

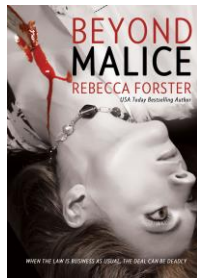
Book Club Discussions



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BEYOND MALICE



Unlike her much younger sister Nora, attorney Amanda Cross has worked hard for everything she has - which isn't much. But the tables turn when the evidence in the grisly murder of a partner's wife at a prestigious law firm points to Nora. Abandoned by the legal community, Nora reluctantly turns to her sister for help. Armed with a tenacious spirit, no leads, no experience in defending a murder charge, Amanda has to free her sister from what the D.A. claims is an open-and shut case. With the help of a handsome assistant-for-hire with a chip on his shoulder, this outgunned lawyer peels away the protective layers surrounding some very upright types to reveal intentions that seem to be beyond reproach, but are, in fact, beyond malice.

BOOK CLUB GUIDE:

1. **At its core, Beyond Malice is about the game, the prize and the win.** Name three separate power struggles playing out in this book. Do you see any differences between the struggles of the women versus the men?
2. **Nora and Amanda have a unique relationship - or do they?** Does sibling rivalry have to be based in some reality or can it simply exist as an organic thing? Nora and Amanda both had different perceptions of their parents' behavior. How might each of the women been right about their treatment and how might they have been wrong?
3. **Nora and her affair are at the heart of this story.** Do you believe it is possible to entirely divorce emotion from an affair as Nora says she has? If she did harbor emotional attachments do you believe it was to her lover, to what he represented, or to the partnership she wanted? Is Nora hard or practical? Does her character make you want to hire her as an attorney, make her your friend, or want to steer clear of her?
4. **Amanda seems to have a chip on her shoulder.** Does she really? Or is Amanda as self-aware as her sister, understanding her limitations in the same way her sister understands that the world is her oyster. Amanda thinks she has a healthy view of herself until Mark points out that they are both 'destined to loose'. Does that need to prove him wrong make her a better person in the same way it makes her a better attorney?
5. **The firm wives are a tight knit group.** Discuss the roll of groups to women. Was there really power in this group? Was there comfort? Were they tied together out of fear and, if so, what exactly did they fear? Loss of wealth? Status? Love?
6. **The End.** In the end, Amanda's only thanks from Nora is a check for services rendered. Do you see any future for the sisters? Has this experience put Nora in the proper perspective for Amanda

or will she slide back down the chute of resentment again. Do you think Amanda will better herself in the future? If so, will she leave Mark behind?