

**A gripping thriller from WATERSTONES CHILDREN'S BOOK PRIZE-SHORTLISTED Tracy Darnton, author of THE RULES and THE TRUTH ABOUT LIES.**



Shared family holidays at Creek House have been the backdrop to Millie's summers since forever. Hanging out with the other kids – Matt, Charlie, Jem and her best friend Kat – has made it her favourite time of the year.

But this holiday things are different – the childhood games that once filled their days have lost their appeal to everyone except Millie. It's not until the final night that the others agree to a game of hide and seek. But in the time it takes Millie to count to twenty, Kat vanishes.

One year on, and struggling to come to terms with the events of last summer, Millie persuades the others to return to Creek House. It's meant to give them closure, but it could be a chance to find out what happened. After all, people don't just disappear, do they?

**A tightly plotted thriller, perfect for fans of Karen McManus, Holly Jackson, THE GREAT GODDEN and WE WERE LIARS.**

## **A perfect teen/YA book club choice:**

Ready or Not raises issues around obsession, toxic friendships, privilege and game-playing.

Keen creative writers can discuss ways of structuring story as Ready or Not also uses letters, police interview transcripts and newspaper articles to tell the story.

## **Book Club Discussion Questions:**

1. How do you think Kat and Millie each viewed their friendship?
2. How are games used in the book?
3. Is everyone hiding their true selves?
4. Does Millie know deep down what happened to Kat before she arrives at Creek House in the summer of 2019?
5. Millie says no one would give Rob a Dad of the Year prize. But do any of the adults measure up as good parents?
6. How did the letters in Millie's notebook reveal her changing attitude to Kat?
7. Is Noah right that he'll be treated differently from the privileged Creeker teens? What does the future hold for him?
8. What did you think had happened to Kat at different stages of the book?
9. Would you have opened up the box?
10. What do you want to happen to Millie?

## Get writing:

In Tracy Darnton's *Ready or Not* Millie writes letters to her missing friend Kat. In one she describes a lesson where the smell of lemons made her remember Kat (pages 16-17):

### Ingredients for a one-sided friendship

*Lemons*

*Secrets*

*Lies*

### Method

*Throw all your ingredients haphazardly into a bowl. Mix them up.*

*Cover with a clean tea towel and leave in a cool place. For a really long time. All your life.*

*Let it sit. Let it fester.*

*Every now and then dare to lift the cover and check on your friendship. See if it's the way it's meant to be; if it's growing, doubling in size. Or is it shrinking? Is it rancid and mouldy?*

What does using the recipe in this way tell us about the nature of Kat and Millie's friendship?

Write a scene where a recipe is used in the story to advance the plot. This could be a potion or spell in a magical fantasy or a darker scene in a thriller. Remember that revenge is often described as a dish served cold...

Write your own abstract recipe like Millie's. It could be a recipe for success - or a recipe for disaster.

Write about a memory of your own triggered by food. Maybe an ice cream flavour reminds you of a summer's day at the beach, or you burnt your tongue on a mug of hot chocolate at a bonfire party.