ReadingGroupGuides
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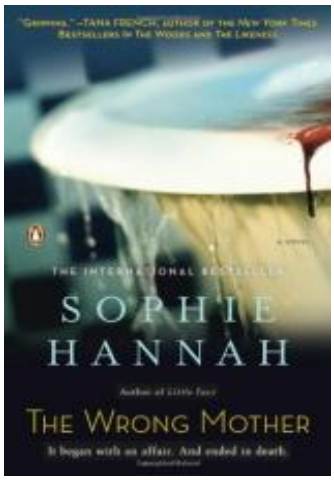
The Wrong Mother

by Sophie Hannah



About the Book

A chilling exploration of a mother?s unspeakable betrayal from the author of *Little Face*

Sally Thorning is watching the news with her husband when she hears an unexpected name --- Mark Bretherick. It?s a name she shouldn?t know, but last year Sally treated herself to a secret vacation --- away from her hectic family life --- and met a man. After their brief affair, the two planned to never meet again. But now, Mark?s wife and daughter are dead --- and the safety of Sally?s own family is in doubt. Sophie Hannah established herself as a new master of psychological suspense with her previous novel, **Little Face**. Now with accomplished prose and a plot guaranteed to keep readers guessing, **The Wrong Mother** is Hannah?s most captivating work yet.

Discussion Guide

1. Why is the novel called **The Wrong Mother**? Does the title refer to a specific character in the book?

2. Is Sally a sympathetic character? Are her reasons for having a fling understandable or do you disapprove of her?

3. Is Nick a good or a bad husband? What about Mark Bretherick? And Jonathan Hey?

4. Do you see what happens to Sally subsequently in the book as a punishment for her having been unfaithful to her husband? Is the book taking a moral stance over extra-marital affairs? (The answer to this is no, by the way!)

5. What is the book saying about motherhood in the book? How do Sally, Encarna, Geraldine and Cordy differ, in their behavior as mothers?

6. What does the sociological theme of 'family annihilation' killings add to the book? How does it resonate with the

main plot?

7. Do you see the novel as having a feminist agenda in any way?

8. Is Jonathan Hey evil, or are his crimes understandable?

9. What point is the book making, if any, about the role of grandparents in contemporary families?

10. Are the little girls in the novel --- Lucy, Amy and Oonagh --- goodies or baddies? Is it possible for a child to be a baddy, or is a nasty child's behavior more excusable than a nasty adult's?

Author Bio

Sophie Hannah is the *New York Times* bestselling author of numerous psychological thrillers, which have been published in 51 countries and adapted for television, as well as THE MONOGRAM MURDERS, the first Hercule Poirot novel authorized by the estate of Agatha Christie, and its sequels: CLOSED CASKET, THE MYSTERY OF THREE QUARTERS, THE KILLINGS AT KINGFISHER HILL, SILENT NIGHT and THE LAST DEATH OF THE YEAR. Sophie is also the author of a self-help book, HOW TO HOLD A GRUDGE, and hosts the podcast of the same name. She lives in Cambridge, UK.

Critical Praise

"Hannah [writes] persuasively about modern women who buckle under the stress of motherhood... with style and wit."

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