



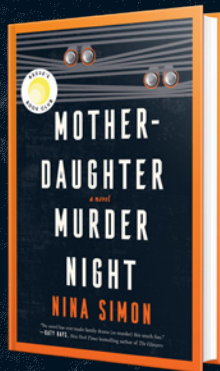
**MOTHER-
DAUGHTER
a novel
MURDER
NIGHT**

NINA SIMON

BOOK CLUB KIT

Questions for Discussion

1. The Rubicon women embody strength in different ways—Lana the warrior, Beth the caregiver, Jack the explorer. What traits do you associate with those of a “strong woman?” How do the women demonstrate those qualities differently, or similarly?
2. Lana Rubicon is brand-new to investigating crimes. What do you feel is her most effective skill as an amateur detective? What do you believe is her greatest weakness?
3. All the primary suspects—and the murder victims—have different visions for the future of the ranch. If you had the power to decide what should happen to the Rhoads ranch at the end of the story, what would you do, and why?
4. Lana and Beth disagree about why the sheriffs focus on Jack as a potential suspect. As Lana puts it on page 51, “Not everything is about racism or discrimination. This is just good old-fashioned incompetence.” Do you agree with Lana? What role, if any, do you see discrimination playing in the investigation of Ricardo Cruz and Hal Rhoads’s deaths?
5. Lana Rubicon and Hal Rhoads are both tough, exacting single parents. What differences do you see in their parenting styles, and how do you think those differences impact the relationships they’ve built with their adult children?
6. Self-love and family love are important themes throughout *Mother-Daughter Murder Night*. On page 123, Lana tells Jack, “You have to love yourself most. No one else will do that for you.” How do you feel about this advice and Jack’s response to it? In what other moments of the book do these themes appear?
7. Lana Rubicon and Teresa Ramirez both use their appearance to command attention in a world that tries to render them invisible. How else do the women in the novel assert themselves? If you’ve had experiences of feeling invisible and wanting to assert yourself, how did you do it?
8. The whole story starts when Lana is suddenly knocked out of the iron grip she holds on her life. How did this experience reverberate throughout the novel? Have you ever experienced a sudden loss of power or agency? How did you deal with it?
9. Jack is hungry to go on adventures beyond her small town. On page 20, she thinks about the fact that it’s not that she doesn’t love the slough, she just “isn’t surprised by its secrets anymore.” Do you remember a time when you thought you knew everything about your community, and then were surprised by a shift in your understanding?
10. The Rhoads family is full of secrets that lead to pain, emotional distance, and murder. Do you think there are times when keeping secrets from family members can be good, even compassionate? Do you agree with the necessity in keeping any of the Rhoads’ secrets?
11. Lana Rubicon and Gigi Montero both offer the young women in their lives unfiltered and unsolicited advice. Have you ever received an audacious piece of advice from an elder that has stuck with you (whether you agreed with it or not)?



ENHANCE YOUR BOOK CLUB

- The historical document Jack finds about the history of the Roadhouse Ranch and the way the Roadhouse family took the land from Mexicans in the 1800s is real. Consider the history of the neighborhood or land where you live. If you discovered your family's land was acquired by theft or unequal government policies, what would you do?
- The central conflict that drives this mystery is about the relationship between real estate, power, and self-determination. The author was influenced by crime writer Attica Locke's speech in 2020 about how all questions of land ownership and land use are fundamentally about power. Watch Locke's Noirwich Lecture on YouTube and discuss the role real estate plays in the way power moves through *Mother-Daughter Murder Night* and other crime stories.
- The conflict between Victor Morales and Ricardo Cruz regarding the future of the Rhoads ranch is based in a real debate about the purpose and evolving role of land trusts. Find out more about the land trust(s) in your area and their goals. Do you see "holding land in trust" as a question of protecting ecosystems from human interference, managing new relationships between humans and nature, supporting indigenous groups in efforts to reclaim stolen land, or something else?
- Find (or make!) the perfect shrimp burrito to accompany your book club meeting.
- Channel your inner Lana and wear an item of clothing to your book club meeting that makes you feel powerful.
- Lana and Beth drink wine out of Sprite bottles. Be creative and enjoy your favorite wine in a non-wine glass. Bonus points if it's a wine from Monterey, Santa Cruz, or Carmel.
- This book emphasizes female empowerment. Make a fun music playlist for your book club featuring women-power singers of the 1980s that Lana would love: Tina Turner, Pat Benatar, Bonnie Raitt, Linda Ronstadt, Annie Lennox.