

Book Club Questions

“Mouse in the Box” by Lewis Allan

1. This book toys with the idea of a sympathetic criminal. Both the Michael and Lori storylines gear the reader to feel for them and put themselves in their shoes. Did you sympathize with one or both of them? If so, why? If not, why?
2. We learn about interrogation tactics used by law enforcement to “extract a confession” out of Michael, including lying, harassing, and intimidating, particularly by Detective Chase. Under the same circumstances do you think you would confess to a crime you did not commit? Also, do you think these tactics are fair?
3. Throughout this book we get a glimpse of the inner workings of the criminal justice system, which is clearly flawed. What did you learn or were most interested to learn about the system?
4. The assassination of Alice on the courtroom steps thrusts Mason into being the primary lawyer for Michael Key. Do you think it hurt or helped Michael's case? Do you think Alice would have changed the outcome of Michael's case. Would you have continued to represent Michael after Alice's assassination?
5. If you were in Lori's position on the morning of trial morning of trial, would you have taken a plea deal? Do you ultimately feel that the sentence she got was fair?
6. Racial tensions are prevalent in this novel. Specifically, that Michael and Robin are a mixed-race couple. How do you think the story would be different if Michael and Robin were both black? Both white?
7. Did you find the testimony of the jail house snitch, Steven Baker, credible?

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8. Do you think Michael should have testified?
9. Lori and Mason develop a relationship and friendship while she is in prison through writing to each other. How do you believe this relationship benefited each character and why do you think it kept growing?
10. Perhaps one of the biggest twists in the book is the revelation of Doctor Fehl and the subsequent hope for Michael. What were your thoughts on the failure of the motion for a new trial?
11. Who else (if anyone) did you suspect for murdering Robin?
12. The book revealed later in the story that Ozzy was black. Did you originally picture him as white or black? How did the reveal of his race contribute to his character in the book?
13. How did you feel about the ending of the book?
14. Were there any part of the plot or aspects of the characters that frustrated or upset you?