

## READING GROUP GUIDE

### Discussion Questions

1. Who do you think may have saved Anne? What theories do you have about her escape?
2. Before reading this book, what was your understanding of female pirates? Has your perspective changed?
3. What fascinated you the most in reading the afterword?
4. Mary and Anne subverted roles for women during their time. How has their story challenged your own ideas about gender, in the past but also at present?
5. What do you think the title means?
6. Who were your favorite side characters? Were there any, in their own way, who also lived with determination?
7. What do you make of Captain Charles Johnson? Why do you think the author made the choice to include him as a character?
8. In what ways has the male gaze impacted Mary's and Anne's legacies?
9. Mary and Anne make impossible choices amid limited options and difficult circumstances. When was a time you made an impossible choice? Did it feel like a choice?
10. The women in this novel face assaults and vulnerable hardships. When they speak about their experiences, characters respond in many different ways. What can we learn from their various reactions?

11. Who would you cast in a film adaptation of *The Determined*?
12. Compare Mary and Anne with other historical figures, such as Grace O'Malley and Joan of Arc, mentioned throughout this book. How are they similar or different?
13. Mary is credited with a famous speech about the courage of pirates in contrast with the "Rogues" who govern land by "cheating Widows and Orphans, and opposing their poor Neighbours." Her quote is lightly adapted in chapter 62 of this novel. Do you agree with her perspective? Why or why not?
14. What do you make of the quote from *A General History of the Robberies and Murders of the Most Notorious Pyrates* that prefaces this novel? In what ways is the medium of writing and storytelling challenged and engaged with this as a theme?
15. Mary and Anne, though inked into history, represent untold numbers of women who also sailed the seas but whose histories were not recorded. How can we best serve them, and all women's history, to honor their stories?