

# In Her Bones

By Kate Moretti

## Reading Group Guide

*This reading group guide for **In Her Bones** includes discussion questions and ideas for enhancing your book club. The suggested questions are intended to help your reading group find new and interesting angles and topics for your discussion. We hope that these ideas will enrich your conversation and increase your enjoyment of the book.*

### Topics & Questions for Discussion

1. While few of us fear, like Edie, that we are doomed to become unhinged or murderous, many people worry about becoming like their parents. Are there traits or habits of one or both of your parents that you dread potentially inheriting?
2. Even years after her conviction, Liliith Wade and the murders she committed are able to garner media attention. What do you think it is about serial killers in general, or her story specifically, that capture the public's attention?
3. It's not uncommon to refer to researching someone online as social media "stalking" them, looking into their background, old photos, etc. to gather information about a new acquaintance or a potential romantic partner. Edie also uses the wealth of information readily available in the digital era to her advantage, but takes it to a level that can more seriously be considered stalking. Where is the line between everyday online "stalking" and inappropriately prying into someone's life?
4. During the course of her investigation, Edie receives a lot of contradictory information. Without an obvious, corroborated truth, how do you tell if someone is lying? On what do you think Edie based her judgments of who was being honest with her?
5. Why do you think Kate Moretti included excerpts from *The Serrated Edge* interspersed among the chapters of *In Her Bones*? What did it add to the story as you read?
6. Both Edie and her brother, Dylan, have obsessive tendencies and a disregard for healthy boundaries. Edie finds the impact of "nurture" reassuring, suggesting her mother's psychosis isn't "in her bones"—do you agree? Why, or why not? To what extent do you think Edie and Dylan have inherited some of their mother's unbalanced nature as a result of the trauma they suffered at her hands, as opposed to genetic predisposition?
7. If Edie's father had been the murderer instead of her mother, do you think her reaction would have been different at all? Why, or why not? And if so, in what ways would that have affected her? Would it have affected the way other people saw Edie or her parent's crimes?
8. The author of *The Serrated Edge* blames Liliith's family for not preventing her crimes. After hearing the author's motivation for writing the book, do you think this perspective was understandable? Do you think more could have, or should have, been done to preempt the murders or bring Liliith to justice earlier?

9. Gil Brandt and Dr. Doyle both assert that “Knowing *about* someone is not the same as knowing them.” (p. 281) What do you think it means to truly know someone?
10. Were you surprised by the transformation Edie has undergone by the epilogue? What do you think the future holds for her and Tim?

### Enhance Your Book Club

1. There are many true crime biographies of serial killers, in the vein of *The Serrated Edge: The Story of Lilith Wade, Serial Killer*. Consider reading one with your book group, such as *Manson: The Life and Times of Charles Manson* by Jeff Guin or *Unholy Messenger: The Life and Crimes of the BTK Serial Killer* by Stephen Singular. Discuss in conjunction with *In Her Bones*: did reading Edie’s story affect how you read the true crime biography at all? Did they raise any similar questions about the nature of serial killers, or what allows them to commit so many murders before being apprehended?
2. Edie repeatedly remarks on how easy it is to “research” people given our lax attention on privacy in the digital era. As an experiment, consider assigning everyone in your book group another member’s name. How much information can you find out about that person (without actually hacking each other’s accounts)? What inferences might you make about who they are and how they live based on what is publicly available online (profile pictures, public social media accounts, professional information, etc.)? Share your findings with the group (and perhaps upgrade your privacy settings together!).
3. Ali Land’s novel *Good Me Bad Me* also centers on the daughter of a female serial killer. Consider reading it with your book club, and comparing it with *In Her Bones*. What themes appear in both novels, and in what ways do they diverge?
4. Check out more of Kate Moretti’s books, such as *The Blackbird Season* and *The Vanishing Year*. To find out more about Kate, visit [KateMoretti.com](http://KateMoretti.com), or follow her on Twitter [@KateMoretti1](https://twitter.com/KateMoretti1) or Facebook [facebook.com/katemorettiwriter](https://www.facebook.com/katemorettiwriter).