ReadingGroupGuides
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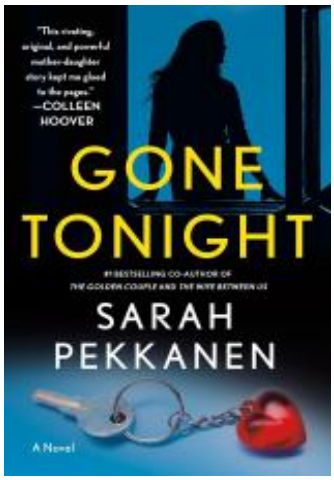
Gone Tonight

by Sarah Pekkanen



About the Book

New from the #1 bestselling co-author of THE GOLDEN COUPLE and THE WIFE BETWEEN US!

Catherine Sterling thinks she knows her mother. Ruth Sterling is quiet, hardworking and lives for her daughter. All her life, it's been just the two of them against the world. But now, Catherine is ready to spread her wings, move from home and begin a new career. And Ruth will do anything to prevent that from happening.

Ruth Sterling thinks she knows her daughter. Catherine would never rebel, would never question anything about her mother's past or background. But when Ruth's desperate quest to keep her daughter by her side begins to reveal cracks in Ruth's carefully constructed world, both mother and daughter begin a dance of deception.

Discussion Guide

1. How did the dual perspectives of Ruth and Catherine affect your reading of this story? How would the book be different if it were told from only one perspective?

2. What was the turning point in Ruth and Catherine?s seemingly idyllic relationship? Why did you pinpoint this moment?

3. How did Ruth?s flashbacks to her high school relationship with James enhance your reading experience? What did you learn about her that you might not have otherwise?

4. Do you support Ruth?s decision to keep the truth from Catherine, even if it meant perpetuating a horrible deception? Why or why not?

5. In chapter 30, Ruth says:

I so loved my birth name, Ava Morales. It felt graceful and ethereal, like it could belong to a ballerina.

Ruth Sterling sounded like a young woman who was Ava?s opposite: a sturdy, stoic individual who worked hard and didn?t complain. Those were qualities I desperately needed. I wanted to become Ruth Sterling in more ways than one.

How did Ruth?s identity change when she took on her new name? How does a name impact one?s identity? Do you feel as if your name suits you?

6. In chapter 2, Ruth says, ?I?m good at disappearing. We women do it all the time.? What do you think this statement means? Explain how this statement is expressed throughout the novel.

7. Were you surprised by how Catherine handled the situation with James? Why or why not?

8. The book explores the theme of keeping secrets from someone to protect them. Was there a time in your life when you held a secret for someone else?s own good? Why did you feel like you had to keep that secret? Do you still feel the same way?

9. What moment surprised you the most in this book? Did you suspect that Ruth was more involved in Coach?s death than she let on? If so, what led you to this suspicion?

10. Explore the concept of family as portrayed in this novel, and the ways family members can hurt us and love us at the same time. What defines family? How did Ruth?s reunion with her father and brother make you feel? How does it contribute to this novel?s definition of family?

Author Bio

Sarah Pekkanen is the #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of 15 solo and co-authored novels. Her books are sold in 36 countries, with several optioned for TV and film. Sarah also co-wrote the screenplay for THE WIFE BETWEEN US for Steven Spielberg's Amblin Entertainment. She serves on the board of directors of International Thriller Writers, and is the founder of the nonprofit IndiaStreetPaws.com, which rescues injured and abused street dogs in India. She lives just outside of Washington, DC.

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