



SOCIETY

OF LIES

BOOK CLUB KIT

Lauren Ling Brown

Dear Readers,

This book started with a simple question: How far would you go to belong?

It started with a young woman being invited to join a secret society that promised her the life of her dreams. But what if that society was hurting someone else? Would she stay?

I held these questions close as I wrote Maya and Naomi's story over the pandemic, during a difficult time in my life and a dark time in the world. Drawing from personal experience as a sister, and as a multiracial, Black and Chinese woman, I thought about how it felt when I first got off the train at Princeton. How I had been this shy, bookish high school kid from Northern California with big dreams, someone who never felt like she fit in anywhere, and how, in that moment, I just wanted to belong.

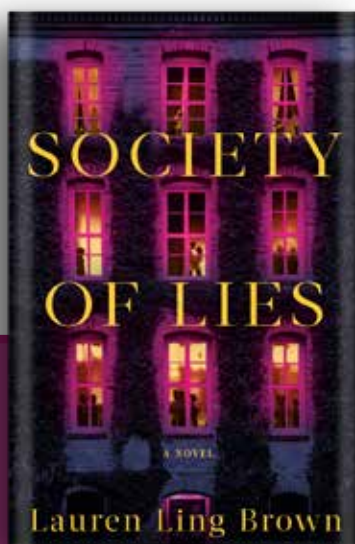
While reading, I hope that you will keep in mind that Greystone Society and its morally questionable members are fictional. That they do not represent the kind, hardworking, and honest people I met at Princeton, some of whom remain my closest friends to this day. And that this story could take place at any university, anywhere.

At the same time, I hope that Maya and Naomi's story encourages conversation around the more difficult subjects within this book, and that talking openly about them brings readers a little closer together. Because, during times like these, we need our friendships and family more than ever.

Thank you for choosing to dive into this world with me. I loved writing Maya and Naomi's story, and I am excited to share it with you!

With kindness, Lauren

P.S. You've been tapped . . .



QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. Which of these characters do you relate to most and why?
2. What do you think of Maya and Naomi's relationship? Do you have a sibling, and if so how is your relationship similar or different?
3. Before reading *Society of Lies*, did you know anything about clubs at Ivy League schools? And if you had the opportunity to join Sterling Club, would you? How about Greystone Society?
4. Should Maya have told Naomi the truth about the Society? Do we have a duty to tell the truth at all costs, or is it better to protect our loved-ones from situations that may harm them?
5. Maya believes that she must decide whether to join Greystone Society in order to support her sister or turn against the Society after learning about its true nature. What would you do in that situation?
6. How do the sisters' backgrounds affect their view of the world and the choices they make?
7. At Winter Formal, Nate and Maya get into an argument, and he tells her that Princeton means two different things to each of them. Do you think this is true?
8. What systems (of race, class etc.) do you see at work in the book, and how do the characters combat or contribute to them?
9. During Initiations, Maya says that everyone has experienced some form of bias. She believes that if we are aware of our own biases, we can correct them. Do you agree or disagree?
10. Different forms of female friendship are explored in the book. Do you think Maya and/or Naomi have true friendships in their lives? Found family? What does this concept mean to you?
11. Do you think *Society of Lies* has a message or theme? If so, what is it?
12. If they were to turn this novel into a movie or tv show, who would you cast as Maya and Naomi?

CHARACTER PROFILES:



MAYA

- Naomi's older sister
- Interned at a Wall Street Bank
- Was a member of Sterling club
- Attended Princeton
- Introvert
- Married to Nate



NATE

- Maya's husband
- Was in a band in college, played guitar
- From Chicago



NAOMI

- Maya's younger sister
- Always full of life
- Became a member of Sterling Club
- Works for Labyrinth Books
- English major
- Attends Princeton
- Member of BAC dance



LIAM

- Naomi's ex-boyfriend
- Plays tennis
- Guarded
- Has a Greystone insignia tattoo



CECILY

- Maya's college friend
- President-elect of Sterling Club
- Ballet prodigy
- Her family owns half of Manhattan
- Owns Hunt Gallery



BEN

- Naomi's friend/crush
- His parents are from Singapore
- Treasurer of Sterling Club
- Plays men's soccer
- Sensitive + Kind



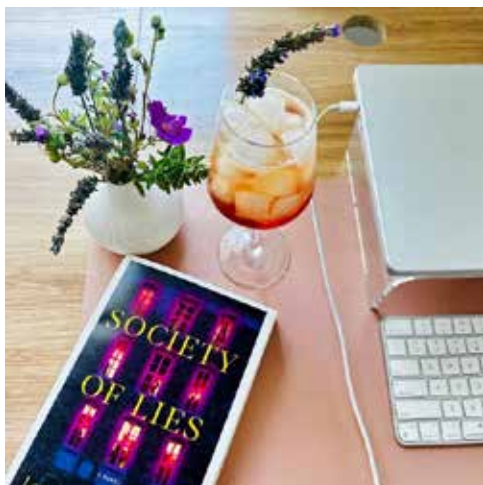
MATTHEW DUPONT

- Maya's former Sterling mentor
- Princeton Professor
- Teaches Behavioral Economics 301
- Graduated from Princeton and worked on Wall Street

Society of Lies Mocktail Recipe

THE DAISY, A SHAM-PAGNE SPRITZ!

INGREDIENTS:



- 2oz kombucha
- 2oz sparkling water
- Meyer lemon slice
- Splash of tart cherry juice
- Agave or simple syrup to taste
- A few drops of lavender bitters, like these All the Bitter organic zero-proof bitters, if you'd like!

INSTRUCTIONS:

Super easy, just combine the ingredients and pour over ice!
Top off with more sparkling water until you're satisfied with the sweetness-level!

BONUS LAVENDER SIMPLE SYRUP:

I love this easy lavender simple syrup recipe, using fresh-cut lavender from the garden.
I add it to my oat milk lattes in the morning and to mocktails in the evening!

INGREDIENTS:

- 4-6 sprigs of lavender (or rosemary), can use the flowers and a bit of stem, you can also buy culinary lavender (use 2 tablespoons of dried flower buds)
- 1 cup sugar • 1 cup water

INSTRUCTIONS:

Add sugar, water, and lavender to a sauce pan. Boil on medium heat until sugar is dissolved (5 min), then cover, reducing heat to a simmer.

Let cook for 10-15 minutes until desired flavor is reached.

Strain the lavender syrup into a cute labeled dispenser and add to drink to taste!