

BOOK CLUB DISCUSSION GUIDE

FOR NIKI UNDERCOVER

📖 Ashley and “Niki” live in different worlds. What cost does Ashley bear in order to maintain her Niki persona? How does becoming Niki affect how she thinks and acts as Ashley? Does she keep them separate, or do the lines blur?

📖 Ashley sometimes sidesteps procedure to protect the mission. When—if ever—is that justified? Which of her choices would you most debate?

📖 What in Ashley’s past do you think caused her to have such strong trust issues? Who did you trust at key moments—Rick, Malachi, Gex, Sergeant Oliver, Colonel Pete, Sam, Seamus, others—and why? If your view of someone changed, what tipped you from trust to doubt or vice versa?

📖 How do gender expectations shape the way people in the FBI and at Pendergast Holdings treat Ashley? How is that similar to or different from Niki’s experience in Patriots for Freedom? Where does she use those expectations to her advantage—and where do they put her at risk?

📖 How do family ties and revelations complicate Ashley’s decisions? In what ways do “given family” and “chosen family” collide in this story?

📖 The author tells most of the story through Ashley/Niki’s point of view, but some scenes use Malachi’s or Colonel Pete’s perspective. In what ways is that effective? Would you keep the structure as is or change anything?

📖 From randomizing routes to Faraday bags, surveillance cameras, and phone compromises, how does the novel explore modern tradeoffs between security and vulnerability?

📖 Nothing stays the same after the diner confrontation. What options existed in that instant and in the immediate aftermath? How do you judge each character’s choices and their consequences?

📖 How do Washington, D.C., Maryland backroads, and St. Paul each shape tone, stakes, and Ashley’s thinking? Where did place feel most vivid to you?

📖 What do you think the author wanted to explore with this story?

📖 If you could invite the author and three characters to dinner, which characters would you choose and why? What would you ask each first?

📖 If you could change one thing—cut or add a scene, alter a character’s choice, something else—what would it be, and why?

📖 What do you predict for Niki in the next novel, *Niki Unleashed*? What consequences from this story are most likely to follow her?