

Cat on the Edge Discussion Questions

by Shirley Rousseau Murphy

Author Bio: (from Fantastic Fiction & srmurphy.com)

Shirley Rousseau Murphy is the author of over 40 books (for Adults, Teens, and children) and has received five Council of Authors and Journalists Awards. The Joe Grey books have won eleven Muse Medallion awards for best cat novel of the year.



She graduated from San Francisco Art Institute, has worked as a commercial artist and has exhibited paintings and sculptures extensively on the West Coast. She and her husband, Pat, live in Carmel, California. Their cats have included a tom that twice warned them of burglars in the middle of the night by growling, and a cat that liked to ride horseback.

Characters:

- **Molena Point** – Seaside village on the California coast.
- **Joe Grey** – A male tomcat who can understand human speech. He has belonged to Clyde Damen for 4 years. He only has a stump of a tail.
- **Clyde Damen** – (38) – Joe Grey’s owner. Auto mechanic. Divorced. Rented his work space from Samuel Beckwhite and helped maintain Beckwhite’s fleet.
- **Dulcie** – A young, female brindle cat. Belongs to Wilma Getz. Steals soft items from her neighbors. Called the “Cat Burgler.” Getz returns the items to her neighbors.
- **Wilma Getz** – (55) – Dulcie’s owner. Retired probation officer. Works as a reference assistant at the local library.
- **Samuel Beckwhite** – Owns a local auto agency. Has a wife, Sheryl. He was murdered. Hit with a wrench.
- **Max Harper** – Town police chief. Friends with Clyde Damen.
- **Jimmie Osborne** – Manager for Beckwhite’s car agency. Old school friend of Clyde Damen. Married to Kate. Having an affair with Sheryl Beckwhite.
- **Kate Anderson Osborne** – Jimmie’s wife of 9 years. Animal lover and Clyde’s friend. Missing for a few days.
- **Lee Wark** – Freelance car buyer. Welsh. Has been in America for 10 years.
- **Bernie Sage**– Female. Beckwhite’s secretary, office manager, and bookkeeper. Dated Lee Wark. Used to work with Wilma.
- **Marvin** – Town paperboy who finds town strays and takes them to the vet.
- **Dr. Firreti** – Village vet. Spays and neuters the strays found in the village.

Discussion Questions:

1. Did you like the book? Why or why not?
2. Who was your favorite character and why? Who was your least liked character?
3. What genre does this book fall in? Cozy mystery? Cat story? Fantasy? Something else?
4. What would you do if you found out your cat could talk?
5. What do you think a talking cat would say? Would you have anything in common? What if they lived with you?
6. How do you think the author did in portraying the attitudes of a cat in this book? Did she succeed in putting a feline flavor to the characterizations?
7. What did you think of the mystery in this book? Was it enough to sustain the story or do you think it needed a little more fleshing out?
8. Why do you think the killer took Clyde's wrench to frame him? Do you think the frame up would have worked if Joe Grey did not get involved?
9. Why do you think the killer was so determined to kill Joe, Dulcie, and Kate?
10. If you were transformed into a cat, would you be horrified? Enchanted? Excited?
11. Do you think Beckwhite's wife knew about the criminal aspects of the car agency?
12. How did you feel about the supernatural aspects of the book? Did they hook you or did they "break" the book?
13. After finishing this book, do you think you could describe the author's view of the world and life in general?
14. Shirley Rousseau Murphy has written 20 books in the Joe Grey series and a number of other books. Will you read any of them?

References:

- Amazon – <https://www.amazon.com/Cat-Edge-Joe-Grey-Mystery/dp/0061056006>
- Fantastic Fiction – <https://www.fantasticfiction.com/m/shirley-rousseau-murphy/>
- Goodreads – https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/12654.Cat_on_the_Edge
- Novelist – <http://web.b.ebscohost.com/novp/detail?vid=2&sid=d180424f-281f-41c4-a72e-b4a1a648d4f5%40sessionmgr104&bdata=JnNpdGU9bm92cC1saXZl#UI=005413&db=neh>
- Reviewing the Evidence – <http://www.reviewingtheevidence.com/review.html?id=2542>
- Shirley Rousseau Murphy's website - <http://www.srmurphy.com/index.htm>

Shirley Rousseau Murphy's Books

Children of Ynell

1. The Ring of Fire (1977)
2. The Wolf Bell (1979)
3. The Castle of Hape (1980)
4. Caves of Fire and Ice (1980)
5. The Joining of the Stone (1981)

Dragonbards

1. Nightpool (1985)
2. The Ivory Lyre (1987)
3. The Dragonbards (1988)

Joe Grey

1. Cat On the Edge (1996)
2. Cat under Fire (1997)
3. Cat Raise the Dead (1999)
4. Cat in the Dark (1998)
5. Cat to the Dogs (1999)
6. Cat Spitting Mad (2000)
7. Cat Laughing Last (2001)
8. Cat Seeing Double (2003)
9. Cat Fear No Evil (2004)
10. Cat Cross Their Graves (2005)
11. Cat Breaking Free (2005)
12. Cat Pay the Devil (2007)
13. Cat Deck the Halls (2007)
14. Cat Playing Cupid (2009)
15. Cat Striking Back (2009)
16. Cat Coming Home (2010)
17. Cat Telling Tales (2011)
18. Cat Bearing Gifts (2012)
19. Cat Shout for Joy (2016)
20. Cat Shining Bright (2017)
- Cat on the Money (2010)

Lee Fontana (with Pat J J Murphy)

1. The Cat, the Devil, and Lee Fontana (2014)
2. The Cat, the Devil, the Last Escape (2015)

Stand-alone Novels

- Sand Ponies (1967)
- White Ghost Summer (1969)
- Wind Child (1973)
- Poor Jenny, Bright As a Penny (1974)
- aka Unsettled
- The Grass Tower (1976)
- Silver Woven in My Hair (1977)
- Soonie and the Dragon (1979)
- Elmo Doolan and the Search for the Golden Mouse (1982)
- The Flight of the Fox (1983)
- Valentine for a Dragon (1984)
- Medallion of the Black Hound (1989)
- The Song of the Christmas Mouse (1990)
- The Catswold Portal (1992)

If you liked Cat on the Edge, try...

- What the Cat Dragged In – Gilbert Morris
 - A Load of Old Bones – Suzette Hill
 - Catnap – Carole Nelson Douglas
 - The Hollow Chocolate Bunnies of the Apocalypse – Robert Rankin
 - Anonymous Rex – Eric Garcia
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