



Ripper

By Isabel Allende
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Questions for Discussion

1. Describe Amanda Martin. Think about the adults in her life. Who has the most influence on her? Compare and contrast Amanda to her parents. How does she favor her homicide detective father, and how is she like her free-spirited mother?
2. As we come to know Amanda, we learn that she has trained her senses in a variety of ways, including cataloging people by scent. If you were to categorize the people close to you, what scents would you ascribe to each of them? Choose a few family members or friends and share your insights with the group.
3. Have you ever played a mystery game? Is Ripper a good outlet for Amanda's intelligence and curiosity? How might it be detrimental? How does playing the game help her solve the mystery at the center of the novel? Track her steps and how she compiled the clues.
4. Consider the novel's structure. How does Isabel Allende build suspense as the story proceeds? Does she use red herrings? Were you surprised when the killer was revealed? If you guessed, what clues led you to the killer?
5. While *Ripper* is about Amanda, it is also the story of her mother, Indiana. What is your opinion of Indi? Is she too trusting? Too open? Too free? Or do you think the world would be a better place with more people like her?
6. When we are introduced to Amanda's mother, Indi, we meet a woman with the soul of a hippie, who believes in peace and love. Do you think her experience with a serial killer changed her?
7. Consider the men in the book—Amanda's father Bob Martin, Navy vet Ryan Miller, and the elusive and wealthy Alan Keller. What attracts Indi to each of these men? What is it about her that draws them? What qualities does Indi need in a man?
8. The city of San Francisco is not only the novel's setting, it's also a character. If you have been to San Francisco, how does the city in the pages of *Ripper* compare to your experiences? If you haven't been there, what impressions did you get about the city from reading the book?
9. If you have read other Isabel Allende novels, how does this compare to them? What elements carry through her books, and what is different in *Ripper*?