



Mine Is the Night
A NOVEL

LIZ CURTIS
HIGGS

BEST-SELLING AUTHOR OF *HERE BURNS MY CANDLE*

Mine Is the Night



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P R E S S

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All Scripture quotations are taken from the King James Version.

The characters and events in this book are fictional, and any resemblance to actual persons or events is coincidental.

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Readers Guide

A woman's whole life
is a history of the affections.
The heart is her world.

WASHINGTON IRVING

1. Marjory and Elisabeth Kerr begin their new life in Selkirk as penniless widows, but they don't arrive empty-handed. What practical skills, emotional strengths, and spiritual gifts does each woman bring with her? Even so equipped they still have a great deal more to learn about life and love. How does Marjory's character grow from first page to last? And Elisabeth's? Of the two women, which is your favorite, and why?
2. Anne Kerr is less than happy to find two long-lost relatives at her door requiring food and lodging. How would you handle the situation if you were Cousin Anne? It appears she has lived alone most of her adult life. In what ways might that have shaped her character? Elisabeth observes, "One moment Anne seemed content to be unwed, and the next she was miserable." If you are, or have been, a single adult, what's your take on the joys and challenges of singleness?
3. Knowing that *Here Burns My Candle* and *Mine Is the Night* are based on the biblical story of Ruth, readers have been eager to meet our Scottish counterpart for the heroic Boaz. Yet this novel has at least three heroes, including Michael Dalgliesh, Neil Gibson, and Lord Jack Buchanan. What heroic qualities do these good men possess? Wealth and title aside, which of the three do you find the most appealing, and why?

4. When Marjory presents Lord John's magnifying glass to Anne, their relationship takes a significant step forward. What unexpected gift have you given or received that deepened your relationship with someone? Marjory is able to share with Elisabeth the chapbook that once belonged to Donald, yet she cannot part with Andrew's toy soldier. How would you explain the difference from Marjory's viewpoint? What possession could you never part with under any circumstances, and why?
5. Novelists add children and animals to a story with care, knowing how quickly they can take over a scene. What does young Peter Dalglish bring to the novel? In what ways does he remind you of a child in your life or of yourself as a child? Four-legged creatures usually reveal something about their owners. What do Charbon and Janvier tell us about Lord Jack? If Marjory were to have a pet, what would it be, and why? And what sort of pet might you choose for Anne Kerr? Reverend Brown? General Lord Mark Kerr?
6. The epigraphs, or opening quotes, for each chapter were chosen to reflect the action that follows. The quote from Robert Southey—"And last of all an Admiral came"—suited chapter 31 since Lord Jack Buchanan was the last of our major characters to be introduced. What was gained by delaying the admiral's appearance? How did your view of the admiral change from your first impression to the final scene? As to the other eighty-some epigraphs, which one did you especially like, and why?
7. After experiencing the tension, drama, and heartache of *Here Burns My Candle*, you may have been surprised to find several lighthearted moments in *Mine Is the Night*. What is gained by adding a touch of humor to a scene and to this novel in particular? Think of one bit of action or dialogue you found amusing or entertaining. Why did it appeal to you, and what did it reveal about each of the characters involved? Since laughter and tears are at one end of the emotional

spectrum—and apathy is at the opposite end—we often move rather quickly from one heightened emotion to another. Which scene in particular moved you, and why might that be so?

8. Restoration and redemption are the twin themes of *Mine Is the Night*. After many losses what is restored in Marjory's life? In Elisabeth's life? When someone is redeemed, he or she may be rescued, set free, delivered, or bought back, depending on the situation. In what ways are Marjory and Elisabeth redeemed? And how do some of the other characters experience redemption? Roger Laidlaw perhaps, or Fiona Cromar? Are there any characters in the novel whom you consider beyond redemption? If so, who and why?
9. Imagine Marjory, Elisabeth, and Anne ten years hence. What might their lives look like in 1756? Where are they living, how are they spending their time, and what is the condition of their hearts? The epigraph chosen for our Readers Guide states, "A woman's whole life is a history of the affections," suggesting women tend to measure themselves by the success or failure of their relationships with others. Do you agree or disagree, and why? What might your own life look like in ten years, particularly in regard to your relationships with those you love?
10. Readers who favor historical fiction are quick to explain their preference. Cynthia from California wrote, "It transports me to another world and enlightens and enriches me while I am entertained." And Christine from Indiana said of historical fiction, "It carries me away to another time and place where people lived, loved, and were finding their way just as I am today." If you prefer contemporary novels, what reasons could you offer? And if historical novels are more to your taste, what do you enjoy about them? When you reach the last page of any novel, what emotion do you most want to experience?

For more about the author, visit www.LizCurtisHiggs.com.