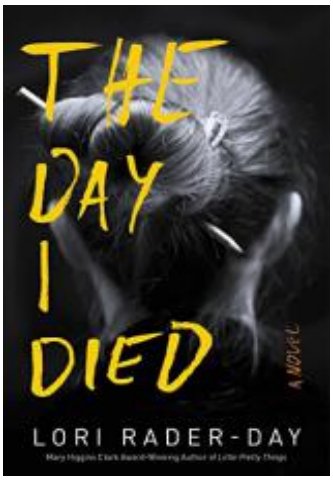
The Day I Died

by Lori Rader-Day



About the Book

Anna Winger can know people better than they know themselves with only a glance --- at their handwriting. Hired out by companies wanting to land trustworthy employees and by the lovelorn hoping to find happiness, Anna likes to keep the real-life mess of other people at arm?s length and on paper. But when she is called to use her expertise on a note left behind at a murder scene in the small town she and her son have recently moved to, the crime gets under Anna?s skin and rips open her narrow life for all to see. To save her son --- and herself --- once and for all, Anna will face her every fear, her every mistake, and the past she thought she'd rewritten.

Discussion Guide

1. When we first meet Anna, she can?t admit that she cares about the little boy who?s missing. What changes in this situation? How does Anna find compassion she didn?t think she had?

2. Anna?s only friend isn?t really a friend. She knows that ?one of us had been a drowning person, and the other, a life raft.? How has being helped so much by Kent and others defined Anna?s ability to connect with other people?

3. How does the Ransey family?s history in the town of Parks color Sheriff Keller?s approach to the case of Aidan going missing? How can media representation or other commentary hurt the chances of justice being served?

4. The Dairy Bar is a place that Anna gravitates toward, a place she can reclaim from a childhood she?s had to leave behind. What are the touchstone locations of your childhood? Where is the place in your current life that reminds you most of a cherished place or person?

5. Anna returns to her old town and sees simultaneously what is the same and what is different, layers over time over top one another. (The word for this phenomenon is *palimpsest*.) Have you ever returned to a place you hadn?t been in years?

What changes or enduring artifacts stood out to you?

6. What complex feelings do you see between Anna and Theresa during their unexpected reunion?

7. Left for dead, Anna finds strength not just in her son but in the child she once was. What emotions are at work here?

8. What do you think will be different for Anna after the end of this story? How has she changed?

Author Bio

Lori Rader-Day is the Edgar® Award-nominated and Agatha, Anthony and Mary Higgins Clark award-winning author of WRECK YOUR HEART, THE DEATH OF US, DEATH AT GREENWAY, THE LUCKY ONE, UNDER A DARK SKY, THE DAY I DIED, LITTLE PRETTY THINGS and THE BLACK HOUR. She lives in Chicago, where she is leads the mystery readers? festival Midwest Mystery Conference and teaches creative writing for Northwestern University?s School of Professional Studies.

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