



The Sound of Broken Glass

By Deborah Crombie
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Questions for Discussion

1. Talk about the four detectives featured in the novel: Melody, Gemma, Duncan, and Doug. What techniques do they use during their investigation? Does their gender have any influence on how they approach their jobs?
2. Discuss the structure of the novel. Each chapter begins with a small entry on the history of the Crystal Palace. It also includes information from one of the main character's lives: Andy. Why did the author frame the story this way? How does this add to the tension and the plotting? What do you learn about this section of London—how has it changed from when Crystal Palace was built to Andy's childhood to today?
3. How do some of the detectives' choices complicate the case? By the book or think outside of the box?
4. If you are fans of the series, compare the characters from the first novel you read to this one. Describe the arc of each of the characters' developments and identify the factors that helped shape their personalities. Do you have a favorite character? Identify and explain what attracts you to him or her.
5. Being a detective is a highly immersive profession. How do Gemma and Duncan balance work and family life? How does having small children complicate their work? What does it add to it? How does Duncan cope with being a stay-at-home dad?
6. If you are a fan of mystery novels, how does this novel—and the series compare to others in the genre? What is it about this series that appeals to you? Compare and contrast British and American detectives. If this were set in America, how would it be different?
7. Were you surprised when the killer's identity became clear? If yes, what plot devices did Deborah Crombie employ to keep you guessing? If you suspected the killer early, what led you to suspect the truth?
8. What role does class play in the story? Do the detectives have their own prejudices that shape their attitudes and color their investigations?
9. What do you think will happen in the next novel? Will Melody still be seeing Andy? What would you like to see happen in her and Doug's relationship? What may happen to Duncan and his career?