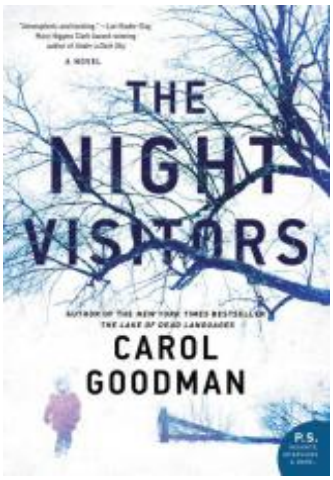
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The Night Visitors

by Carol Goodman



About the Book

This latest thriller from the internationally bestselling author of THE LAKE OF DEAD LANGUAGES and THE OTHER MOTHER is a story of mistaken identities and missed chances, forgiveness and vengeance.

ALICE gets off a bus in the middle of a snowstorm in Delphi, NY. She is fleeing an abusive relationship and desperate to protect...

OREN, 10 years old, a major *Star Wars* fan and wise beyond his years. Though Alice is wary, Oren bonds nearly instantly with...

MATTIE, a social worker in her 50s who lives in an enormous run-down house in the middle of the woods. Mattie lives alone and is always available, and so she is the person the hotline always calls when they need a late-night pickup. And although, according to protocol, Mattie should take Alice and Oren to a local shelter, instead she brings them home for the night. She has plenty of room, she says. What she doesn't say is that Oren reminds her of her little brother, who died 30 years ago at the age of 10.

But Mattie isn't the only one withholding elements of the truth. Alice is keeping her own secrets. And as the snowstorm worsens around them, each woman's past will prove itself unburied, stirring up threats both within and without.

Discussion Guide

1. Do you consider Frank a sympathetic character? Did his death change your opinion of him?

2. How does the hidden house layered within Mattie?s house symbolize her relationship with Caleb and the rest of her family?

3. How does the book?s wintry setting affect the events that take place? How does it constrain and aid the characters?

4. How did the alternating points of view between Alice and Mattie shape your impressions of both women?

5. How does the Greek mythology featured throughout the book inform the book?s setting, characters and events?

6. At the start of chapter 13, Oren decides Mattie is Princess Leia and Alice is Rey in their game of *Star Wars*. To what degree does this reflect Mattie and Alice?s relationship? Are there other roles you would assign them or some of the other characters in the book?

7. Many characters are either running from the past or stuck in the past. In both cases, voices call to them from the past, whether it?s Mattie?s mom, Caleb or Davis. How effectively does each of the characters deal with these voices? Are there voices from your past that echo in your ears?

8. Forgiveness and vengeance are major themes in the book. How do they balance and counteract each other?

9. How does the book?s ending subvert society?s expectations of how families are supposed to look and the roles and responsibilities people are supposed to take on?

10. To what degree do you think Caleb?s actions were driven by vengeance versus love?

11. Support between women plays a big role in the book, not only with Mattie and Alice but with Doreen, Atefeh and Sister Martine as well. How does this contrast with the men in the book? How do you think this will affect Oren as he grows up?

Author Bio

Carol Goodman?s rich and prolific career includes novels such as THE WIDOW'S HOUSE and THE NIGHT VISITOR, winners of the 2018 and 2020 Mary Higgins Clark Award. Her books have been translated into 16 languages. She lives in the Hudson Valley, NY.

Critical Praise

?Carol Goodman is, simply put, a stellar writer.?

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