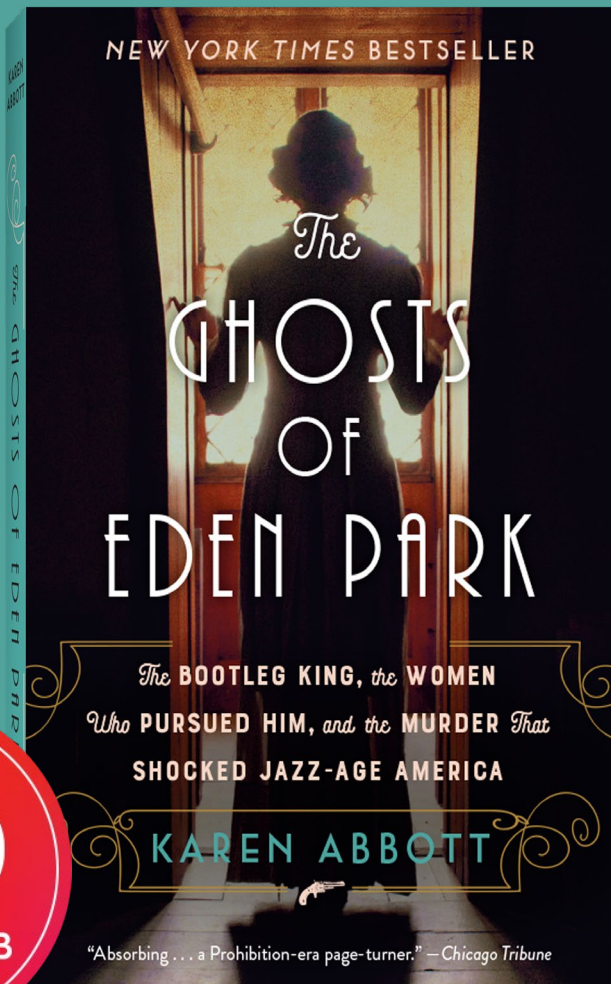


# BOOK CLUB KIT

## *The* GHOSTS OF EDEN PARK

KAREN ABBOTT



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LETTER FROM THE AUTHOR

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JAZZ AGE PLAYLIST

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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COCKTAIL RECIPES

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FUN FACTS

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## DEAR READER,

Thank you so much for choosing *The Ghosts of Eden Park* for your book club! I hope you all enjoyed reading the saga of George Remus as much as I enjoyed writing it. If you would like me to join your book club via Skype, please email me ([abbottauthor@gmail.com](mailto:abbottauthor@gmail.com)) with “book club” in the subject line. I’d be happy to join—especially if Bessie Smith is playing and Sidecars are on the menu.

Thank you again for reading—and for sharing the magic of books!

ABBOTT



# JAZZ AGE JAMS

A PROHIBITION-  
THEMED PLAYLIST



THE PROHIBITION ERA  
BIRTHED COUNTLESS TUNES THAT  
WOULD INFLUENCE  
MUSICAL HISTORY. HERE  
ARE TEN OF THE MOST  
ICONIC—THE PERFECT  
PLAYLIST FOR YOUR ROARIN’  
20s-THEMED PARTY.

- 
1. AIN'T MISBEHAVIN' - FATS WALLER
  2. DARK WAS THE NIGHT - BLIND WILLIE JOHNSON
  3. DOWN HEARTED BLUES - BESSIE SMITH
  4. IN THE JAILHOUSE NOW - JIMMIE RODGERS
  5. MAKIN' WHOOPEE! - BING CROSBY
  6. MY MAN - FANNY BRICE
  7. SWANEE - AL JOHNSON
  8. WEST END BLUES - LOUIS ARMSTRONG
  9. RHAPSODY IN BLUE - PAUL WHITEMAN
  10. T FOR TEXAS (BLUE YODEL #1) - JIMMIE RODGERS
- 

