

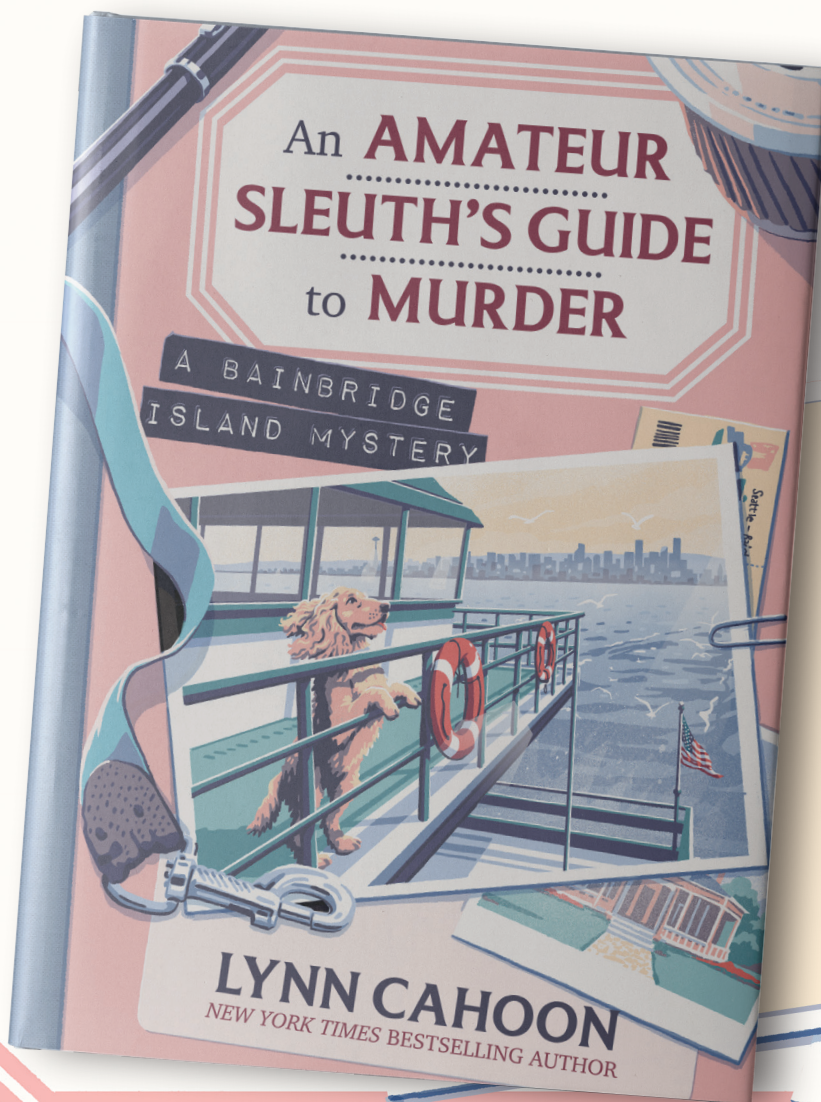
BOOK CLUB KIT

for

An **AMATEUR**
.....
SLEUTH'S GUIDE
.....
to **MURDER**

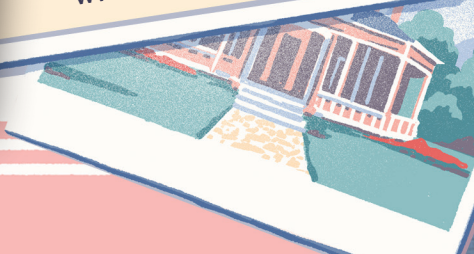
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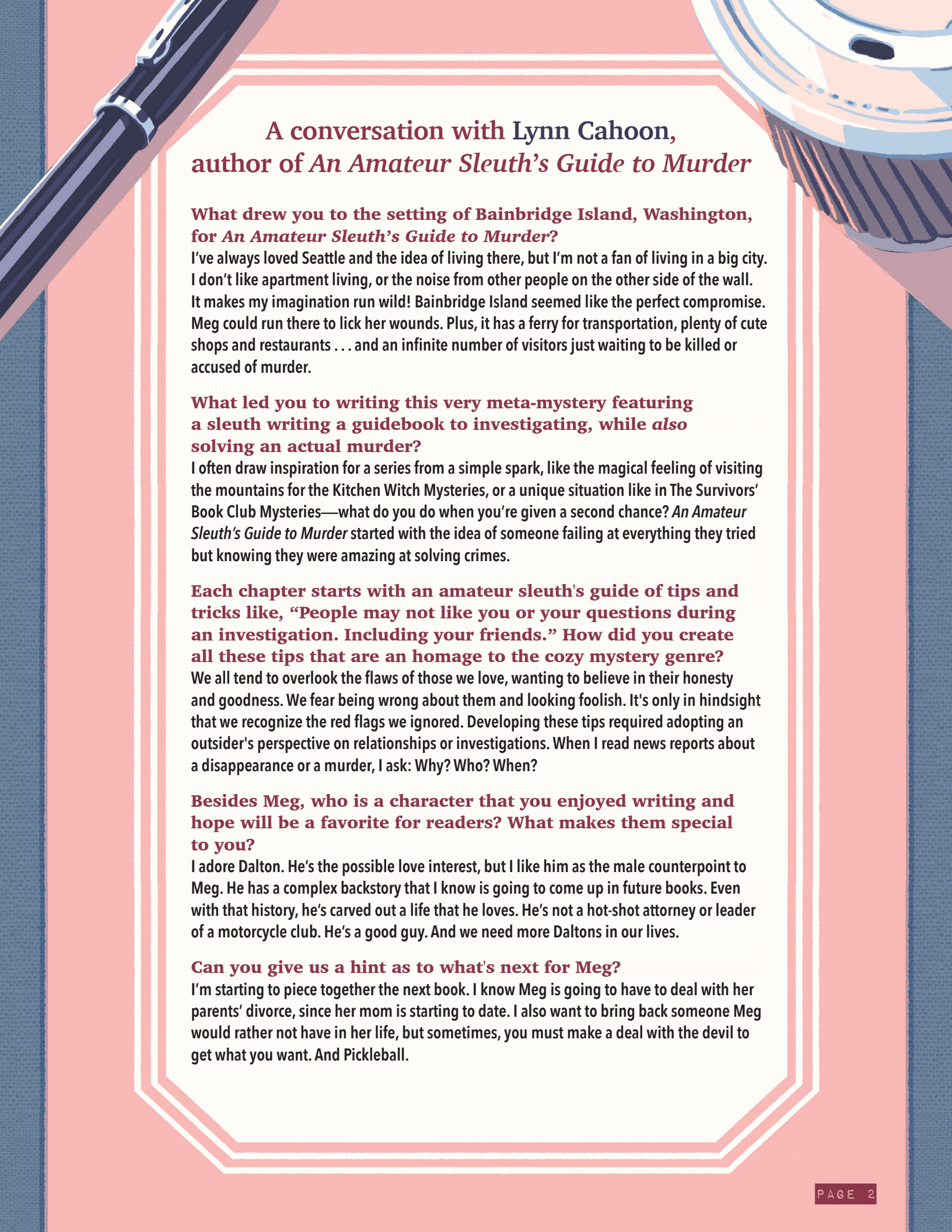
LYNN CAHOON



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A conversation with Lynn Cahoon, author of *An Amateur Sleuth's Guide to Murder*

What drew you to the setting of Bainbridge Island, Washington, for *An Amateur Sleuth's Guide to Murder*?

I've always loved Seattle and the idea of living there, but I'm not a fan of living in a big city. I don't like apartment living, or the noise from other people on the other side of the wall. It makes my imagination run wild! Bainbridge Island seemed like the perfect compromise. Meg could run there to lick her wounds. Plus, it has a ferry for transportation, plenty of cute shops and restaurants . . . and an infinite number of visitors just waiting to be killed or accused of murder.

What led you to writing this very meta-mystery featuring a sleuth writing a guidebook to investigating, while *also* solving an actual murder?

I often draw inspiration for a series from a simple spark, like the magical feeling of visiting the mountains for the Kitchen Witch Mysteries, or a unique situation like in The Survivors' Book Club Mysteries—what do you do when you're given a second chance? *An Amateur Sleuth's Guide to Murder* started with the idea of someone failing at everything they tried but knowing they were amazing at solving crimes.

Each chapter starts with an amateur sleuth's guide of tips and tricks like, "People may not like you or your questions during an investigation. Including your friends." How did you create all these tips that are an homage to the cozy mystery genre?

We all tend to overlook the flaws of those we love, wanting to believe in their honesty and goodness. We fear being wrong about them and looking foolish. It's only in hindsight that we recognize the red flags we ignored. Developing these tips required adopting an outsider's perspective on relationships or investigations. When I read news reports about a disappearance or a murder, I ask: Why? Who? When?

