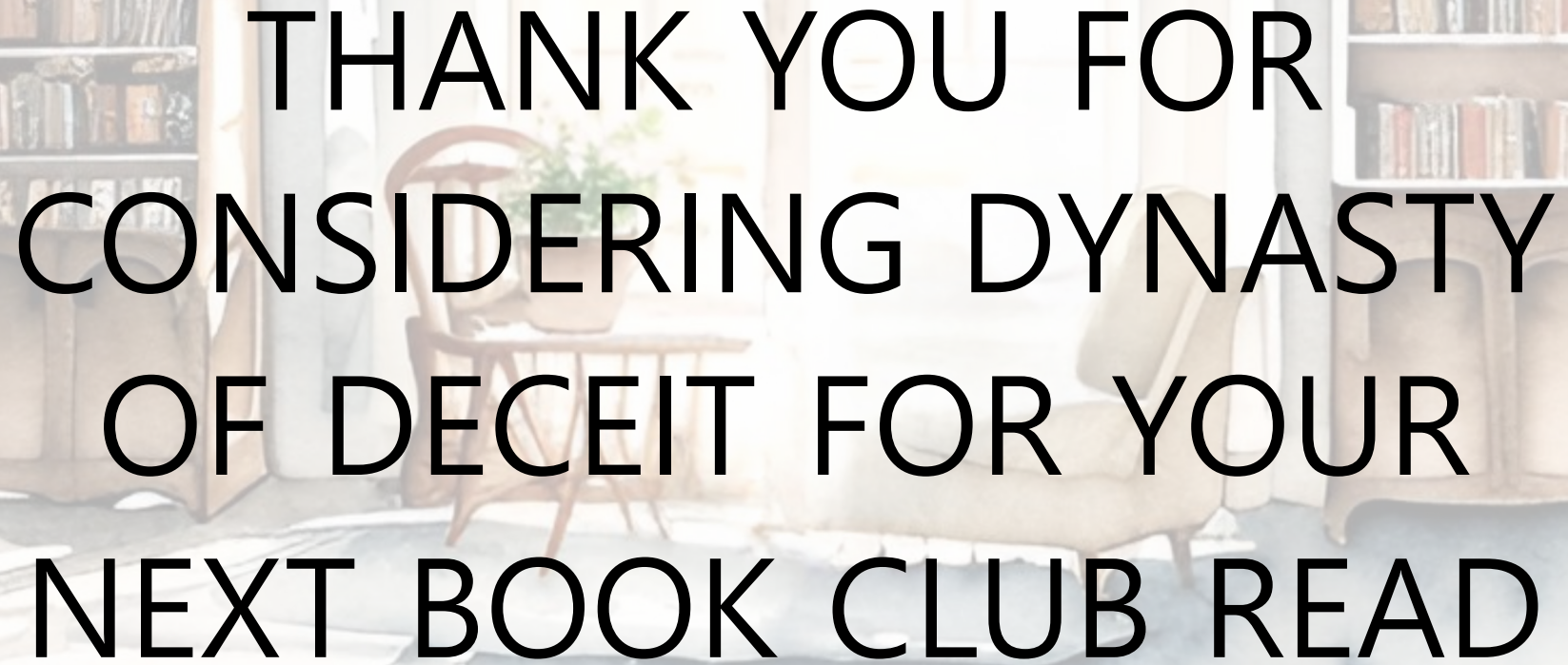




BOOK CLUB  
RESOURCE GUIDE

CRIME NOIR

A watercolor illustration of a cozy living room. In the center, a wooden chair with a curved back sits on a light-colored rug. To the left and right are tall wooden bookshelves filled with books. A small table with a plant on it is visible behind the chair. The overall style is soft and artistic, with a warm, inviting atmosphere.

