

BOOK CLUB KIT



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DEAR READER,

Thank you for choosing *Flight* for your book club! One silver lining of this tumultuous time has been hearing from readers who say books have helped sustain them by providing comfort, joy, and companionship. I am especially excited to share with you my newest novel, *Flight*, a romantic thriller set on the Texas Gulf Coast.

Flight is the story of Miranda Rhoads, a former forensic photographer who moves to the seaside town of Lost Beach with plans to make her living as a wildlife photographer and leave crime scenes behind her. But her plans are upended one morning when she comes across a couple sleeping in a canoe, entwined in an embrace. Looking closer, she realizes the man and woman aren't asleep—they've been murdered. Investigators converge on the scene, but Miranda is the one who spies several key clues, including an exotic feather, that the killer has left behind. Although Miranda is reluctant to get involved in the case, lead detective Joel Breda is determined to convince her to help. Joel is dealing with a string of chilling murders, and he needs Miranda's CSI skills to help unravel the crimes before the killer strikes again.

I got my start as a newspaper reporter and always loved covering the crime stories. So when I started writing fiction, I was naturally drawn to suspense. I love interviewing cops and forensic experts to uncover those vivid details that really bring a story to life!

Flight takes place along the Texas Gulf Coast, where I have spent many summers. With its beautiful dunes, vast marshes, and crackling thunderstorms, the coastal setting provides a dramatic backdrop for a novel that is both a thriller and a love story. *Flight* is book two in the Texas Murder Files series, which kicked off with *Hidden*, a *USA Today* bestseller. Each book in the Texas Murder Files series features a different mystery and a different romantic couple, so each book can be read as a standalone. As with my other series, readers can pick up any book and dive right in.

I hope you will enjoy *Flight*! I love to engage with readers, so please let me know if you are interested in setting up a virtual event or if you'd like me to send you a batch of signed bookmarks for your group.

Happy reading!

LAURA GRIFFIN

A Conversation with **LAURA GRIFFIN**

Tell us about *Flight*! What inspired you to write this story?

I wanted to write a story about this amazingly skilled and talented woman who is fleeing the very thing she was meant to do. Miranda shows up at Lost Beach determined to become a nature photographer, but she can't escape the pull of CSI work. It's ingrained in her, and she has to figure out how to come to terms with her passion for the work—photographing crime scenes and finding evidence for police—and the toll it is taking on her mentally. *Flight* is a love story, too, so ultimately Detective Joel Breda is with her on this journey.

What do you feel are the main themes/issues that are addressed in *Flight*?

Well, the two original victims in the story are young bohemians who road trip around the country taking pics of themselves and posting them for their followers. They lead this beautiful life, set against a backdrop of sunsets and iconic landmarks. But are there consequences to the relentless push to post things on social media? Miranda is troubled by this trend in society. As a forensic photographer, she sees where the beauty and the horrors of daily life intersect.

Miranda's former job as a forensic photographer puts her in a unique situation for being the one who discovers the two bodies at the start of the novel. What was it about that career that made you want to explore it with your heroine?

I love forensics! It's such an interesting combination of science and intuition. I wanted to write a heroine whose superpower is being able to walk into a crime scene and figure out what the perpetrator may have done, and how, and zero in on the most important evidence to photograph. In *Flight*, that's Miranda's special gift.

Nicole is a great character we're introduced to in this book, and she gives us insight on what it means to be a woman in the police force. Will we get see more of her in future books?

Absolutely! Nicole is in the book I'm writing now, *Harbored* (Texas Murder Files 3), as a second-

ary character. I love writing Nicole because she operates in a male-dominated world of law enforcement, and she knows how to stand up for herself. In *Flight*, we see her friendship with many of the men she works with, but there is a love story there, too, waiting to be told.

What sort of research went into writing the book?

I first became interested in forensic photography when I was visiting an FBI crime lab. The investigators showed me some of the techniques they use for photographing and lifting fingerprints from difficult places, like a brick or bumpy surface. They can even get them from human skin! They demonstrated how to photograph shoe prints and trace evidence. It's fascinating how a forensic photographer can spy tiny bits of evidence and turn them into huge leads for the police. The story possibilities are endless.

How did your writing process change, if at all, while writing this novel?

I finished this novel during the pandemic, which was a challenge. Like so many other people, my household turned upside-down as my entire family was home suddenly sharing the same space. For me, working at home is normal, but the rest of my family had a big adjustment. Usually when I hit a writing wall, I pack up and go to my favorite coffee shop to work. But with that option out, I learned to use music and earbuds to create my own "space" within a busy living room. Also, I spent a lot of time outside, whether hiking or jogging or paddle boarding... anything to get a mental break. Nature is a wonderful escape.

What do you hope readers will take away from this story?

I hope people will think more about how they use social media and why, and how that technology impacts our daily lives and relationships. Next time you're taking out your phone, ask yourself: Does this moment really need to be captured and shared? What if I keep this experience just for me? Sometimes the best experiences—like striking up a friendship or crying over a book or falling in love—are the ones that wash over you when you least expect it.

ISLAND BREEZE COCKTAIL

2 oz. pineapple juice

2 oz. cranberry juice

1 oz. rum (I prefer Bacardi)

**Splash of grenadine or
maraschino cherry juice**

**Ice cubes, cherry and pineapple
slice for garnish**

Combine pineapple juice, cranberry juice, rum, and grenadine.

Shake to create foam on top.

Pour over ice cubes. Garnish with a slice of pineapple and a cherry on a toothpick.

Relax & enjoy!





PHOTOS THAT INSPIRED THE BOOK



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1

Joel is impressed with Miranda's CSI skills because she notices things investigators overlook. Where in the story was this skill most evident? Were there any points where the clues Miranda noticed took you by surprise?

2

Miranda struggles between the ongoing stress of CSI work and her desire to make a positive impact. Do you think you could work in a field where you were continually exposed to the aftermath of violent crime, or would the stress be too much?

3

Miranda worries that she may be risking her heart with Joel because he recently came out of a serious relationship. How soon is too soon to go from one serious relationship to another? Do you think the timing matters?

4

Many people have a love/hate relationship with social media. What about you? Do you find that the benefits of social media outweigh the things you dislike about it?

5

The young couple in the story posted thousands of pictures of their travels. Do you like glimpsing people's vacations through their social media posts, or do you think people have gone too far with showcasing their vacations online?

6

Like Lost Beach, many resort communities struggle to balance economic development with preserving natural resources. Which do you think is more important?

7

When did you first realize the killer's true motivation in the story? Do you think their motive is compelling?

8

Have you ever lived in a place considered a tourist destination? If you could live full-time in a popular tourist spot, where would it be?

About **LAURA GRIFFIN**

Laura Griffin is the *New York Times* and *USA Today* bestselling author of more than twenty-five books and novellas. She is a two-time RITA Award winner as well as the recipient of the Daphne du Maurier Award.

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