Besides Meg, who is a character that you enjoyed writing and hope will be a favorite for readers? What makes them special to you?

I adore Dalton. He's the possible love interest, but I like him as the male counterpoint to Meg. He has a complex backstory that I know is going to come up in future books. Even with that history, he's carved out a life that he loves. He's not a hot-shot attorney or leader of a motorcycle club. He's a good guy. And we need more Daltons in our lives.

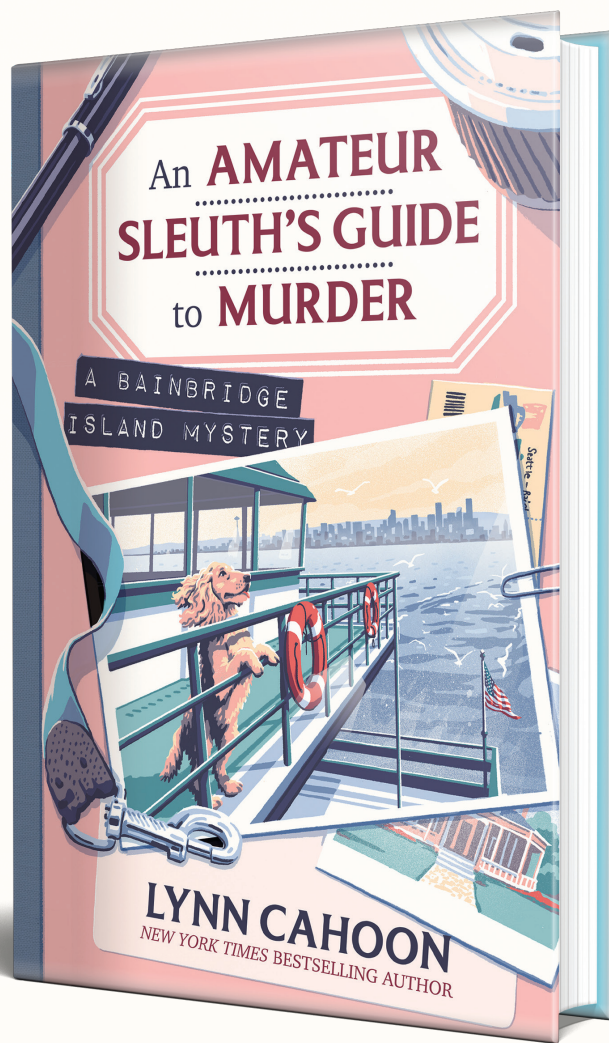
Can you give us a hint as to what's next for Meg?

I'm starting to piece together the next book. I know Meg is going to have to deal with her parents' divorce, since her mom is starting to date. I also want to bring back someone Meg would rather not have in her life, but sometimes, you must make a deal with the devil to get what you want. And Pickleball.



Book Club **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS** for *An Amateur Sleuth's Guide to Murder*

- 1 When Meg's fiancé shatters their future and her wedding dreams, she makes plans to return home while shredding her wedding dress into pieces. What would you have done in her position?
- 2 Why do you think Meg wants to write the guidebook?
- 3 Meg's constant companion in the book is Watson, her rescue cocker spaniel. Why do you think she is rarely without him?
- 4 Have you ever found yourself in a position like Meg's when she found out her best friend had been keeping secrets from her? How did you handle it? Why do you think Natasha chose to keep Meg in the dark?
- 5 A recurring theme in this book is reinventing yourself after failure. How do you think Meg's job with L. C. Aster related to that theme?
- 6 Meg's mom keeps getting involved in Meg's life by talking to Dalton and questioning Meg's feelings for Romain. But when Meg notices changes in her mom's life, she fails to question them. What do you think about their mother/daughter relationship?
- 7 Dalton came to live on the island after a challenging childhood. Now he's settled and happy. Do you see the glass as half full or half empty? Can you think of an example?
- 8 As a child, Meg envisioned her future in the bustling city of Seattle. Now, she's returning home. Have you ever had to rebuild your life after a dream didn't materialize? What lessons did you take away from that experience?
- 9 Meg left college to chase another opportunity, the tech startup. Have you ever had to choose between two options that on the surface looked equal?
- 10 Developing friendships as an adult is challenging for many adults. In the book, Meg makes several attempts to meet new people including Sunday school and the local bonfire. If one of your friends was in a new place, what would you tell them to try?



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