THANK YOU FOR  
CONSIDERING DYNASTY  
OF DECEIT FOR YOUR  
NEXT BOOK CLUB READ

BOOK CLUB  
RESOURCE GUIDE

TIMOTHY R. BALDWIN

What if the biggest scandal in your city wasn't happening in back alleys —but in boardrooms, country clubs, and college admissions offices? *Dynasty of Deceit* plunges readers into a world where power is currency, secrets are leverage, and one private investigator is willing to risk everything to expose the truth. Follow Cassie Maddox as she uncovers a web of corruption that reaches into elite universities, high-society fundraisers, and even her own family. Perfect for fans of sharp-witted detectives, political intrigue, and mysteries that won't let you go.

WORD COUNT: 70,000

PAGE COUNT: 265

KEY WORDS: Political corruption mystery | Strong female detective | Family secrets thriller

DEMOGRAPHICS: Adult readers (25–65) who enjoy modern detective fiction, private investigator series, and female-led mysteries

COMP BOOKS: *The Good Daughter* by Karin Slaughter | *The Lincoln Lawyer* by Michael Connelly | *The Cuckoo's Calling* by Robert Galbraith | *The Lying Game* by Ruth Ware

ISBN: 978-1-64456-891-0 [PAPERBACK]

ISBN: 978-1-64456-892-7 [KINDLE]

ISBN: 978-1-64456-893-4 [EPUB]

LCCN: 2026905415

## Dress Code

Encourage guests to come dressed as:

- Noir detectives
- Country club elites
- College administrators
- Lenape City locals
- Members of the Super Sleuths

## Signature Drink Station

Serve the Maddox Martini (alcoholic & mocktail versions) and Add a forensic garnish bar with:

- Lemon twists
- Rosemary sprigs
- Edible glitter
- Blackberries

## Case File Invitations

**Send invitations styled like:**

- Subpoenas
- Confidential memos
- Evidence envelopes

## The Big Reveal

At the end of the night, reveal:

- The winning team
- The funniest interrogation
- The best costume
- The most convincing detective

# THEMED ACTIVITIES - The Super Sleuths' Night Out

## SETTING THE MOOD

### Lighting & Mood

- Keep the room dim, using warm amber lamps or LED candles to mimic Cassie's late-night office vibe.
- Add city skyline silhouettes along the walls using black poster board or printable templates. Backlight them with soft blue LEDs for a noir glow.
- Scatter a few streetlight accents — tall lamps with yellow bulbs — to give the room a moody urban feel.

### Decor

- Set up fake evidence boards with red string, sticky notes, and printed documents (no spoilers — just vibes).
- Use manila folders as placemats, each labeled with a case file name like:
- *Ignite Global Transfers - Genesee Country Club Events - Penamore Scholarship Fund*
- Place pens, highlighters, and confidential stamps at each seat.

### Soundscape

- Play the Spotify music list for setting the mood

THEMED ACTIVITIES - The Super Sleuths' Night Out

## GAMES

### Follow the Money Game

Teams receive:

- A packet of fictional financial clues
- Fake bank statements
- A list of suspects
- A timeline of events

Their goal: trace the money to the correct culprit.

- Make it fun by adding:
- Red herrings
- Anonymous tips delivered mid-game
- A countdown timer for tension

The winning team gets a Maddox Investigative Services certificate.

### Interrogate the Witness Icebreaker

Each guest draws a card with a character name:

- Cassie
- Rafi
- Lila
- Alfred
- Mel
- A Super Sleuth
- A Genesee board member
- A Penamore administrator

Guests must answer questions in character, such as:

- Where were you on the night of the fundraiser?
- What do you know about the scholarship fund?
- Who do you trust least in Lenape City?

This warms everyone up and gets them laughing.

# THEMED ACTIVITIES - The Super Sleuths' Night Out

## Appetizers

### Paper Trail Flatbread

- Thin crust with caramelized onions, goat cheese, and balsamic drizzle—layered like Cassie's evidence files.

### Country Club Cucumber Bites

- Cucumber rounds topped with herbed cream cheese and smoked salmon.

