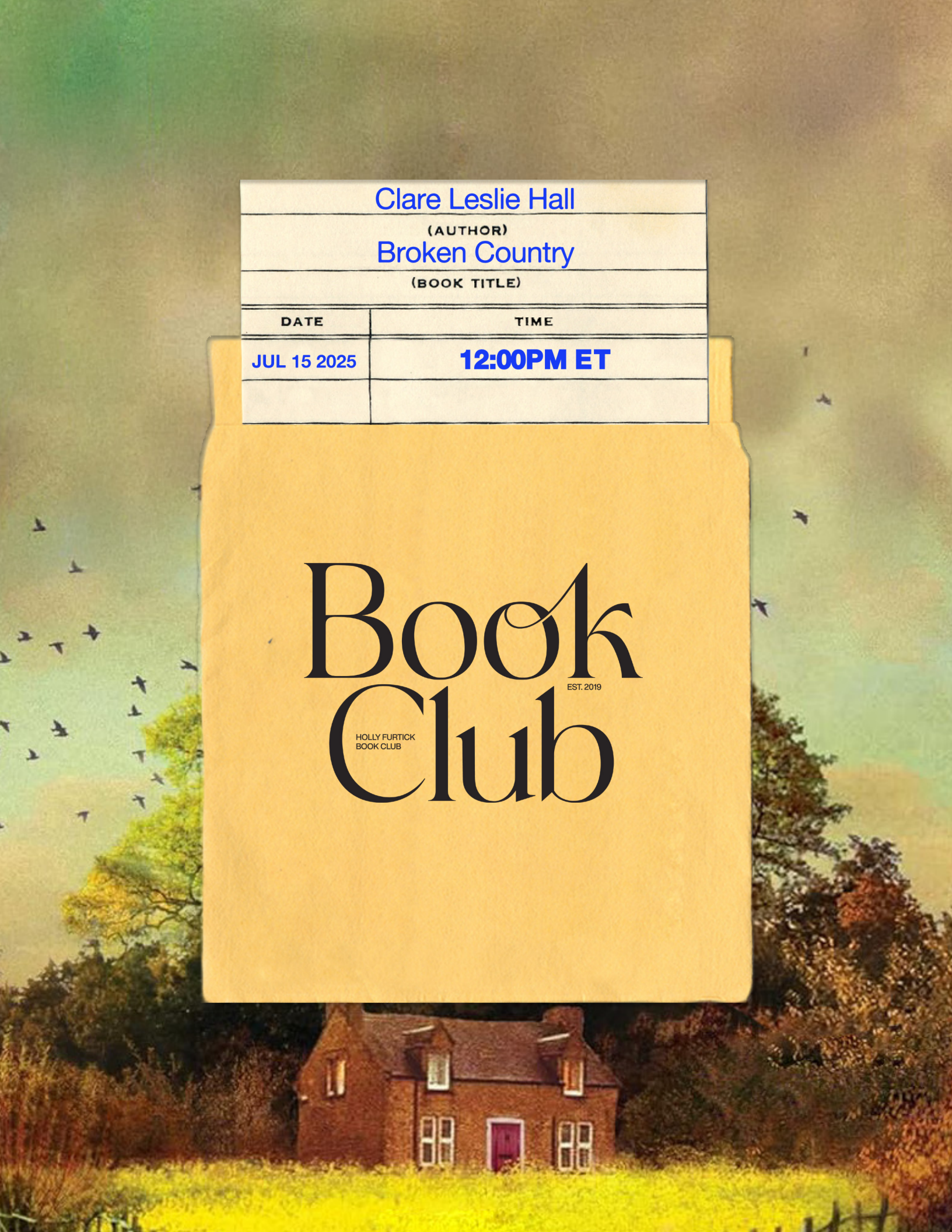


Clare Leslie Hall	
(AUTHOR)	
Broken Country	
(BOOK TITLE)	
DATE	TIME
JUL 15 2025	12:00PM ET

Book Club

EST. 2019

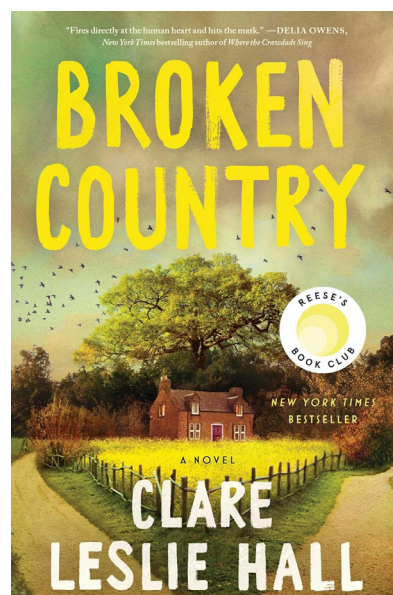
HOLLY FURTICK
BOOK CLUB



Book Club

EST. 2019

HOLLY FURTICK
BOOK CLUB



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Clare spent the first half of her career as a journalist on national newspapers before publishing two novels HIM and MINE under the name Clare Empson in the UK and Germany. The novels are being republished under the name Clare Leslie Hall as Pictures of Him and Days You Were Mine.

