

ALLEN AND UNWIN'S BOOK CLUB GUIDE



'As addictive as *Cone Girl*.'
PATRICIA KARVELAS

'Simply unmissable.'
HAYLEY SCRIVENOR

LOUISE MILLIGAN Pheasants Nest

'A compelling story,
written with tautness
and wit.'
ANNABEL CRABB

'Gripping and
devastating...
all too real.'
SARAH BAILEY

MORE ABOUT PHEASANTS NEST



KATE DELANEY has made the biggest mistake of her life. She picked the wrong guy to humiliate on a girls' night out and now she is living every woman's worst nightmare. Kate finds herself brutalised, bound and gagged in the back of a car being driven god knows where by a man whose name she doesn't know, and she is petrified about what's in store for her.

As the suspense escalates, Kate's boyfriend Liam is left behind, struggling with his shock, fear and desperation as the police establish a major investigation. The detectives face their own feelings of anguish and futility as they reflect on the cases they didn't solve in time and the victims they couldn't save.

They know Kate's chances of survival diminish with every passing hour.

LOUISE MILLIGAN is a multi-award-winning investigative journalist for ABC TV's *Four Corners*, the Australian national broadcaster's flagship current affairs documentary program. She is the author of two bestselling non-fiction books: *Cardinal*, *The Rise and Fall of George Pell* and *Witness, An Investigation into the Brutal Cost of Seeking Justice*.

Her books have been awarded multiple prizes, including the Walkley Book Award, the Davitt Awards Best Non-Fiction Crime Book, the Melbourne Prize for Literature People's Choice Award, the Victorian Premier's Literary Award's People's Choice prize, the Sir Owen Dixon Chambers Law Reporter of the Year Award, a Press Freedom Medal and a shortlisting for the Stella Prize. *Pheasants Nest* is Louise's first novel.



Photo: David Mandelberg

CONVERSATION STARTERS

1. The protagonist, Kate Delaney, is a journalist. How did her profession influence the way she approached her kidnapping and the search for her? Did it add a unique perspective to the story?
2. What do you think of Kate Delaney's 'Big Mistake'?
3. What did you think of the portrayal of law enforcement and investigative procedures in the book? Did it seem realistic to you?
4. What role do Kate's friends play in the narrative? How do their actions impact the investigation and her fate?
5. Do you feel Detective Peter D'Ambrosio's PTSD impacted the investigation into Kate's abduction?
6. How does Louise Milligan use the setting to enhance the mood and atmosphere of the narrative?
7. How does the suspense build throughout the novel? Did you find yourself compelled to keep turning the pages? Why or why not?
8. What are Kate Delaney's strengths and weaknesses? How does she evolve throughout the story?
9. Consider the antagonist aka 'The Guy' in the book. What motivates him? Do you find his actions believable given his motivations?
10. How did the author handle the pacing of the novel? Did it feel like the story moved at the right speed, or were there parts that dragged or felt rushed?
11. Do you think *Pheasants Nest* should have an apostrophe? Why or why not?
12. Overall, what did you think of the book? Would you recommend it to others? Why or why not?

JUST FOR FUN

- Name three TV shows or books Louise Milligan references in *Pheasants Nest*.
- What would be the newspaper headline if you disappeared?
- Whom would you cast as Kate Delaney and Liam Carroll in a movie?

IF YOU LOVED *PHEASANTS NEST*, you might also like *Before You Knew My Name* by Jacqueline Bublitz, *The Mother* by Jane Caro or *Mad Honey* by Jodi Picoult and Jennifer Finney Boylan.

