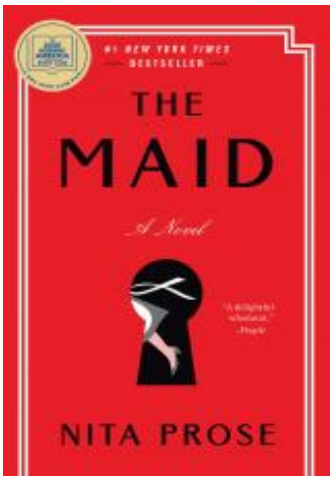
ReadingGroupGuides
The online community for reading groups

The Maid

by Nita Prose



About the Book

A charmingly eccentric hotel maid discovers a guest murdered in his bed. Solving the mystery will turn her once orderly world upside down in this utterly original debut.

Molly Gray is not like everyone else. She struggles with social skills and misreads the intentions of others. Her gran used to interpret the world for her, codifying it into simple rules that Molly could live by.

Since Gran died a few months ago, 25-year-old Molly has been navigating life's complexities all by herself. No matter --- she throws herself with gusto into her work as a hotel maid. Her unique character, along with her obsessive love of cleaning and proper etiquette, make her an ideal fit for the job. She delights in donning her crisp uniform each morning, stocking her cart with miniature soaps and bottles, and returning guest rooms at the Regency Grand Hotel to a state of perfection.

But Molly's orderly life is upended the day she enters the suite of the infamous and wealthy Charles Black, only to find it in a state of disarray and Mr. Black himself dead in his bed. Before she knows what's happening, Molly's unusual demeanor has the police targeting her as their lead suspect. She quickly finds herself caught in a web of deception, one she has no idea how to untangle. Fortunately for Molly, friends she never knew she had unite with her in a search for clues to what really happened to Mr. Black. But will they be able to find the real killer before it's too late?

A *Clue*-like, locked-room mystery and a heartwarming journey of the spirit, THE MAID explores what it means to be the same as everyone else and yet entirely different --- and reveals that all mysteries can be solved through connection to the human heart.

Discussion Guide

1. What did you think of Molly as a character? What made her believable to you? What were your feelings about the revelations in the epilogue about Molly?s involvement in the case?

2. Gran has a number of iconic sayings that Molly relies on to get her through both very happy and very difficult situations. What were some of your favorites?

3. Gran and Molly believe in the three E?s --- Etiquette, Elocution and Erudition. Is there a moment in the novel where Molly?s application of these three values stood out to you? If you had to pick just one of these, which would you say is the most important?

4. Molly says she is ?blessed with this ability --- to clean my mind as I would a room. I picture offensive people or recall uncomfortable moments, and I wipe them away.? What did you make of some of the moments when Molly?s memories came creeping back in? Did some of her darker memories, when she finally revealed them, surprise you? Did you understand why she?d want to ?wipe them away??

5. Molly is aware that others tend to make assumptions about her based on her demeanor and her position as a maid. This is a fact that she uses to her advantage during her interrogation by saying, ?I?m a hotel maid. Who would ever want to talk to me?? when asked about her friendship with Giselle. The detective easily accepts this answer and lets Molly go free, which feels like a bittersweet victory. What did you think of this exchange? What does it suggest about power dynamics, and about the assumptions people tend to make about others who are different from themselves?

6. Molly has a very distinct sense of what is right and wrong, but sometimes this takes the form of her Gran?s ?Robin Hood? morality, in which her sense of fairness and justice can override what others may traditionally consider ?right? or ?wrong.? Do you think this
willingness to help others is brave or naive? What would you do in her situation?

7. Despite the danger to his family and himself, Juan Manuel decides to help Molly in the end. While everything ends up okay, each one of Molly?s allies risks something to help her. What do you think influenced each of their decisions?

8. What were some of your takeaways from the book? What message do you think the author was trying to convey?

Author Bio

Nita Prose is the #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Maid* series, which has sold millions of copies worldwide. A ?Good Morning America? Book Club pick, THE MAID won the Ned Kelly Award for International Crime Fiction, the Fingerprint Award for Debut Novel of the Year, the Anthony Award for Best First Novel, and the Barry Award for Best First Mystery. It also was an Edgar Award finalist for Best Novel. Nita lives in Toronto, Canada.

The Maid

by Nita Prose

Publication Date: January 3, 2023
Genres: Fiction, Mystery
Paperback: 320 pages
Publisher: Ballantine Books
ISBN-10: 0593356179
ISBN-13: 9780593356173