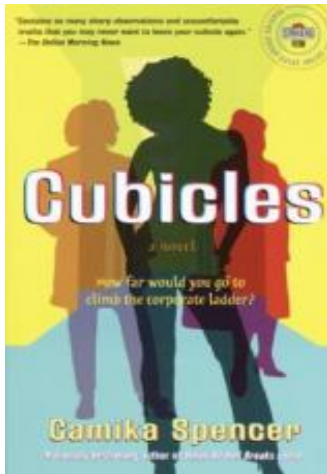


Cubicles: A Novel

by Camika Spencer



About the Book

The sparks that fly at Meridian Southwest are enough to ignite the tempers of even the most dedicated professionals. Margaret is about to retire from the company, Faulkner is an up-and-comer thirsty for a promotion, and Joyce is a domineering but sexy middle-aged woman about to grab her spot at the top of the ladder. They lead very different lives. But now something strange is going on, and suddenly Margaret, Faulkner, and Joyce are unexpectedly drawn together as a tangled web woven decades earlier begins to unravel.

Discussion Guide

- 1. Cubicles** charts the working lives of three women, but the book is about more than office politics. One of the major themes is the way work shapes life, fulfillment, and values. How is this explored in the book?
- Faulkner, Joyce and Margaret each undergo a process of self-discovery during the course of the book. What does each woman realize about her life and her choices? How does the relationship between the three women help or hinder this process?
- Faulkner has a love-hate relationship with her job. On the one hand she wants to succeed, but she also resents the demands it places on her time. In the end, she decides to pursue writing. Who was the greatest influence on her decision? Greg? Margaret? Joyce?
- When Fred Price makes a pass at her, Faulkner refuses to sacrifice her values for her ambition. Joyce eventually makes the same choice. The cost of their decision is their careers; Faulkner gives up her ambitions at Meridian Southwest and once Joyce stands up to Fred, she too leaves. Why? Is it possible to maintain both values and ambition?
- What is the price of reaching the top? Could Joyce have achieved all she had without compromising herself and her

body?

6. Margaret claims she can't retire because she has too many bills to pay. Is this true? Are her attempts to provide for her family selfless or does she get something out of work that she doesn't get at home? Why is she working herself to death?

7. In the end, Joyce feels like she doesn't have many choices. Is she in a prison of her own making or does she deserve better than what she gets? What should Joyce have done after her altercation with Fred? How much does her past influence her choices?

8. Work consumes the lives of all of the three women in Cubicles, so much so the rest of their lives suffer. Joyce never has a family, Margaret's relationship with her husband and step-daughter are troubled, and Faulkner can barely keep up with old friends. Why can't any of the women achieve any balance in their lives? What *is* the right balance between work and life?

9. When Faulkner rejects Fred's advances and pursues a lawsuit against him, she makes a choice that will potentially ruin her career. Given her single-minded focus on becoming an executive, why does she do it? What is different about her choice and Joyce's?

10. Joyce and Faulkner are more alike than each likes to admit, both share the same drive to succeed and ability to perform well in their jobs. Is Joyce's effort to push Faulkner out of Meridian Southwest an attempt to save her or an act of jealousy? What are the key differences between the two women?

11. Joyce's relationship with Margaret ended after Joyce moved up, why? Was she unable to respect their friendship? Herself?

Author Bio

Camika Spencer is the bestselling author of **When All Hell Breaks Loose**. She holds a bachelor's degree in broadcasting and journalism, has written for *Eclipse*, *The East Texan*, and *Mosaic*, and now writes a monthly column for dallasblack.com. She is currently working on her second stage production and third novel. She lives in Dallas, Texas. You can write to her at P.O. Box 41062, Dallas, TX 75241 or visit her website: www.camika.com.

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