## Main Dishes

### Lenape City Winter Stew

- Beef or mushroom stew with root vegetables—mirroring the cold February setting.

### The Genesee Gala Pasta

- Creamy garlic parmesan pasta with roasted tomatoes—rich, elegant, deceptively simple.

THEMED MENU - Corruption & Canapés

## Sides

### **Ignite Global Greens**

- Mixed greens with citrus vinaigrette—fresh, sharp, cleansing.

## Dessert

### **Secrets & Layers Tiramisu**

- Coffee-soaked layers representing the hidden truths Cassie uncovers.

## Snack Option

### **Super Sleuths Popcorn Trio**

- Caramel, cheddar, and spicy chili popcorn—chaotic, bold, and perfect for teen detectives.



### **Alcoholic Version**

- 2 oz gin
- 1 oz elderflower liqueur
- Splash (¼ oz) fresh lemon juice
- Garnish: twisted lemon peel
- Optional: rosemary sprig

Combine gin, elderflower liqueur, and lemon in a shaker with ice. Shake lightly and strain into a chilled martini glass. Express the lemon peel over the drink, twist, and drop in. Add rosemary if desired.

### **Mocktail Version**

- 4 oz sparkling water
- 1 oz elderflower syrup
- Squeeze of lemon
- Lemon twist
- Optional: rosemary sprig

Serve over ice in a coupe or martini glass. Garnish with a lemon twist; add rosemary if desired.

# SIGNATURE DRINK - The Maddox Martini

Control by Halsey  
Bury a Friend by Billie Eilish  
Way Down We Go by KALEO  
The Night We Met by Lord Huron  
Believer by Imagine Dragons  
Run by OneRepublic  
Bad Guy by Billie Eilish  
Human by Rag'n'Bone Man  
Everybody Wants to Rule the World by Lorde (cover)  
Take Me to Church by Hozier  
Unsteady by X Ambassadors  
Lovely by Billie Eilish & Khalid  
The Chain by Fleetwood Mac  
Do I Wanna Know? by Arctic Monkeys  
Glory and Gore by Lorde



# SPOTIFY MUSIC RECOMMENDATIONS

A watercolor illustration of a cozy living room. In the center, a wooden chair with a curved back sits on a light-colored rug. To the left and right are tall wooden bookshelves filled with books. The background features a window with light streaming through, and a small table with a plant is visible behind the chair. The overall style is soft and artistic.

THIS GUIDE CONTAINS POSSIBLE  
SPOILERS FOR THIS BOOK IN  
THE DISCUSSION SECTION.

WARNING

- Cassie struggles with loyalty to her family versus loyalty to the truth. How does this tension drive the plot?
- How does the author use financial records and digital clues to build suspense?
- What role does Rafi play in grounding Cassie emotionally and professionally?
- How does the presence of the Super Sleuths change the tone of the investigation?
- What does the book suggest about power and privilege in academic institutions?
- How does Alfred's calm demeanor contrast with the severity of his actions?
- Which scene best illustrates Cassie's internal conflict about her family legacy?
- How does Lenape City function as a character in the story?
- What themes emerge around mentorship, especially between Cassie and the teens?
- How does the ending set up future books in the series?

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



Timothy R. Baldwin is a mystery and crime fiction author whose work blends classic noir influences with contemporary themes. He grew up in Syracuse, New York, and now lives in Maryland, where he teaches English, Creative Writing, Film, and Theatre at the middle and high school levels. At the encouragement of his students, he began writing seriously in 2014. His books span detective stories, crime fiction, and speculative mysteries for both teens and adults. When he isn't writing, he can be found reading, camping, teaching, or enjoying live music.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

WEBSITE: <https://timbaldwinbooks.square.site/>

OTHER BOOKS: Kahale and Claude Mystery Series | Cassie Maddox Mystery Series | A Shot in the Dark series | A Crock of Sundries | The Unwanted Guest and other short thrillers