LISTEN ON SPOTIFY



# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 Before reading *The Ghosts of Eden Park*, how much did you know about George Remus, Mabel Walker Willebrandt, and the Prohibition Era? Which historical aspects of the book surprised you the most? Did you learn new things about this period in history?
- 2 You meet two very different female characters in the book: Imogene Remus and Mabel Walker Willebrandt. Compare and contrast these two characters. With whom did you most identify and why? What did you like or dislike about them? How did they each adhere to—and rebel against—circumscribed gender roles?
- 3 George and Imogene's relationship deteriorates after he's sent to prison. Taking into consideration everything you've learned about Imogene, do you believe their love was genuine? Why or why not? Were you surprised by their fates at the end?
- 4 What role does the Jazz Age setting play? Do you think these events could have occurred in any other era?
- 5 What were your initial impressions of George Remus? Did your opinions shift throughout the story?
- 6 *The Ghosts of Eden Park* uses excerpts of trial testimony to foreshadow and create suspense. Did you know which character would commit murder? Did your assumptions change at all as you read?
- 7 As you read about the court proceedings, what reactions did you have to the trial-by-jury process? What are the most significant factors in getting a fair trial, or an intelligent investigation? Have you served on a jury, or been a defendant before a jury? If so, how did your experience compare to the one described here? How would you have voted had you been on that jury?
- 8 Beneath George Remus's sensational story lie fundamental and timeless questions: What value does a life have? Is murder ever defensible? In seeking facts and certainty, how do we grapple with the often selective nature of truth?
- 9 In a way, George Remus's story could be seen as a cautionary tale about conspicuous consumption, excess, and greed. What does our seemingly boundless desire for more say about human nature? Do you believe we are always destined to wish for things we can't have?
- 10 One of the themes in the book is the infinite human capacity to deceive—both others and ourselves. How did each main character—George and Imogene Remus, Willebrandt, and Dodge—practice deception?
- 11 Is there a particular scene in *The Ghosts of Eden Park* that will stay with you? What will you remember most about this book? Do you plan to read more fiction or nonfiction about the Jazz Age?



# DRINK LIKE IT'S THE 1920'S!

## FIVE PROHIBITION-ERA COCKTAILS



THE 1920S WERE NOTORIOUS FOR CORRUPTION AND GRAFT, BUT IT WAS ALSO A TIME TO LET LOOSE IN NIGHTCLUBS AND SPEAKEASIES—AND ALCOHOL WAS A HUGE PART OF THAT REVELRY. HERE ARE A FEW OF OUR PROHIBITION-INSPIRED HAPPY HOUR FAVORITES! (OF COURSE, THERE'S ALWAYS JUST WHISKEY ON THE ROCKS.)

### SEELBACH

COURTESY OF ADAM SEGER, SEELBACH BAR, LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

- 1 oz bourbon
  - ¼ oz Cointreau
  - 7 dashes Angostura bitters
  - 7 dashes Peychaud's bitters
  - Champagne or a dry sparkling wine
  - Orange peel, for garnish
1. Add bourbon, Cointreau, and bitters to a mixing glass.
  2. Add ice and stir until chilled.
  3. Strain into a chilled flute or coupe.
  4. Top with Champagne or sparkling wine.
  5. Garnish with an orange peel.

### OLD FASHIONED

- 1 sugar cube or barspoon simple syrup
  - 2 to 3 dashes Angostura bitters
  - Splash of warm water (if using sugar cube)
  - 2 oz rye or bourbon
  - Orange peel, for garnish
1. In a double rocks glass, muddle sugar cube with bitters and a small splash of warm water until dissolved.
  2. If using simple syrup, swirl with bitters in a double rocks glass.
  3. Add whiskey and ice, preferably an over-size cube, and stir well.
  4. Garnish with an orange peel.

# DRINK LIKE IT'S THE 1920'S!

## FIVE PROHIBITION-ERA COCKTAILS



### LAST WORD

- $\frac{3}{4}$  oz gin
  - $\frac{3}{4}$  oz green Chartreuse
  - $\frac{3}{4}$  oz lime juice
  - $\frac{3}{4}$  oz maraschino liqueur
  - Brandied cherry, for garnish
1. Add all of the ingredients except for the brandied cherry to a cocktail shaker.
  2. Add ice and shake until chilled.
  3. Strain into a chilled coupe or cocktail glass.
  4. Garnish with a brandied cherry.

