

Pretty Girls Discussion Questions

by Karin Slaughter

Author Bio: (from Fantastic Fiction & Slaughter's website)

Karin Slaughter grew up in a small south Georgia town and has been writing novels and short stories since she was a child. She currently resides in Atlanta.

She has been published in 36 languages, with more than 35 million copies sold across the globe. Her Will Trent series, Grant County series, and standalone novel Cop Town are all in development for film and television.



Characters:

- **Julia Carroll** – 19 year old who disappeared on March 4, 1991. Last seen in a bar with her friends.
- **Lydia (Pepper) Delgado** – (41). Owns a dog grooming business. Has a daughter, Dee (17). Widowed. Former drug addict. Sisters are Julia and Claire.
- **Claire Scott** – On Parole. Just off ankle monitor. Married to Paul Scott for 18 years. Sisters are Julia and Lydia. Has grandmother, Ginny.
- **Sam Carroll** – Father of Julia, Claire, and Lydia. Veterinarian. Wife, Helen, divorced him a few years after daughter went missing. Very invested in finding Julia. Committed suicide.
- **Helen Carrol** – Mother of Julia, Claire, and Lydia. Retired librarian. Remarried after she divorced Sam.
- **Paul Scott** – Architect. Married to Claire Scott. Killed (knifed) in a mugging.
- **Rick Butler** – Lydia's boyfriend. Mechanic. They met in rehab. Lives next door to Lydia and Dee.
- **Ben Carver** – Convicted serial killer. Postal worker who killed and ate a few young men. Sam Carroll visited him in prison because he had information on Julia's disappearance.
- **Dee Delgado** – (17). On an academic scholarship to a private, upscale school. On the basketball and debate team. Actual name is Julia Cady Delgado.
- **Sheriff Carl Huckabee** – In charge of Julia's missing person investigation. The Carrolls call him and all police officers "huckleberries."
- **Johnny Jackson** – Congressman running for senate. Friend of Paul's.
- **Anna Kilpatrick** – (16) Missing girl in present day. Her car was found in mall with flat tire, but she is still missing.
- **Captain Mayhew** – Police chief in charge of the robbery at Claire's home.
- **Agent Fred Nolan** – FBI agent who becomes involved in the robbery at Claire's home (after Paul's funeral).
- **Adam Quinn** – Paul's friend from college and architect business partner. Claire had an affair with him.
- **Detective Eric Rayman** – Police detective in charge Claire and Paul's robbery/mugging investigation.
- **Penelope Ward** – Former lawyer. Wife of Branch Ward, who is running for senate. Head of PTA. Has 5 kids in the same private school as Dee Delgado.

Discussion Questions:

1. Did you like the book? Why or why not?
2. The book was written from multiple characters' points of view. Was it successfully done? Did it help or harm the story?
3. Do you think that Sam's letters to Julia were an effective story telling device? Did it bother you that the journals/letters never had either of their names associated with them?
4. Do you think this book was too graphically violent, not descriptive enough, or was it just right in order to generate suspense?
5. Who was your favorite character and why? Who was your least liked character?
6. Did you find the characters in this story believable?
7. Julia's disappearance made a huge impact on her family. Why do you think each family member reacted the way they did?
8. Sam writes, "When you first disappeared, your mother warned me that finding out exactly what happened to you would be worse than never knowing." Which do you think is worse – knowing or never knowing?
9. What did you know...and when did you know it? At what point in the book did you begin to piece together what happened?
10. Why do you think Claire destroyed Paul's things after the funeral?
11. Why do you think Paul pays (through a shell corporation) for Dee's private school education?
12. One of the criticisms of this book was that, after the "big reveal", the antagonist's actions become cliché or over-the-top unbelievable. Do you think that is true or do you think that he was a fully realized, independent character?
13. "The world stops for you when you're pretty." Lydia says this when telling Rick that pretty women can get or get away with anything. Do you think that is true? Is this why women use cosmetics and try to make themselves attractive?
14. Do the lies Paul told change Claire's past? (i.e. The fact that she believed she was happy and lived "perfect" life/marriage.)
15. Do you think Lydia is happy with her current life? Why or why not?
16. Do you think Paul loved Claire? Why or why not?
17. Was Claire justified in what she did at the end? Did she have a choice? Was there a better option?
18. Should Claire go out with Nolan?
19. Did you find the ending satisfying? Did the story seem complete to you?
20. Karin Slaughter has written 18 books. Will you read any of them?

References:

- Fantastic Fiction – <https://www.fantasticfiction.com/k/laurie-r-king/>
- Goodreads – <https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/25574782-pretty-girls>
- Karin Slaughter -- <http://www.karinslaughter.com/>
- New in Books – <https://www.newinbooks.com/what-to-read-if-you-like-karin-slaughter-books/>
- Novelist – <http://web.a.ebscohost.com/novp/detail?sid=15b99633-580d-4a0e-a8db-cefd208c9221%40sessionmgr4006&UI=UI+10423941&hid=4207&vid=2>
- Wikipedia – https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karin_Slaughter

Karin Slaughter's Books

Grant County

1. Blindsight (2001)
2. Kisscut (2002)
3. A Faint Cold Fear (2003)
4. Indelible (2004)
5. Faithless (2005)
6. Beyond Reach (2007) aka Skin Privilege

Will Trent

1. Triptych (2006)
2. Fractured (2008)
3. Genesis (2009) aka Undone
4. Broken (2010)
5. Fallen (2011)
- 5.5. Snatched (2012)
6. Criminal (2012)
- 6.5. Busted (2013)
7. Unseen (2013)
8. The Kept Woman (2016)

Stand-alone Novels

- Cop Town (2014)
- Pretty Girls (2015)
- The Good Daughter (2017)
- Last Breath (2017)

If you liked Pretty Girls, try...

- Silent Girls – Eric Rickstad
- Fixed in Fear – T. E. Woods
- Shadow Play – Iris Johansen
- Smash Cut – Sandra Brown
- The Eleventh Victim – Nancy Grace