

THE HIT-MOM BOOK CLUB KIT



MINOTAUR BOOKS

Welcome back to The Hit-Mom Book Club! In this kit,
you'll find everything you need for your book club's discussion of

FINLAY DONOVAN JUMPS THE GUN

by ELLE COSIMANO:


- Jumps the Gun: A Playlist
- Finlay and Vero's Top 10 Suggestions for Spicing Up Your Romance Novel
- Nick's So-Hot Chili and His Very Impressive Biscuits Recipe
- Discussion Questions

Whether you're meeting in person, on Zoom, or via your somewhat-shady online women's forum, or in the police academy dorms—dust off those wigs, scarves, and sunglasses, grab a Panera pastry and a glass of wine, and enjoy your discussion of Finlay and Vero's latest hijinks.

We love to see your Finlay Donovan-inspired photos! Please tag us on social media and use #FinlayDonovanJumpsTheGun and #HitMomBookClub.


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Happy Reading,
Minotaur Books



MINOTAUR BOOKS

KNOCKS 'EM DEAD: A PLAYLIST

1. Not Dead Yet - DEVORA
2. Trouble - The New Respects
3. What's Coming To Me - Dorothy
4. Anarchy - Lilith Czar
5. Heroes - Dead Sara
6. favorite crime - Olivia Rodrigo
7. Blinding Lights - The Weeknd
8. Bad Habits - Ed Sheeran
9. Four Letter Words - K.Flax
10. You Should Probably Leave - Chris Stapleton
11. Vertigo - Alice Merton
12. STAY (with Justin Bieber) - The Kid LAROI, Justin Bieber
13. I'm Sorry - Bexley
14. Bad Decisions - RedHook
15. AHHHH! - Teen Jesus and the Jean Teasers
16. girls (feat. phem) - Royal & the Serpent, phem
17. Good Girls - CHVRCHES
18. Save Me - Eliza & The Delusionals
19. Backbeat - Haywood
20. deathwish (feat. nothing,nowhere.) - Stand Atlantic, nothing,nowhere.
21. Difficult - Amy Allen
22. Bomb Through the Breeze - Hannah Wicklund
23. death wish - LØLØ
24. Dead Weight - PVRIS



Scan the QR code
to listen now

NICK'S SO HOT CHILI AND HIS VERY IMPRESSIVE BISCUITS

"Text me when you get home," Nick said, walking backward toward the training center, grinning at me like a fool.

"How about chili and biscuits at my place tomorrow night?"

"It's a date." I couldn't help stealing a preview of his biscuits as he opened the door and disappeared into the building.

This year's recipe comes from the winner of the Finlay Donovan Chili Cook-Off! There were some great recipes, but this one from the Brew City Book Club in Milwaukee grabbed me for so many reasons. The recipe was written in perfect Finlay style! The commentary cracked me up! This team really did their homework. They also included both a chili and a biscuit recipe, and both were delicious and complemented each other well. And finally, I loved how their book club all worked together to cook and enjoy the meal! The video they submitted (find it on @mollyfranbooks's IG!) perfectly captured the joy that comes with being part of a vibrant and creative book club. Their closing scene around the dinner table stole my heart. I hope you and yours have as much fun making these recipes as they-and I-did. -Elle

NICK'S SO HOT CHILI RECIPE

By the Brew City Book Club, Milwaukee, WI

Molly Brooks, Mikhaila Carbajal, Sarah Wilson, Kelly Gathman, Caroline Kuether, Morgan Farkas, Meg Hemmelgarn, Katie Thiele, Jeni McKean, Megan Stephenson, Alaina Dearing, MaryEllen Kordik, Emily Rafferty, Paige Levenhagen, Taylor Walek, Aly Castellanos, Becky Van Deraa

Recipe inspired by The Modern Proper

INGREDIENTS:

1 lb of beef (because we beef with crime)

1 lb of pork

Onion - diced

Green pepper - diced

Red pepper - diced

4 cloves garlic - minced

Enchilada sauce can (20 oz)

Can of diced tomatoes (28 oz)

Black beans, kidney beans, and pinto beans - a trifecta for the 3rd book! (1 can each)

Dash of cayenne pepper to add some spice like a stakeout make out sesh

1/4 cup chili powder

2 tbsp cumin

2 bay leaves

Salt + pepper = the perfect pair

1 tbsp sugar (keep it sweet while spicy)

STEPS:

Heat stock pot to medium.

Brown onion, peppers, and garlic until fragrant.

Add both meats and brown.

Add canned beans (rinsed), enchilada sauce, and canned tomatoes.

Add remaining seasonings.

Stir to combine.

Simmer slow and low like a slow burn romance.

If you can wait, 8 hours is optimal!

Top with hot sauce and jalapenos to keep things sizzling. Add sour cream and cheese! Throw in some cilantro, avocado, (or maybe even some greens from your freezer!)

