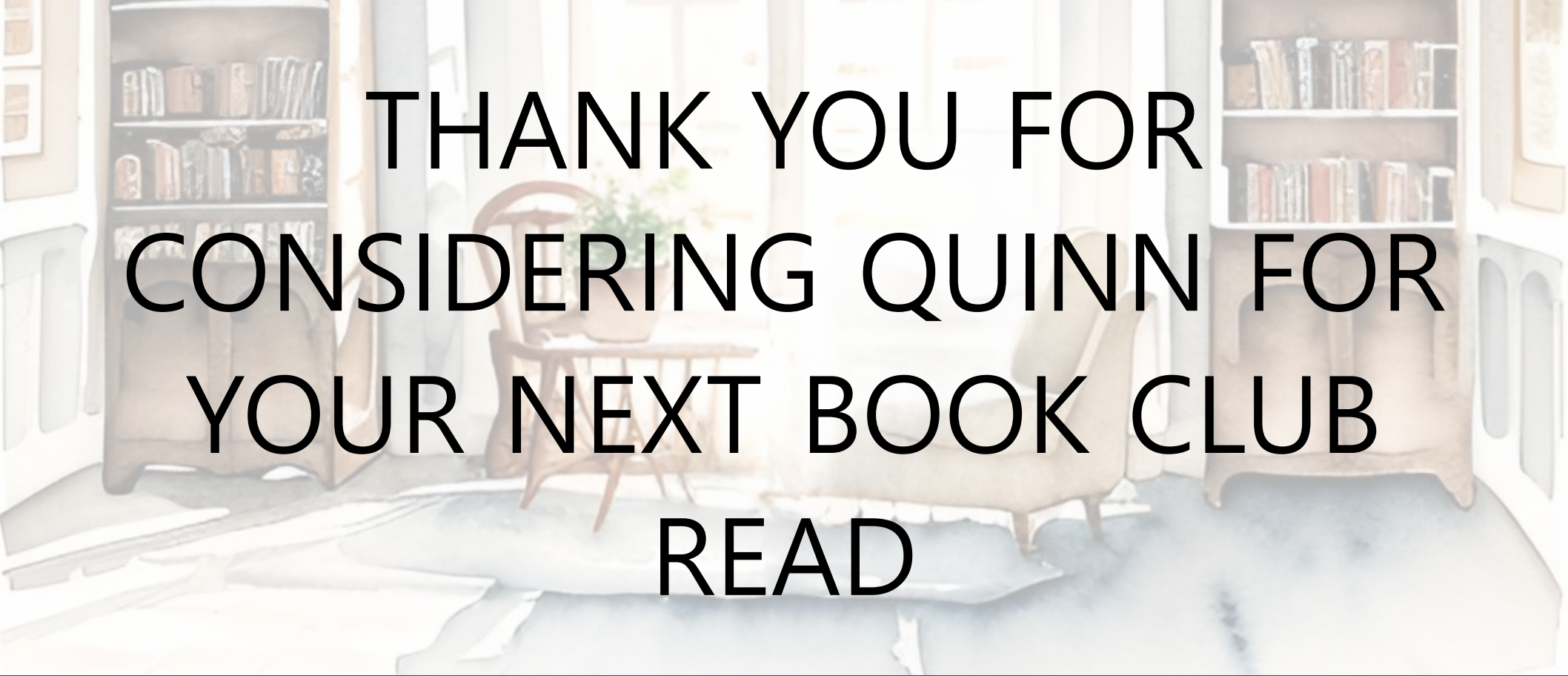




BOOK CLUB
RESOURCE GUIDE

Crime Fiction



THANK YOU FOR
CONSIDERING QUINN FOR
YOUR NEXT BOOK CLUB
READ

BOOK CLUB
RESOURCE GUIDE

Michael Deeze

Thomas Quinn used to have a badge, a bureau, and a line he didn't cross. He lost all three in the same six months, along with two hundred and fifty thousand dollars he never asked for and can't return. Now he's fixing problems for people who don't file paperwork. A Chicago crime council held together by an aging queen named Sally Carlisle, an uneasy truce between the Kings and the Nation, and one very patient priest with a past he keeps locked in a wardrobe.

