






BOOK CLUB DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR NIKI UNLEASHED


 **The title:** This book is the second in the Niki Undercover Thriller series. Why do you think the author chose the title *Niki Unleashed*? FBI Deputy Director Ambrose uses the word in one specific instance. Is that the only way that Niki has been unleashed, or does the author intend it in a broader context?


 **Bookstore Shelving:** The story involves a mystery (who is the killer?) and various thriller elements (politics, environment, undercover agent). If you were placing the novel in a very large bookstore with shelves for every crime fiction subgenre, where would you place *Niki Unleashed*?


 **Ashley/Niki choices:** Ashley/Niki sometimes sidesteps procedure and bends or breaks rules. When—if ever—do ends justify means? Choose one instance of this behavior from the book and argue both sides of the question of why it was necessary and why it was unacceptable. Is there a different line between fiction and real life?


 **Trust of character:** Trust and betrayal issues appear throughout the novel. What specific scene altered your view of each of the characters? What tipped you from trust to doubt or vice versa? Do you think Ashley can learn to trust, given her undercover work as Niki?


 **Turning points:** Identify one decision you think changes the story's trajectory. If that decision flipped the other way, how different would events be?


 **Technology & Vulnerability:** From route randomization to device hygiene and surveillance counter-measures, how does the story explore the uneasy balance between security and exposure? What felt realistic—or chillingly plausible?

 **The Price of Secrecy:** What does secrecy protect—and what does it destroy? Consider the effects on friendships, professional relationships, and self-image.

 **Justice/revenge & moral tradeoffs:** The story probes the difference between justice and revenge and moral tradeoffs. Several characters make questionable choices for what they believe are good reasons. Where is the line between justice and revenge? Which choice troubled you most? Which one did you reluctantly support?

 **Point of View choice:** The author tells the story through Ashley/Niki's eyes. Do you think she is a reliable narrator? Why or why not?

 **Life's Meaning:** Ashley has convinced herself that she has a personal driving force. What do you think her core principles are? If you think her life is not yet whole, what does she need to do? Can she?

 **What lingers:** What idea or scene stayed with you after finishing? Why that one—and what does it suggest about the book's core theme?