

A *Danny Weston*
**HUNTER'S
MOON**

Discussion notes



uclanpublishing

A HUNTER'S MOON

Discussion notes

1. In the acknowledgements section of *A Hunter's Moon*, Danny Weston says that he may just have written an allegory all about the Covid-19 pandemic. In what ways do you think he has done this?
2. One of the themes of *A Hunter's Moon* is environmentalism. Colonel Chivers' devastation of the woods awakens the Walkers, and everybody else pays the price. How does this relate to current concerns about climate change?
3. Scottish legends are integral to this novel. Why do you think Weston is so drawn to mythology, and how does it affect your reading of the novel?
4. Mhairi is an intriguing character, and she and Callum are drawn to one another. Do you think they have a future together? Why?
5. The inhabitants of the Forest of Tay enter knowingly into a Faustian pact when they accept Colonel Chivers' money - but many of them have little choice. As Shona Gilmour says, "I took the money. I was desperate, sir. The weans have to eat and there's no money coming into this house. What else was I to do?" It seems unfair that the Cù Sìth should be so indiscriminate, but that is their nature and, besides, their habitat is at stake. There are no easy answers here. What are your thoughts about the way the Cù Sìth enact their revenge?
6. If you were to visit the Cloutie Well, what would you wish for?
7. In *A Hunter's Moon*, Danny Weston makes allusions to fairy tales such as *Rapunzel* and *Little Red Riding Hood*. Why do you think he does this, and what effect does it have?
8. To what extent do you think the characters' Fate is predestined?



A HUNTER'S MOON

Discussion notes

9. Truth is a slippery notion in *A Hunter's Moon*. For example, Mhairi tells Callum that she's a 'shargie,' that her father found her when she was a bairn. However, Andrew says he's her real father. "You shouldn't believe everything that comes out of her mouth, lad." What do you think? Is Mhairi actually a changeling?
10. Did Mhairi kill Tam?
11. To what extent do you think the punishments meted out to various characters fit their crimes?
12. What are your thoughts on Callum's relationship with his parents?
13. Some of the tension in this novel stems from the clash between old and new - between Pagan values and Christian ones, between the ancient woodlands and the new settlements. Do you think such hostilities are inevitable?
14. At the beginning of the novel, Callum seems almost numb. He has no control over what happens to him, and has learned to accept this. He is blown through life like a leaf on the wind, his fate literally resting on the turn of a card. However, his experiences in the Forest of Tay change him and, when Fraser offers him the chance to escape, he realises it's time to take charge of his own destiny. Why do you think he makes the decision he does?
15. Although we only see her twice, the Washer at the Ford is a key figure. How does Weston use this mythological death omen to create a sense of unease - in both Callum and the reader?
16. Does Fraser do enough to earn redemption?