When couriers start turning up beaten within an inch of their lives, and then not. Quinn is the only man everyone agrees can walk both sides of the line without getting shot on sight. What starts as a courier problem becomes a Russian laundering operation, becomes a dead friend on a riverbank, becomes a name whispered by the only people who understand how this city actually works: it isn't the gangs pulling the strings. It's the man who never touches a gun, never raises his voice, and never once thinks of himself as the villain.

WORD COUNT:

PAGE COUNT:

KEY WORDS: Chicago crime fiction, organized crime novel, morally gray protagonist

DEMOGRAPHICS: Ages 30–65, drawn to morally complex stories with patient pacing and dialogue worth rereading.

COMP BOOKS: The Force by Don Winslow, The Black Echo by Michael Connelly, Indemnity Only by Sara Paretsky

ISBN: 978-1-64456-952-8 [HARDCOVER]

ISBN: 978-1-64456-953-5 [PAPERBACK]

ISBN: 978-1-64456-954-2 [KINDLE]

ISBN: 978-1-64456-955-9 [EPUB]

ISBN: 978-1-64456-956-6 [AUDIOBOOK]

LCCN: 2026919451

Setting the Mood

- Keep the lighting low and warm
- Candles if you have them.
- A simple evidence board as a centerpiece a corkboard with photos, string, and a few handwritten notes makes a great conversation-starting prop and doubles as a nod to Reyes's corkboard comment early in the book.

Clothing Suggestions

- Classic noir-detective styling reads best
- Trench coats
- Fedoras,
- Dark tailored suits.
- For anyone who wants to channel Sally Carlisle specifically, think sharp-shouldered blazers and "business glamour"

Music

- Play moody blues and jazz
- Spotify playlist

THEMED ACTIVITIES – Setting the Mood

WHO SAID IT?

- Pull five or six lines of dialogue from the book
- Have guests guess whether it was Quinn, Sally, Hennessey, Reyes, or Gardner.

Trivia

Examples

- What did Quinn use as a weapon during the break-in at his apartment? (A frying pan, then a five-wood.)
 - What's the name of the currency exchange the gangs finally give up? (Western Avenue.)
 - Who does Sally send Quinn to for a name on the North Side? (Emilio.)

THEMED ACTIVITIES – Quick Games

Chicago-Style Italian Beef Sliders

Slow-cook 2 lbs thin-sliced beef (chuck or sirloin tip) in 2 cups beef broth with a packet of Italian seasoning, 3 cloves garlic, and a few pepperoncini until fork-tender (4 hours on low in a slow cooker works well). Shred, pile onto slider buns, top with giardiniera or sautéed sweet peppers, and spoon a little of the cooking broth (the "jus") over each one before serving.

Mini Deep-Dish Pizza Bites

Press biscuit dough or mini pie crust into a greased muffin tin. Layer a thin layer of mozzarella first (to keep the crust from getting soggy), then chunky tomato sauce, then more cheese and a little sausage or pepperoni. Bake at 375°F for 15–18 minutes until golden.

Riverside Whiskey Meatballs

Simmer frozen or homemade meatballs in a sauce of 1 cup ketchup, 1/2 cup brown sugar, 1/4 cup whiskey, and a splash of Worcestershire sauce for 30 minutes on low, stirring occasionally, until glazed and sticky. Serve with toothpicks.

Cannoli Bites

Fill store-bought mini cannoli shells with a mixture of 1 cup ricotta (drained well), 1/2 cup powdered sugar, 1/2 tsp vanilla, and mini chocolate chips. Dust with extra powdered sugar just before serving so the shells stay crisp.

THEMED MENU - The Chicago Fixer's Feast



Named for Sally Carlisle's habit of pouring "two fingers of something expensive" a stirred, no-nonsense rye cocktail with a little bite at the finish.

