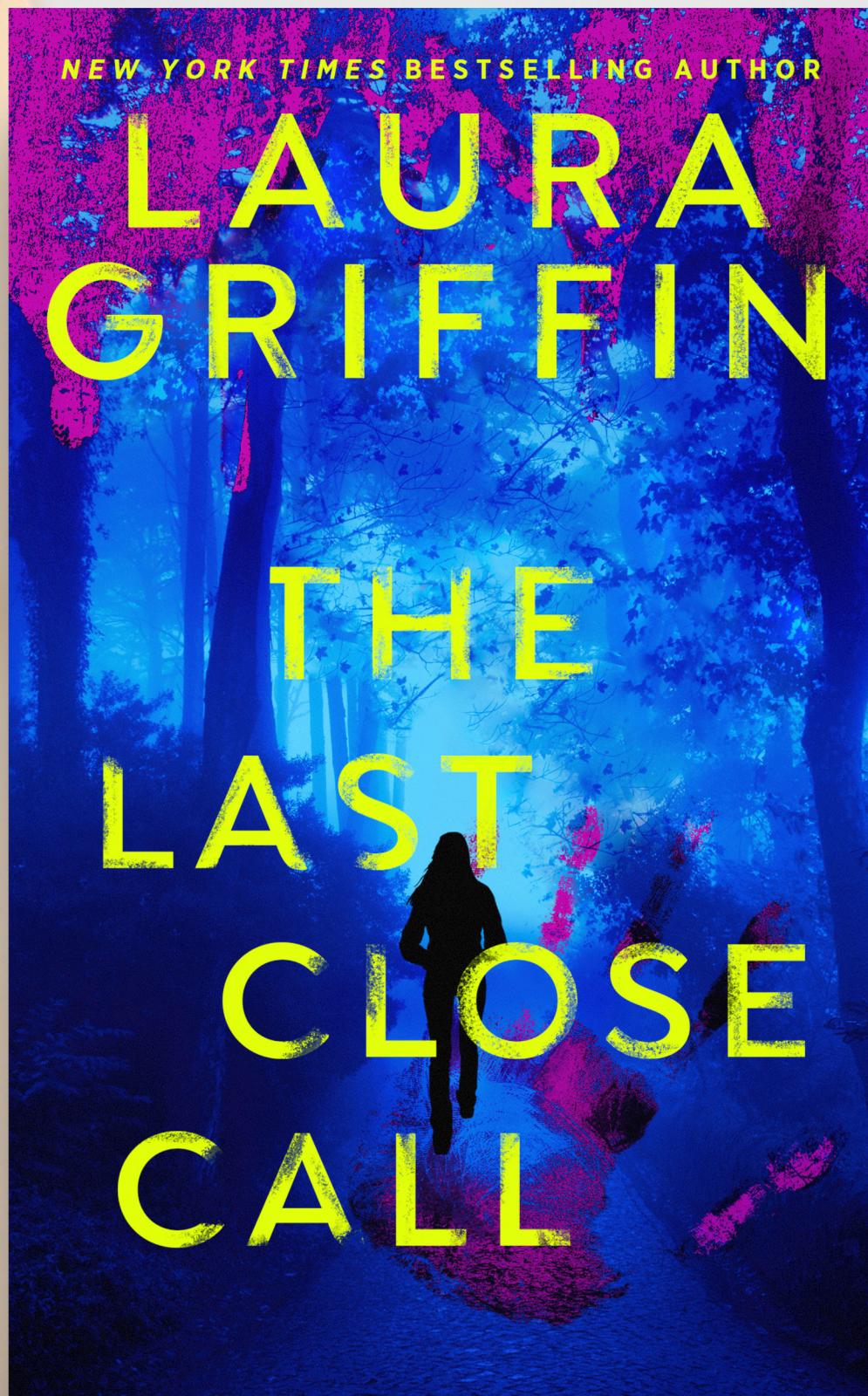


BOOK CLUB KIT

analyst
who's
cold
new
suspense
best-
Griffin.





AUTHOR
LETTER

Dear Reader,

Thank you for selecting *The Last Close Call*!

When I visit book clubs, readers often ask where my stories come from. As a former newspaper reporter, I am constantly scanning headlines to spark new ideas. *The Last Close Call* was inspired by the genetic genealogist who helped California police capture the Golden State Killer, who had eluded them for decades.

In *The Last Close Call*, Rowan Healy has made a name for herself by using DNA profiles and genealogy to help detectives track down violent criminals. But the pressure of police work has prompted her to shift her focus to helping adoptees reconnect with their biological parents. Then she meets Jack Bruner, an Austin homicide cop who believes Rowan holds the key to cracking his toughest cold case. With Rowan's genetic genealogy skills and Jack's clever detective work, they zero in on a ruthless offender who has been hiding in plain sight for years.

Across the country, the field of genetic genealogy is turning police investigations upside down. Almost every day, we hear about murderers being brought to justice after years of frustration and investigative dead-ends. This new technology means crime solving—and crime fiction—will never be the same.

I loved writing this book! It was a thrill to write about an innovative young woman using cutting-edge DNA technology and old-fashioned sleuthing to find a killer.

While researching *The Last Close Call*, I was inspired by the amazing work of true crime author Michelle McNamara, who studied the Golden State Killer and wrote the bestseller *I'll Be Gone in the Dark*. It's a fascinating case, and I believe my new book will appeal to readers of suspense fiction, as well as true crime enthusiasts.

I love to meet readers! Please let me know if you'd like to set up a book chat or if you would like a batch of signed bookmarks for your members. And, again, thank you for choosing *The Last Close Call*.

Happy reading!

Laura Griffin

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

TEST REPORT



1. When Rowan first meets Jack, she declines to get involved in his case. Why do you think she changes her mind?
2. In addition to police work, Rowan also helps adoptees locate their biological parents. Do you think it is ethical for people to use DNA to track down their biological parents in cases where the adoption records are sealed?
3. Rowan and Joy share something in common in that both of their lives were shaped by a rocky relationship with their parents—but for entirely different reasons. Can you identify with either character? Do you find Rowan or Joy to be more relatable?
4. In what ways are various characters affected by sexism in the story? What do you think of the way Joy has dealt with sexism in her life?
5. New advancements in genetic genealogy are turning police investigations upside-down as more and more cold cases are reopened. How do you think you would feel if you took a home DNA test and the DNA profile you uploaded ended up implicating one of your relatives in a crime? If you were ever approached by police and asked to give a DNA sample to help with an investigation of someone in your family tree, would you be willing?
6. Do you think that Joy was right to keep her past a secret from her husband? How do you feel about Joy's actions at the end of the story?
7. Rowan initially lies to Jack when he asks whether she has ever used her DNA to trace her family tree. Do you think she was justified in lying to him at that point in their relationship?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

TEST REPORT



8. Rowan is estranged from her parents after they kept a secret from her. Do you agree with Rowan's view that they should have told her the truth when she was a teenager? Do you think they were morally obligated to ever tell her the truth about her biological parents?
9. Rowan says Skyler, Lila, and Dara are "like my family now" and she describes herself and her friends as a group of misfits. Do you have anyone in your life who is like a found family?
10. In Joy's kitchen one evening, Joy asks Rowan if she believes evil can be inherited. What do you think of this idea? Do you believe some people are born with an "evil" gene, or do you think psychopathic behavior is learned or shaped by experience?
11. By the end of the story, Jack is trying to make room in his life for things besides work, such as his relationship with Rowan. What does Jack do to show his commitment and help restore Rowan's faith in relationships?