



Book Club

Woman on the Edge

By Samantha M. Bailey

About the Author

Samantha M. Bailey is the USA TODAY and #1 nationally bestselling author of *WOMAN ON THE EDGE* and the instant #1 national bestseller, *WATCH OUT FOR HER*. Her novels have sold in eleven countries to date. Samantha is also a journalist and freelance editor; her work has appeared in *NOW Magazine*, *The Village Post*, *The Thrill Begins*, and *The Crime Hub*, among other publications. She lives in Toronto, where she can usually be found tapping away at her computer or curled up on her couch with a book.

About the Book

A moment on the subway platform changes two women's lives forever—a debut thriller that will take your breath away.

*A total stranger on the subway platform whispers, "Take my baby."
She places her child in your arms. She says your name.
Then she jumps...*

In a split second, Morgan Kincaid's life changes forever. She's on her way home from work when a mother begs her to take her baby, then places the infant in her arms. Before Morgan can stop her, the distraught mother jumps in front of an oncoming train.

Morgan has never seen this woman before, and she can't understand what would cause a person to give away her child and take her own life. She also can't understand how this woman knew her name.

The police take Morgan in for questioning. She soon learns that the woman who jumped was Nicole Markham, prominent CEO of the athletic brand Breathe. She also learns that no witness can corroborate her version of events, which means she's just become a murder suspect.

To prove her innocence, Morgan frantically retraces the last days of Nicole's life. Was Nicole a new mother struggling with paranoia or was she in danger? When strange things start happening to Morgan, she suddenly realizes she might be in danger, too.

Woman on the Edge is a pulse-pounding, propulsive thriller about the lengths to which a woman will go to protect her baby—even if that means sacrificing her own life.

Discussion Questions

1. How did you experience the book? Were you engaged immediately, or did it take you a while to "get into it"? How did you feel reading it—amused, sad, disturbed, confused, bored...?
2. Describe the main characters—personality traits, motivations, and inner qualities.
 - Why do characters do what they do?
 - Are their actions justified?
 - Describe the dynamics between characters (in marriage, family, or friendship).
 - How has the past shaped their lives?
 - Do you admire or disapprove of them?
 - Do they remind you of people you know?
3. Are the main characters dynamic—changing or maturing by the end of the book? Do they learn about themselves, how the world works and their role in it?
4. Discuss the plot:
 - Is it engaging—do you find the story interesting?
 - Is this a plot-driven book—a fast-paced page-turner?
 - Does the plot unfold slowly with a focus on character?
 - Were you surprised by complications, twists & turns?
 - Did you find the plot predictable, even formulaic?
5. What main ideas—themes—does the author explore? (Consider the title, often a clue to a theme.) Does the author use symbols to reinforce the main ideas?
6. What passages strike you as insightful, even profound? Perhaps a bit of dialog that's funny or poignant or that encapsulates a character?
7. Is the ending satisfying? If so, why? If not, why not...and how would you change it?
8. If you could ask the author a question, what would you ask? Have you read other books by the same author? If so, how does this book compare? If not, does this book inspire you to read others?
9. Has this novel changed you—broadened your perspective? Have you learned something new or been exposed to different ideas about people or a certain part of the world?

Author Interview

Q. Where did you come up with the concept for this explosive thriller?

A. Six years ago, I was waiting on a Toronto subway platform when I noticed a woman holding a newborn, standing too close to the edge. She looked frazzled and exhausted, as most new mothers do. As I did, with my own two children. Like a lightning bolt, the premise for *Woman on the Edge* came to me. As the train roared into the station, I scribbled it down on an empty gum pack I found in my messy purse. When I got home, I immediately started writing it.

Q. This book takes a deep dive into other issues like mental health, misplaced guilt, and motherhood. Why was it important to include these elements in the story?