... AND HIS VERY IMPRESSIVE BISCUITS RECIPE

By the Brew City Book Club, Milwaukee, WI

INGREDIENTS:

3 cups of flour

1 tbsp baking powder

1/2 tsp baking soda

1 tbsp sugar

1 tsp salt

1/2 cup COLD butter

1 cup sharp cheddar cheese (shredded)

1 clove garlic (minced)

1/2 tsp red pepper flakes

1 1/4 cup buttermilk

STEPS:

Preheat your oven to 450 degrees. In a large bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, sugar, salt, and baking soda.

Cut in butter until mixture resembles coarse crumbs.

Stir in cheese, garlic, and pepper flakes. Add buttermilk.

Stir until just moistened.

Form biscuits by using a heaping quarter cup.

Set on a greased baking sheet two inches apart.

Bake 12 minutes or until golden brown. Serve warm with butter.

Finlay and Vero's Top 10 Suggestions for *SPICING UP YOUR ROMANCE NOVEL*

"Your heroine can't ride off into the sunset with her sidekick.

This is a romance novel, not Thelma and Louise."

"Thelma and Louise won an Academy Award."

"They held hands and drove off a cliff, Finlay."

1. Take your characters on a dinner date. Or better yet, let your hero cook. Nothing's sexier than a love interest who knows to make things sizzle in the kitchen! (Just remember to save plenty of room for dessert. 😊)
2. How about a little role play? Costumes can be fun, especially in the bedroom. The perfect wig, a badge, or even a trench coat lends an air of intrigue to any romantic chapter.
3. Consider a hot make-out session in the backseat of a car. Or maybe the front seat of a car. (But definitely not in the trunk of a car if there happens to be someone else in it.)
4. Arm your heroine with a sturdy set of handcuffs or some duct tape. And possibly a safe word. (See also: role play.)
5. Will they? Won't they? Nothing increases romantic tension like forced proximity in close quarters. Lock your characters in a maintenance closet, an interrogation room, or even a police car. Then stand back as the windows fog and watch the sparks fly!
6. Revealing your hero's innermost secrets can be freeing. Consider a titillating game of Twenty Questions or Never Have I Ever between your characters. (ProTip: if your character is prone to making questionable choices, maybe she shouldn't tell him everything.)
7. Introduce an irresistible trope: Only one bed? Fake dating? Star-crossed love? Why limit yourself? Add all three!
8. Give your heroine more than one sexy love interest to choose from. Empower her to explore and discover what she wants. Then shake things up, raise the stakes, and let her change her mind.
9. Get your readers' hearts racing with a high-speed chase, a well-timed explosion, or an edge-of-your-seat B&E. Remember: after dinner-cocktails are hot, but Molotov cocktails are hotter!
10. Add some steamy dialog to your novel. "Can I turn up the heat?" and "How spicy would you like it?" are smoking hot questions in any situation! Consent conversations can (and should) be a turn-on. Have your characters check in with each other before adding spice to a scene.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. *Finlay Donovan Jumps the Gun* opens with the heroine, Finlay, in a standoff—but not in the way you'd expect. How does the author parallel motherhood with negotiations, and even crime-solving? Were you surprised by Mo's eventual role in the story?
2. Throughout most of this novel, we stay in one setting: the Citizen's Police Academy. Why do you think the author chose this as her backdrop, rather than the more domestic settings of previous books? How did this change of scenery contribute to or change your understanding of Finlay?
3. Finlay's writer's block seems to be worse than ever in this novel. Why do you think she's so reluctant to give her fictional counterpart a happy ending? What do you think the future holds for Finlay and Nick?
4. Once again, we discover in dramatic fashion that Vero has been keeping secrets from Finlay. Why do you think Finlay continues to trust her nanny/accountant? And why do you think Vero keeps holding back?
5. Trust—and the lack thereof—play a large role in the story overall. Discuss Nick's relationship with Joey and Charlie, and Joey's with Cam, even Finlay and Nick's. When do you think our characters take loyalty too far?
6. Mrs. Haggerty, a minor but pivotal supporting character throughout the series, gets her moment to shine in *Finlay Donovan Jumps the Gun*. Why do you think the author gave Mrs. Haggerty this act of heroism?
7. The series' most villainous villain, Feliks Zhirov, remains off-page for the majority of the book, sending threats through underlings. Though we know he is imprisoned, what do these delegation techniques tell us about his character? What about the characters of those he sends messages through—Cam and Ekatarina Rybakov?
8. Fires and heat, both literal and metaphorical, pop up frequently in this story. Why do you think the author has chosen to use flames both in inciting incidents and at the climax of the story?
9. In *Finlay Donovan Jumps the Gun*, Finlay and Vero finally discover the identity of EasyClean, a paid hit man. Were you surprised by this reveal? What red herrings in particular threw you off the scent?
10. The novel leaves Finlay and Vero driving off into the sunrise on a rescue mission. Earlier, the pair (or at least the fictional versions of them in Finlay's novel) are compared to the title characters in *Thelma and Louise*. Do you see any similarities between our characters and that beloved duo? Where do you think their next mission will take them?