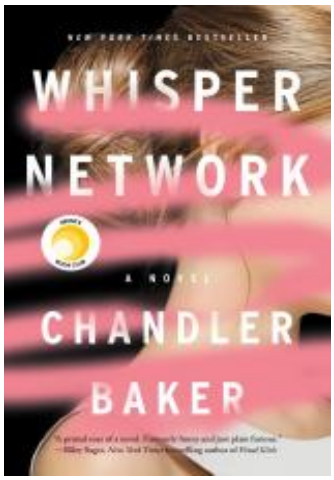
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Whisper Network

by Chandler Baker



About the Book

?If only you?d listened to us, none of this would have happened.?

Sloane, Ardie, Grace and Rosalita have worked at Truviv, Inc. for years. The sudden death of Truviv?s CEO means their boss, Ames, will likely take over the entire company. Each of the women has a different relationship with Ames, who has always been surrounded by whispers about how he treats women. Those whispers have been ignored, swept under the rug, hidden away by those in charge.

But the world has changed, and the women are watching this promotion differently. This time, when they find out Ames is making an inappropriate move on a colleague, they aren?t willing to let it go. This time, they?ve decided enough is enough.

Sloane and her colleagues? decision to take a stand sets in motion a catastrophic shift in the office. Lies will be uncovered. Secrets will be exposed. And not everyone will survive. All of their lives --- as women, colleagues, mothers, wives, friends, even adversaries --- will change dramatically as a result.

Discussion Guide

1. ?If only you?d listened to us, none of this would have happened,? the reader is told in the prologue. Who is the ?you? in this statement? Does this warning ring true by the last page of the book? How does this prophecy color your read of the intervening events?

2. Throughout the novel, Sloane seems to feel some responsibility to protect Katherine from Ames, whom she views as a threat, while Rosalita, Grace and Ardie all have their own personal philosophies about the ?problem of Ames? and their relative roles in it. What responsibility do women bear to protect other women from dangerous men? How does that

answer shape your ultimate view of Katherine?s actions?

3. In Chapter 25, the chorus narrates, ??but whispers could only carry so far. Such was the purpose of whispering --- to ensure that not everyone heard.? ?Intersectionality? is a term coined by black, feminist scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw as a framework to identify how interlocking systems of power impact those groups that are marginalized. What does the chorus?s statement suggest about the efficacy of whisper networks and issues surrounding intersectionality?

4. In Chapter 15, Sloane worries over whether Ames ?knew better? than to act as he did toward his female employees. In what ways, if any, should Ames? intent factor into a discussion about the fate of his professional life?

5. What parallels can be drawn between Abigail?s experience at school and the experiences of Sloane, Grace and Ardie in the workplace? Do you think one experience affects the other?

6. The women of Dallas create the BAD Men List to warn each other about men who exhibit predatory behavior. Was Sloane right to add Ames? name to the list? Is the BAD Men List ethical? Do you ultimately feel such a list is a good idea or a bad one?

7. In what ways do the women in the novel support each other, and in what ways do they fail one another?

8. Chandler Baker has chosen to tell part of the story through a first-person plural (?we?) point of view. What is the effect of this? Beyond issues of sexual harassment, how does the workplace experience differ for women in the novel compared to their male counterparts?

9. At the start of Chapter 20, the chorus observes, ??none of us thought that motherhood and work could exist harmoniously. If anything, they were two forces, diametrically opposed. We were the prisoners, strapped to the medieval stretching device, having enjoyed the rare privilege of both loving and having chosen our torturers.? Can motherhood and work exist harmoniously?

10. At the end of Chapter 45, Sloane admits to herself that she is a ?terrible ambassador? for the cause against Ames. Is this true? Both Sloane and Katherine seem to feel they bear some of the blame for Ames? treatment of them. Do they?

11. Cosette Sharpe agrees to take the lead in the counter lawsuit against Ardie, Grace and Sloane. Sloane is angry at this perceived betrayal, while Cosette feels justified in her decision. Whose side do you identify more strongly with?

12. Rosalita throws away the airplane wings that Ardie gives to Solomon. Why does she do that? Is there a better way for Ardie to have helped Rosalita and Solomon? Is there any way to overcome socioeconomic inequity, even when you?re trying your best?

13. Does it seem consistent with Ardie?s character that she did not reveal her assault to anyone and stayed working at Truviv? How do you think this affected her relationship with Sloane? Do you think Ardie guessed at Solomon?s parentage before it was revealed toward the end of the novel?

14. At any point in the novel, should --- or could --- Ardie, Sloane, Grace or Rosalita have handled what to do about Ames differently? If so, how? To that end, before Ardie?s and Rosalita?s personal histories with Ames are fully

revealed, did you believe Ames? behavior was actionable? Was it sexual harassment?

Author Bio

Chandler Baker is the *New York Times* bestselling author of WHISPER NETWORK, a Reese?s Book Club pick, as well as the "Good Morning America" Book Club selection THE HUSBANDS. A former corporate lawyer, she lives in Austin, Texas, with her husband, two small children and even smaller dog. CUTTING TEETH is her third novel for adults.

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