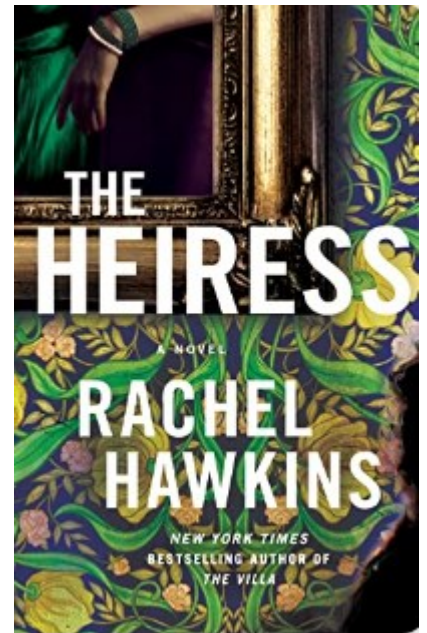


Carey Page Turner's **October 16th** Discussion

THE HEIRESS

By RACHEL HAWKINS

Characters:



- Were you immediately engaged with the book, or did it take you a while?
- What did you like best about this book? What did you like least?
- Articles and stories play a significant role in the novel making the media almost a character itself. How did these external sources contribute to the atmosphere of the story? Did they add depth to your understanding of the characters and their world?
- Each of Ruby's husbands reflects different periods in her life. How did their characters evolve over the course of the story, and how did Ruby's motivations for their eventual fates change?
- Which character did you find yourself sympathizing with the most, and why? Were there any characters you struggled to empathize with? What aspects of their personalities or actions contributed to this?
- Discuss how wealth and privilege influence the characters' decisions and relationships in the book. Do you think the portrayal of wealth is realistic, and how might the story differ if the characters were from a different socioeconomic background?
- The novel explores the concept of nature versus nurture, particularly with characters like Ruby, Dora and Cam. Did your perspective on this age-old debate shift after reading "The Heiress"? How do the characters navigate their identities in relation to their upbringing?
- If you were in Cam's position and received similar letters, how might you react? How did the letters contribute to your understanding of Ruby's character? Did it add depth for you?
- Cam worked hard to distance himself from his family, yet upon returning to Ashby House, he felt transported to his past. Can one ever fully escape their origins? How did Cam define himself in opposition to the McTavishes?

- Why do you think Ruby created memorials for each of her husbands? Do you believe they serve as a form of penance or a strategic move to portray innocence?
- Why did Ruby adopt Cam, and did her plan for him play out as she had hoped? Discuss the complexities of their mother-son relationship and the implications of adoption in the story.
- The McTavishes view the family fortune and Ashby House as a source of power, while Cam sees it as a confining trap. Explore the dynamics of their different perspectives. Does the concept of “birthright” play a role in these varying views?
- What is the significance of the baby doll with one eye closed? When Ruby and Nelle were children, Ruby fears her parents will make her trade dolls with Nelle: “If they do, I will throw this doll into the fire. I will burn it before I let Nelle have it.” (page 31) Does this early insight into Ruby’s character help you to understand her later actions? How does her will reflect this mentality? Additionally, that same doll is next to Nelle in her death bed. What do you make of this?
- How original and unique was this book?
- How did the ending of the novel make you feel? Do you believe Jules got her happy ending?

Rating: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10