

## Further Reading

**Dark Places**  
**Gillian Flynn (2009)**  
**FLYNN**

Libby Day was seven when her mother and two sisters were murdered in "The Satan Sacrifice of Kinnakee, Kansas". She escaped and survived to later testify that her 15-year-old brother Ben was the killer. Twenty-five years later she is contacted by "The Kill Club" and pumped for information they hope to use to free Ben. Libby hatches a plan to profit from her tragic past but ends up being chased by a killer.

**The Ruin**  
**Dervla McTiernan (2018)**  
**MCTIERNAN**

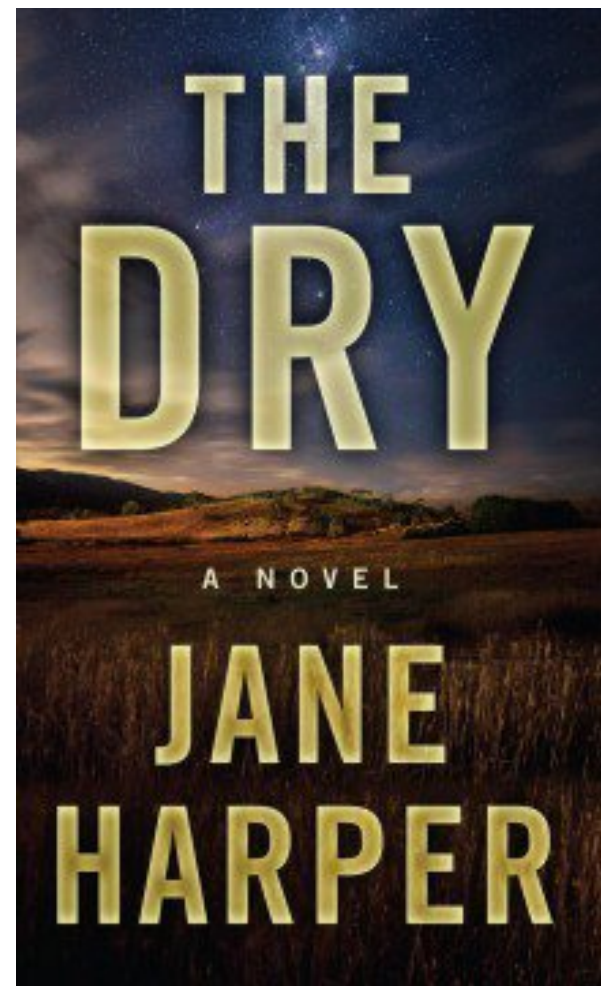
After Maude's mother overdoses and her brother's body is found in a nearby river, Detective Cormac Reilly is pressured to arrest her for the deaths, but evidence emerges that points to an unexpected series of events that changes everything.

**Crimson Lake**  
**Candice Fox (2017)**  
**MYS FOX**

Wrongly accused of the abduction of a thirteen-year-old girl, Sydney detective Ted Conkaffey is forced to hide in the crocodile-infested wetlands of Crimson Lake, where he agrees to help convicted killer Amanda Pharrell in a case involving dangerous secrets.

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## Book Discussion Guide



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## About the Book

After getting a note demanding his presence, Federal Agent Aaron Falk arrives in his hometown for the first time in decades to attend the funeral of his best friend, Luke. Twenty years ago when Falk was accused of murder, Luke was his alibi. Falk and his father fled under a cloud of suspicion, saved from prosecution only because of Luke's steadfast claim that the boys had been together at the time of the crime. But now more than one person knows they didn't tell the truth back then, and Luke is dead. Amid the worst drought in a century, Falk and the local detective question what really happened to Luke. As Falk reluctantly investigates to see if there's more to Luke's death than there seems to be, long-buried mysteries resurface and so do the lies that have haunted them. Falk will find that small towns have always hidden big secrets.

## Discussion Questions

1. Talk about the characters, both good and bad. Describe their personalities and motivations. Are they fully developed and emotionally complex? Or are they flat, one-dimensional heroes and villains?
2. What do you know...and when do you know it? At what point in the book do you begin to piece together what happened?
3. Good crime writers embed hidden clues in plain sight, slipping them in casually, almost in passing. Did you pick them out, or were you...clueless? Once you've finished the book, go back to locate the clues hidden in plain sight. How skillful was the author in burying them?
4. Good crime writers also tease us with red-herrings—false clues—to purposely lead readers astray. Does your author try to throw you off track? If so, were you tripped up?
5. Talk about the twists & turns—those surprising plot developments that throw everything you think you've figured out into disarray. Do they enhance the story, add complexity, and build suspense? Are they plausible or implausible? Do they feel forced and gratuitous—inserted merely to extend the story?
6. Does the author ratchet up the suspense? Did you find yourself anxious—quickly turning pages to learn what happened? At what point does the suspense start to build? Where does it climax...then perhaps start rising again?
7. A good ending is essential in any mystery or crime thriller: it should ease up on tension, answer questions, and tidy up loose ends. Does the ending accomplish those goals? Can you envision a different or better ending?
8. Are there certain passages in the book—ideas, descriptions, or dialogue—that you found interesting or revealing...or that somehow struck you? What lines, if any, made you stop and think?
9. Overall, does the book satisfy? Does it live up to the standards of a good crime story or suspense thriller? Why or why not?

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