Her favourite novels - The Great Gatsby, The Secret History, Moon Tiger and The Go-Between - set a blueprint for the kind of books Clare loves to read and now write. Her three novels all combine passionate love stories with an element of mystery and suspense.

Clare is married with three children and lives in Dorset in an old farmhouse surrounded by fields, which inspired the setting for Broken Country.

BOOK OVERVIEW

A love triangle unearths dangerous, deadly secrets from the past in this thrilling tale perfect for fans of The Paper Palace and Where the Crawdads Sing.

“The farmer is dead. He is dead, and all anyone wants to know is who killed him.”

Beth and her gentle, kind husband Frank are happily married, but their relationship relies on the past staying buried. But when Beth's brother-in-law shoots a dog going after their sheep, Beth doesn't realize that the gunshot will alter the course of their lives. For the dog belonged to none other than Gabriel Wolfe, the man Beth loved as a teenager—the man who broke her heart years ago. Gabriel has returned to the village with his young son Leo, a boy who reminds Beth very much of her own son, who died in a tragic accident.

As Beth is pulled back into Gabriel's life, tensions around the village rise and dangerous secrets and jealousies from the past resurface, this time with deadly consequences. Beth is forced to make a choice between the woman she once was, and the woman she has become.

A sweeping love story with the pace and twists of a thriller, *Broken Country* is a novel of simmering passion, impossible choices, and explosive consequences that toggles between the past and present to explore the far-reaching legacy of first love.

SETTING

- Hemston, North Dorset, England

CHARACTERS

- Beth Johnson (Kennedy)
- Frank Johnson: Beth's husband
- Gabriel Wolfe: Beth's boyfriend/man she had an affair with, rich author
- Jimmy Johnson: Frank's brother
- Bobby: Beth's son who died
- Leo: Gabriel's son
- Louisa: Gabriel's ex-wife
- Nina: Jimmy's wife
- Grace: Beth and Frank's daughter

THINGS I LOVED ABOUT THIS BOOK

- This is a book about marriage and real love and forgiveness
- One of the best endings I have ever read
- Great characters
- Great mystery

QUESTIONS TO DISCUSS

- What did you think of the book?
- Who is your least favorite character?
- Who is your favorite character?
- Did you wish Beth had stayed with Gabriel?
- Did you know Bobby was Gabriel's son?

MEMORABLE SCENES

- Beth meets Gabriel as a teenager (pg 8)
- Leo's dog being shot (pg 12)
- Beth bringing Leo the new puppy, starts going to Gabriel's house (pg 44)

- Gabriel asking Beth to watch Leo (pg 62)
- Gabriel's mother puts doubts in Beth's mind about Gabriel (pg 68)
- Beth reads about Louisa in his diary when she visits him at Oxford (pg 101)
- Jimmy delivering Beth's baby (pg 110)
- Louisa's conversation with Beth that it was not too late (pg 147)
- Jimmy and Nora's wedding (pg 165)
- Beth and Gabriel start physical affair at/after the wedding (pg 170/186)
- Details of Bobby dying (pg 172)
- Beth's decision to stay with Frank (pg 238, 264)
- The trial verdict (pg 268)
- Jimmy getting shot and Frank deciding to take the blame (pg 270-279)
- Beth telling Gabriel Bobby was his (pg 277)
- Beth telling Gabriel's mother she was pregnant (pg 282)
- Beth tells Frank she's pregnant with Grace (pg 295)
- Frank coming home (pg 301)

MEMORABLE QUOTES

"You have to fool yourself into thinking you already are the thing you want to become."
(pg 20)

"You can never change back once you've had a child, even if that child no longer exists."
(pg 25)

"You'd think I'd be macerating in shame, but the truth is, I've been ashamed for so long now it is my background noise, my everyday wallpaper, the emotion so familiar I feel little else."
(pg 182-183)

"Bobby. In some ways so present, but mostly, just horribly absent. The ache of missing him never really goes. Not for long." (pg 184)

[referring to Gabriel] "With him, for a few hours, I get to be unbroken" (pg 193)

"I wonder if I take these risks because I long for it to be over, whatever that might mean."
(pg 208)

"What helps, I have learned, years too late, is to accept responsibility for the things I have done. To be accountable, I suppose." (pg 248)