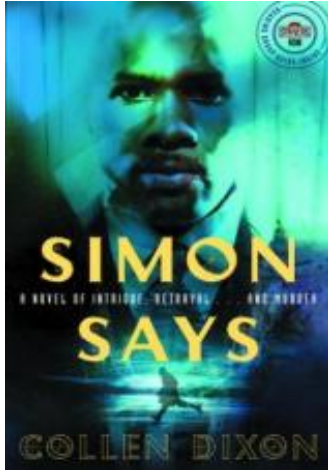

Simon Says: A Novel of Intrigue, Betrayal...and Murder

by Collen Dixon



About the Book

LIFE'S A GAME. ARE YOU READY TO PLAY?

The blood rushed from Alex's head, and his body went limp. As he passed into an abyss of darkness, the chilling final words of The Deliverer rang in his ears, words that would haunt him for the rest of his life. "The next time you pull a knife on someone, you better know why. It's not a toy. It's not a plaything. You be prepared to either use it for real or have it used on you. You either kill or be killed. Always remember that."

?from **Simon Says**

Alexander Baxter is a young man from the heart of D.C.'s most notorious ghetto and seems destined for a life of crime. But his intelligence triumphs over his fists when Simon Blake, the city's illustrious mayor, plucks him out of the clutches of a violent fate and guides him to achieve his every wish. For Alex, it's a fairy tale come true.

But this isn't a fairy tale?and no good deed ever goes unpunished. In this riveting story of murder, intrigue, romance, suspense, and political high jinks, Alexander Baxter learns to be careful what he wishes for, who he trusts, and where he leaves his heart. And he learns it the hard way.

Discussion Guide

1. Tiffany has her pick of the men on Hilliard's campus, but even from the start she seems drawn to Alex. Does she choose him just because he saved her from Sid? What does Alex offer Tiffany that other men do not?

2. Alex experiences two life-changing events in his youth ? the death of his brother and saving Tiffany from her attacker. How do these two events shape the direction his life takes and his attitude towards life?
3. Simon seems purely evil. Is he? Does he really love his daughter?
4. Alex's father is nearly destroyed by the death of his wife and then son. Why can't he recover? What is instrumental in bringing him back into Alex's life?
5. Much of Alex's success after college is due to the influence of Simon. Would Alex have been as successful without Simon's help? Where would he be?
6. Tiffany is the queen of the Hilliard campus and seems to have it all. Does she? What affect did her mother's death have on her? Does she have any suspicions about her father's activities?
7. Without the protection of Fortune, Alex might never have survived his discovery of Simon's secret. Has Fortune redeemed himself? Is this enough payback for his role in Ivan's death?
8. **Simon Says** is a story of loss and coming of age in a world of drugs and violence. How is this theme explored in the lives of the main characters Alex, Tiffany, Ivan and Fortune? What is Ivan's legacy?
9. Growing up, Alex shrugs off his Shaw background and hopes to leave it behind forever. However, in the end, he finds it may be the one thing that can save him. In the end, what does he come to realize about Shaw and Washington DC?
10. Alex's final confrontation with Simon is, in some sense, the completion of a cycle that began with his brother's death. Does Alex finally avenge his brother?

Author Bio

Collen Dixon is a native of Washington, D.C., and **Simon Says** is her debut novel. She is currently writing the sequel to **Simon Says, Every Shut Eye**. She lives with her dog, Chad, in Mitchellville, Maryland. You can e-mail her at author@collendixon.com.

Simon Says: A Novel of Intrigue, Betrayal...and Murder

by Collen Dixon

Publication Date: September 9, 2003

Paperback: 336 pages

Publisher: Villard

ISBN-10: 0812968816

ISBN-13: 9780812968811