



Book Club Questions

What Happened to Nina? by Dervla McTiernan

1. How did Nina's personality and her past choices affect how people reacted when she suddenly went missing?
2. How did Nina's family's grief and fear shape their choices, and can their actions be justified in the face of such overwhelming emotions?
3. How does Simon's character change as the investigation progresses? Did your view of him shift? If so, what influenced that change?
4. Which character struck you as the most morally complex? Were there any unexpected moments where someone surprised you?
5. Nina's mother and Simon's mother both possess an unwavering, fierce protectiveness that shapes their actions during the crisis. But how does their journey through motherhood influence the way each woman tackles the challenges they face?
6. Did you find yourself sympathizing more with one family over the other? What specific choices or behaviors influenced that?
7. How does fear alter the parents' perception of their children? Can they truly grasp the essence of who Nina and Simon really are?
8. The novel delves into the lengths a parent will go to safeguard their child, raising the intriguing question: at what point does fierce loyalty slip into the realm of denial?
9. Compare Andy's (Nina's dad) desperate, boots-on-the-ground search to Rory's (Simon's dad) quiet, expensive complicity. Is Rory's "support" of his wife actually a form of cowardice? At what point does Andy's grief turn into a dangerous obsession?
10. How did the "Search for Nina" campaign change once the Parley family hired a PR firm? Discuss the ethics of using "bots" and "trolls" to smear a victim's reputation. Does this reflect how we consume real-life true crime news today?
11. If Simon and Nina had come from the same socio-economic background, would the investigation have played out differently? In this book, is money portrayed as a tool for justice, or strictly as a tool for concealment?
12. Discuss the "justice" served at the end. Was it satisfying, or did it leave you feeling uneasy? Is there such a thing as a "moral" crime when the legal system fails?
13. How does the trauma of Nina's disappearance-and her parents' subsequent choices-reshape Grace's future? Is she a secondary victim of her parents' obsession with justice?
14. Did knowing "what happened" early on change how you felt about the characters? Does the suspense come from the crime itself, or from watching the two families slowly dismantle their own morality?

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