



Discussion Guide

About the Book:

Author: Freida McFadden

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Questions for Discussion

1. What were your general impressions of this book?
2. This book is in the psychological thriller genre. What do you like/dislike about this genre? How did this book compare to other thrillers you've read?
3. This book is told through Nora's point of view, both as an adult and a child. Did you trust her as a character? To what extent were you suspicious of her?
4. This book explores the theme of nature vs. nurture. There were hints that Nora had her father's nature. Do you agree or disagree? What role do you think nature vs. nurture plays in our personality development? In what ways are you like your parents? How are you different? If you have children, how are they like and unlike you?
5. Why do you think Nora became a surgeon? Do you know other examples of offspring choosing a healing/helping profession in a situation where the parent was very misguided?
6. What did you think of the relationship between Phillip and Nora? Why did he choose her and why were they so competitive? Did you suspect Phillip?
7. What did you think of the relationship between Nora and Brady? Was he a good match for her? Why or why not? Did you suspect him? If so what clues were there that he did it?
8. What did you think of the character of Harper? Were there any clues/suggestions to her involvement in the murders?
9. Did you suspect Nora's involvement in the murders? If so, what clues led you to suspect her? Did you solve the mystery before the resolution? Why or why not?
10. Have you read other books by Freida McFadden? If so, how did this compare and which books would you recommend to other readers and why?
11. What do the MAMs have to say about the book? Whom do you agree with?

Listen on YouTube:

Open Book with Jenna: Freida McFadden (31:56)

Meet the Author: Freida McFadden (31:59)

Human to Human: FREIDA MCFADDEN! (28:35)



NANCY: A psychological thriller that kept me reading and wondering whodunit until the very end. There were enough red herrings on the various characters that I didn't figure it out. This is a new genre for me and I didn't think I'd like it, but it was engaging. I enjoyed the voice of the narrator, Nora, who was also the main character. She made the book very relatable, but also kept me guessing about her character.



ABIGAIL: A new genre for me, as well. As a pacifist, the subject matter bothers me, but not as much as I suspected, because the book is more about trying to figure out who is guilty, rather than describing the actual murders. So that made it more palatable for me. The author is great at character development and spinning a believable tale.



SALLIE: Well, you know as a retired kindergarten teacher, I always focus on the kids, and in this case Nora. Although very few children have mass murderers for parents, many these days have parents involved in drug use and/or criminal activity. You see how hard it is for them through Nora's eyes. And that makes the book worthwhile for me.



PRISCILLA: I actually chose this book for the MAMs to read. That might surprise you, but I actually love to read thrillers. I think because it's an escape for me. I've read all of McFadden's books because they are fast reads and keep me enthralled to the end. I loved Nora and I also figured it out before the end. You read enough of these and you get it.



JANE: Interesting read. Loved the strong female character of Nora, being a surgeon and also that the author is a physician. How cool is that, that McFadden writes in her spare time and became a bestselling author after self-publishing? Go Freida! You're my rockstar.



MOLLY: Not my favorite genre, for sure. I'd rather be reading something that helps make our world better, rather than escaping or being "entertained" by catching a psychopath. Why spend time distracting ourselves with this stuff, while our democracy is at risk, climate change is heating up the environment, and we need to show up and take action?



KATHARINE: I see Molly's point, and also sometimes we just need a break and entering a book takes us away from the reality of everyday. She's obviously a popular author and so would be a good read for literature classes learning about psychological thrillers. Some themes there for a college professor to explore, especially nurture/nature. I still prefer the romance for my escapes, with happier stories. Although, there was some happily ever after in this story, don't you think?