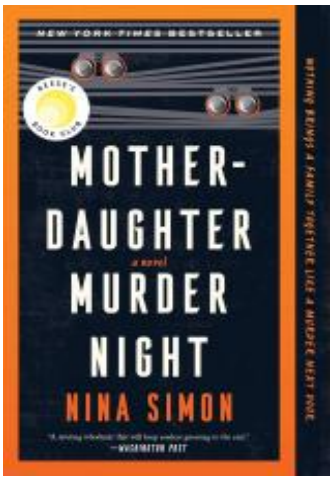
ReadingGroupGuides
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Mother-Daughter Murder Night

by Nina Simon



About the Book

Nothing brings a family together like a murder next door.

?The perfect mix of family drama and murder mystery? (Kellye Garrett, award-winning author) in this lighthearted whodunit about a grandmother-mother-daughter trio of amateur sleuths. Think "Gilmore Girls" but with murder.

High-powered businesswoman Lana Rubicon has a lot to be proud of: her keen intelligence, impeccable taste and the L.A. real estate empire she?s built. But when she finds herself trapped 300 miles north of the city, convalescing in a sleepy coastal town with her adult daughter Beth and teenage granddaughter Jack, Lana is stuck counting otters instead of square footage --- and hoping that boredom won?t kill her before the cancer does.

Then Jack --- tiny in stature but fiercely independent --- happens upon a dead body while kayaking near their bungalow. Jack quickly becomes a suspect in the homicide investigation, and the Rubicon women are thrown into chaos. Beth thinks Lana should focus on recovery, but Lana has a better idea. She?ll pull on her wig, find the true murderer, protect her family and prove she still has power.

With Jack and Beth?s help, Lana uncovers a web of lies, family vendettas and land disputes lurking beneath the surface of a community populated by folksy conservationists and wealthy ranchers. But as their amateur snooping advances into ever-more dangerous territory, the headstrong Rubicon women must learn to do the one thing they?ve always resisted: depend on each other.

Discussion Guide

1. The Rubicon women embody strength in different ways --- Lana the warrior, Beth the caregiver, Jack the explorer.

What traits do you associate with those of a ?strong woman?? How do the women demonstrate those qualities differently, or similarly?

2. Lana Rubicon is brand-new to investigating crimes. What do you feel is her most effective skill as an amateur detective? What do you believe is her greatest weakness?

3. All the primary suspects --- and the murder victims --- have different visions for the future of the ranch. If you had the power to decide what should happen to the Rhoads ranch at the end of the story, what would you do, and why?

4. Lana and Beth disagree about why the sheriffs focus on Jack as a potential suspect. As Lana puts it on page 51, ?Not everything is about racism or discrimination. This is just good old-fashioned incompetence.? Do you agree with Lana? What role, if any, do you see discrimination playing in the investigation of Ricardo Cruz and Hal Rhoads? deaths?

5. Lana Rubicon and Hal Rhoads are both tough, exacting single parents. What differences do you see in their parenting styles, and how do you think those differences impact the relationships they?ve built with their adult children?

6. Self-love and family love are important themes throughout MOTHER-DAUGHTER MURDER NIGHT. On page 123, Lana tells Jack, ?You have to love yourself most. No one else will do that for you.? How do you feel about this advice and Jack?s response to it? In what other moments of the book do these themes appear?

7. Lana Rubicon and Teresa Ramirez both use their appearance to command attention in a world that tries to render them invisible. How else do the women in the novel assert themselves? If you?ve had experiences of feeling invisible and wanting to assert yourself, how did you do it?

8. The whole story starts when Lana is suddenly knocked out of the iron grip she holds on her life. How did this experience reverberate throughout the novel? Have you ever experienced a sudden loss of power or agency? How did you deal with it?

9. Jack is hungry to go on adventures beyond her small town. On page 20, she thinks about the fact that it?s not that she doesn?t love the slough, she just ?isn?t surprised by its secrets anymore.? Do you remember a time when you thought you knew everything about your community, and then were surprised by a shift in your understanding?

10. The Rhoads family is full of secrets that lead to pain, emotional distance and murder. Do you think there are times when keeping secrets from family members can be good, even compassionate? Do you agree with the necessity in keeping any of the Rhoads? secrets?

11. Lana Rubicon and Gigi Montero both offer the young women in their lives unfiltered and unsolicited advice. Have you ever received an audacious piece of advice from an elder that has stuck with you (whether you agreed with it or not)?

Author Bio

Nina Simon writes crime fiction about strong women. She is the author of the *New York Times* bestseller MOTHER-

DAUGHTER MURDER NIGHT, which she wrote for her mother, as a way to entertain, comfort and connect with her during a major health crisis. This debut novel was a Reese's Book Club pick, a Golden Poppy Award winner, and a "best of 2023" selection for Amazon, Barnes & Noble, CrimeReads and *Library Journal*.

Before turning to fiction, Nina wore many hats: NASA engineer, slam poet, game designer, museum director and nonprofit CEO. Her work on community participation in museums, libraries, parks, and theaters has been featured in the *Wall Street Journal*, the *New York Times*, NPR and the TEDx stage. Born and raised in Los Angeles, Nina now lives off-the-grid in the Santa Cruz Mountains with her family.

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