### CORPSE REVIVER #2

- 1 dash absinthe
  - 1 oz gin
  - 1 oz Cointreau
  - 1 oz Lillet or Cocchi Americano
  - 1 oz lemon juice
1. In a chilled coupe or cocktail glass, add absinthe. Swirl around to coat and discard the excess.
  2. Add all of the remaining ingredients to a cocktail shaker.
  3. Add ice and shake until chilled.
  4. Strain into the prepared coupe or cocktail glass.

### BEE'S KNEES

- 2 oz gin
  - $\frac{3}{4}$  oz lemon juice
  - $\frac{3}{4}$  oz honey syrup\*
  - Lemon peel or lemon wheel, for garnish
1. Add gin, lemon juice, and honey syrup to a cocktail shaker.
  2. Add ice and shake until chilled.
  3. Strain into a chilled coupe or cocktail glass.
  4. Garnish with a lemon peel or lemon wheel.

\* To make honey syrup, combine  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup hot water and  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup honey in a heat-proof jar or bowl and shake or stir to combine. Let cool before using. Store in the refrigerator for up to one month.

# CINCINNATI FUN FACTS

- Residents of Cincinnati are called Cincinnatians.
- Cincinnati's original name was Losantiville after the Licking River. The name Losantiville means "opposite of the mouth of the river."
- The Cincinnati and Covington Suspension Bridge (where Remus once battled whiskey pirates) measures 1,057 feet. When it opened in 1866, it was the longest suspension bridge in the world.
- It is the first major American city founded after the American Revolution.
- Over-the-Rhine, a neighborhood just to the north of Downtown Cincinnati, boasts one of the world's largest collections of Italianate architecture.
- Five U.S. presidents called Cincinnati home: William Howard Taft, Rutherford B. Hayes, Ulysses S. Grant, William Henry Harrison, and Benjamin Harrison. During the Civil War, then-General Grant's favorite horse was named "Cincinnati."
- In his poem "Catawba Wine," Henry Wadsworth Longfellow wrote that the city was "the Queen of the West," which popularized Cincinnati's moniker: "The Queen City."
- Cincinnati was also once known as "Porkopolis" after the city's robust meatpacking industry. In her 1832 book *Domestic Manners of the Americans*, English writer Frances "Fanny" Trollope described her experience in the city: "If I determined upon a walk up Main Street, the chances were five hundred to one against my chances of reaching the shady side without brushing up against a snout fresh dripping from the kennel."
- Oktoberfest-Zinzinnati, which attracts 500,000 visitors per year, is the largest Oktoberfest celebration in the country and the second largest in the world (after Munich's). As part of the Oktoberfest revelry, it's tradition for Cincinnatians to gather and perform the largest "chicken dance" in the world.
- Cincinnati is sometimes thought of as the first purely American city.
- The Cincinnati Reds were the first professional baseball team.
- Kroger, the nation's largest traditional grocer, had its start in Cincinnati. German immigrant Barney Kroger opened his first store at 66 Pearl Street in 1883.
- Cincinnati has been called the "Chili Capital of America" (and the world) because it has more chili restaurants per capita than any other city in the nation or world.





# JAZZ AGE FUN FACTS

- The Jazz Age was the period of time between the end of World War I and the Great Depression.
- Cleveland was the fifth largest city in the country.
- There were only 48 states during the Jazz Age.
- On August 18, 1920, the 19th Amendment was ratified, prohibiting any U.S. citizen from being denied the right to vote based on sex.
- On March 4, 1921, Congress approved the burial of an unidentified American soldier from World War I in the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery.
- Lila Bell and DeWitt Wallace began publishing *Reader's Digest* in 1922.
- F. Scott Fitzgerald published *The Great Gatsby* in 1925.
- The first issue of *The New Yorker* was published on February 21, 1925.
- A. A. Milne published his first collection of stories about the character Winnie-the-Pooh in 1926.
- Charles Lindbergh landed the "Spirit of St. Louis" in Paris on May 21, 1927, successfully completing the first trans-Atlantic flight.
- Audiences watched the first motion picture with sound, *The Jazz Singer*, in 1927.
- Ford Motor Company celebrated as the 15 millionth Model T car rolled off its assembly line on May 26, 1927.
- October 29, 1929, also known as Black Tuesday, ushered in the Great Depression with the Stock Market Crash.





