schedules time to grieve "after" she handles practical matters. Is that realistic? Relatable?

Midlife & Reinvention

5. Tavish (a.k.a. Professor Eejit) tells Neris it's "a bit late in life to reinvent yourself." How does that statement reflect cultural messaging about women over 40?
6. What fears about midlife show up in Neris? Which of them feel familiar?
7. At what point in the story does Neris begin to shift from reacting to choosing?

Intuition vs. Intellect

8. Neris is an archivist — logical, organized, spreadsheet-driven. Yet her journey requires intuition. Why is this internal conflict important?
9. The mirror, ring, cloak, and heartstone seem to "choose" her. Do you believe in objects holding memory or meaning?
10. Fable often guides Neris before Neris trusts herself. What might Fable represent symbolically?

Myth & Legacy

11. How does the prophecy of the Six shape the larger world of the story?
12. The island's seal is weakening. What might the "Darkness" symbolize on a personal level? On a collective level?
13. Why do you think Neris's mother waited so long to tell her the truth?
14. The line "You were born of both" carries weight. What do you think it means — practically and metaphorically?

Belonging & Power

15. When Neris first arrives in Braeloch, she feels like she's standing at a threshold. What thresholds have you stood at in your life?

16. Aileandra Isle is hidden — visible only when meant to be seen. What does that say about timing and readiness?
17. How does the story reframe aging as awakening rather than decline?
18. What does Neris gain by the end of the book that she didn't have at the beginning — emotionally, spiritually, or magically?

Character Deep Dive

Neris

- What are her greatest strengths?
- What are her blind spots?
- When do you see her courage most clearly?

Fable

- Protector?
- Familiar?
- Intuition embodied?
- Something more?

Mairen (her mother)

- Was she protecting Neris?
- Was she afraid?
- Was she waiting for the right moment?

Character Guide

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Neris MacIntyre

Role: Reluctant Heir | Archivist | Awakening Ailean

Neris begins the story as a forty-year-old archivist who has just lost her job and her partner. Logical, organized, and deeply identity-driven, she believes she understands the world — until grief cracks it open.

Ka-Hul

Role: Dragon Shifter | Council Member - Fire

Ka-Hul is controlled strength. Ancient. Guarded. Loyal to the island above all else.

Oressa

Role: Enchantress | Council Member - Water

Oressa is intuitive and emotionally perceptive. She understands currents — both literal and relational.

Thorne

Role: Dvergr | Guardian of History | Council Member - Earth

Steady. Rooted. Keeper of knowledge.

Ruarc

Role: Kelpie | Council Member - Shadow

Ruarc is ambition wrapped in charm. He believes power should be decisive — and controlled.

Queen Serela

Role: Queen of Aileandra Isle | Original Ailean

Serela embodies tradition and restraint.

Eirian

Role: Unicorn Shifter | Council Member - Sky | Loyal Ally

Eirian is watchful and direct.

Mairen (Neris's Mother)

Role: Neris's Mother | Keeper of Secrets | Thought to be Serela's Daughter

Though gone at the start of the story, Mairen shapes everything.

The Devourer/Darkness

Role: Ancient Bound Darkness or Evil

The Devourer is less a creature and more a force — ancient, sealed beneath the island.

The Original Six Aileans

The founders who raised the island and bound the Darkness.

Each represented:

- Sky - Maelis
- Fire - Aithne
- Earth - Maura
- Water - Cait
- Shadow - Iomhar
- Light - Queen Serela