



## *Scheduled to Death*

Reader's Guide

By Mary Feliz

Maggie McDonald Mysteries

Book 2

## Discussion questions for Book Groups

Talking about books with readers and writers is one of my favorite activities. Here are some questions I developed to spur discussions about *Scheduled to Death* for readers, libraries, and book groups. Feel free to change and adapt them for use with the other books.

1. After reading the book, what connections have you found to the title: *Scheduled to Death*?
2. The book opens with Maggie's growing concern for her client, Lincoln Sinclair, who has not shown up for a scheduled meeting. How do you feel when a friend colleague or client is late for a meeting? Worried? Angry? Hurt? Does it depend on the situation or the person? How do you respond?
3. Early on in the book, Maggie juggles her own fractured sense of calm along with the grief she shares with her client and her distaste for the investigating officer. As the book moves along, she encounters more than one irascible personality. How well do you think Maggie balances it all? What stress reducing techniques does she use. Would you react as Maggie does, or differently?
4. W.C. Fields is often quoted for his statement about the dangers of being upstaged by children and animals. I like to include them because they allow me to reveal a great deal about the characters through their choice of a companion

and their reactions to animals. What do you think about animals in mysteries? Do they add or distract from the plot, characterization, and mystery?

5. Many cozy mystery readers have strict ideas about what should and should not be included in a cozy mystery. Did this book meet your expectations of a “cozy” read? How did it differ from other cozies?
6. Have you read other books in the series? If so, did you read them in order? Would you recommend others read them in order? How did the book compare to others in the series?
7. I tend to under describe the physical characteristics of the people in the Maggie McDonald series, because I find their height, weight, hair, and skin color the least interesting things about them. How did you picture the main characters? Do you prefer books that outline physical details or those that leave it up to the imagination? How much is too much? How much is too little?
8. Would you say the book is character-driven or plot-driven or both? Do you have a preference for one or the other in the books you choose to read?
9. Setting is often an important element in cozy mysteries. How do you think the California/Silicon Valley setting contributes to the story? Can you imagine the story unfolding anywhere else? How is the author’s portrayal of the area different from what you imagine California to be like or how it is portrayed in movies and on television?
10. Many people (let’s call them literature snobs) don’t feel that genre fiction or popular fiction measure up to what’s typically referred to as “literary” fiction. How do you think this book departs from traditional literary fiction? What characteristics do they share? Do you have a preference?
11. What other aspects of the book were important to you? Would you choose to read another book by the same author? Another book in the same genre?