Ingredients:

- 2 oz rye whiskey
- 1/2 oz sweet vermouth
- 2 dashes Angostura bitters
 - 1 dash orange bitters
- Large ice cube
- Orange peel, for garnish

Directions:

Stir rye, vermouth, and both bitters with ice for about 30 seconds. Strain over one large ice cube in a rocks glass. Express the orange peel's oils over the surface of the drink, run it around the rim, and drop it in.

Serve to anyone who just walked in looking like they need a favor.

SIGNATURE DRINK - Two Fingers of Trouble

1. Sinnerman by Nina Simone
2. St. James Infirmary Blues by Louis Armstrong
3. Sweet Home Chicago by Buddy Guy
4. House of the Rising Sun by The Animals
5. Wicked Game by Chris Isaak
6. Gimme Shelter by The Rolling Stones
7. Bad Moon Rising by Creedence Clearwater Revival
8. The Killing Moon by Echo & the Bunnymen
9. Feeling Good by Nina Simone
10. Hurt by Johnny Cash
11. The Man Comes Around by Johnny Cash
12. Take Me to Church by Hozier
13. Dark Necessities by Red Hot Chili Peppers
14. Chicago by Sufjan Stevens
15. Ain't No Rest for the Wicked by Cage the Elephant



SPOTIFY MUSIC RECOMMENDATIONS

A soft, watercolor-style illustration of a living room. On the left is a tall wooden bookshelf filled with books. In the center background is a fireplace with a mantel. To the right is another bookshelf. In the foreground, there is a light-colored sofa and a wooden chair. The overall atmosphere is warm and inviting.

THIS GUIDE CONTAINS POSSIBLE
SPOILERS FOR THIS BOOK IN
THE DISCUSSION SECTION.

WARNING

- Quinn insists early on that justice "needs squinting" to look clean. Do you think the book ultimately agrees with him, or quietly argues against that idea by the end?
- Sally Carlisle, Detective Hennessey, and Katja each hold real power in very different ways. How did this compare to how women are usually written in hardboiled crime fiction?
- Father Reyes hides an entire second identity behind his collar. What did his hunting chapter change about how you read every other conversation he has with Quinn?
- Spencer Gardner never picks up a weapon, yet the book treats him as more dangerous than any of the gang violence we witness firsthand. What does that say about where the novel locates real evil?
- Quinn is pulled between the FBI's "dictated morality" and the street's unwritten rules. Which value system do you think he actually ends up living by, if either?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Carlos and Emilio both die as a direct result of helping Quinn. Did the book earn those deaths, or did they feel like a cost of doing business?
- The ending has the neighborhood crown Quinn "the Fixer" while he stands there refusing to accept the title. What do you think that refusal means for where his character goes next?
- Hennessey starts the book as Quinn's adversary and ends it as something closer to a partner. Where do you think that turn actually happens?
- The novel treats gentrification and union-busting as central villainy rather than backdrop. Did that change how you read the more traditional crime-thriller elements, the Russians, the gangs, the violence?
- If this is the first book in a series, what's the one loose thread you most want the next book to pick up?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



Michael Deeze

MICHEAL DEEZE was a child in the notorious Maplewood Commons housing projects of inner city Chicago, growing up hard. And fast. Surrounded by crime and violence, his family struggled to just hold their own while trying to escape their own poverty. Deeze gained street sense young, and it became the backdrop for a life of multiple indiscretions and occupations, call them what you will.

Deeze is a natural-born storyteller—in life and in print. A child of the sixties, he draws extensively from his own diverse experiences and subsequent education to introduce the hapless Emmett Casey. As U.S. Army veteran and retired Doctor of Chiropractic, Deeze now lives in Illinois after spending decades living near the forests of northern Wisconsin. He's a devoted father to his three children, a magical daughter, two grown sons, and his dog. His first novels are the critically acclaimed Bless Me Father, and For I have Sinned, The Heretic is the final novel in the series.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

WEBSITE: <https://authormikenelson.com/>

OTHER BOOKS: The Emmett Casey Chronicles | The Deathbed Confessions