A. I always wanted to focus on mental health, especially postpartum. When I started writing it, there was so little fiction about postpartum depression and anxiety. I didn't experience depression myself, but I watched so many friends struggle through it, who generously shared their stories so I could access Nicole's thoughts and feelings. These friends felt so much shame, guilt, and loneliness and were so scared to tell anyone the extent of how they were feeling because they feared judgment. It was only after they'd gotten help that they realized how many women go through it. I did, however, have my own anxieties and worries with my first baby. So, I knew it was a story I needed to tell. I wanted to portray how easy it is for even the strongest, most accomplished of women to suffer dramatic and drastic changes after the birth of their child. How hard it is to ask for help. And how difficult motherhood is.

Q. The main character, Morgan Kinkaid, becomes a suspect in a woman's death. Tell us about the research you did to be able to accurately describe the process that law enforcement goes through to solve such a crime?

A. So many experts were willing to talk to me and I'm grateful. I spoke with a Chicago-based homicide detective, a private investigator, and criminal defence attorney. I'm also lucky to have a friend who is a detective and constable with the Toronto Police, who offered to help with any questions I might have. He invited me down to the station and I spent a day as a suspect. He led me through Sally Port to fingerprinting and the evidence room. I was giddy with excitement because, of course, I wasn't under arrest, and it all felt so intriguing. When he asked if I wanted to be locked in a holding cell to see what it's like, I jumped at the chance. He told me to bang on the door when I'd had enough, and it clanged shut. I was alone in a tiny cell – white-washed brick walls, a

stainless-steel sink and toilet, and a small bed. I'm claustrophobic and immediately panicked. It took all of thirty seconds to bang on the door and beg to be let out.

Q. Are you a pantsner or plotter?

A. I'm a former pantsner-turned-plotter. *Woman on the Edge* is the fifth book I've written, and the first to be traditionally published. I used to write with a general outline in mind, but that's completely changed. For this book, I needed a clear map of the beginning, middle, and end so I knew what the characters' arcs would be, the narrative structure, placement of the clues, the goals, motivations, and so on. I used three craft books to help me: [*On Writing*](#) by Stephen King, [*Story Genius*](#) by Lisa Cron, and [*Save the Cat! Writes a Novel: The Last Book on Novel Writing You'll Ever Need*](#) by Jessica Brody. I write out a scene-by-scene outline before I begin drafting. For me, it's a process that works, but every author has their own method.

Q. How many hours a day do you write? What does your process look like?

A. Right now, it looks a bit manic because I'm promoting *Woman on the Edge* at the same time I'm working on my next novel. I usually get up at five or six in the morning, and for a former night owl, it's a shocking change. I don't have enough time during the day to really focus on writing, and I actually love the dark silence in my house when it's just me and my words. I write until my kids get up for school around 7:30 a.m., then I'm all mom – making breakfast, packing lunches, finding homework. The minute they're out the door, I turn to my emails, social media, promotion, then back to writing until the kids come home around 4:00 p.m. It's hectic and all I ever wanted at the same time.

Q. What was the hardest scene to write?

A. The opening scene, because I wanted it to be as powerful, raw, and visceral as possible. I must've revised it at least twenty times, so I hope I accomplished what I set out to.

Q. If you could tell yourself something about writing and becoming an author when you were starting out, what would it be?

A. It won't be fast and it won't be easy, but it'll be so worth it.

Other Links and Resources

Samantha M. Bailey joined The Morning Show to talk about her new book, *Woman on the Edge*:

<https://globalnews.ca/video/6218834/author-samantha-baileys-book-woman-on-the-edge>

Danielle Girard interviews Samantha Bailey, author of *Woman on the Edge*:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_1ln2nGzF0o

Postpartum Help for Partners and Families – how to support loved ones experiencing postpartum depression:

<https://www.postpartum.net/get-help/family/>

More information about postpartum depression and anxiety:

<https://www.marchofdimes.org/find-support/topics/postpartum/postpartum-depression>

Share your thoughts with other readers!

DATE: _____

BOOK CLUB: _____

BOOK TITLE: _____

As a group we rated this book:

1	2	3	4	5
Ugh!		It was OK...		Loved it!

Would we recommend this book to other book clubs?

Yes No Undecided

Why/why not?

Our discussion: