



READING GUIDE

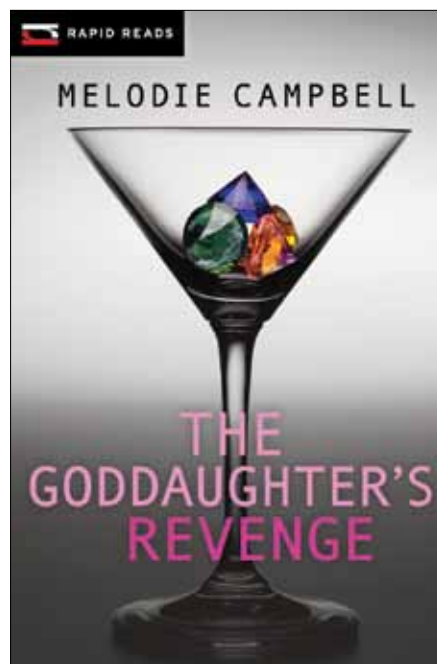
THE GODDAUGHTER'S REVENGE MELODIE CAMPBELL

Reading level: 3.8

Interest level: Adult

Themes: humor, crime, mobsters, gems & jewelry, Hamilton

978-I-4598-0487-6 PB



Summary

In *The Goddaughter's Revenge*, Gina Gallo is back again with another gem-related crisis. When her shop assistant, Tiffany, calls her attention to a ring that a client has brought in for repair, Gina realizes someone has swapped out the original stone and replaced it with a fake.

Gina soon learns from her Uncle Sammy that the stone in her Aunt Miriam's ring is loose too. She quickly connects the two incidents and figures out the culprit: her cousin Carmine, whom she calls "the weasel." One of Gina's uncles had called Carmine in to look after the jewelry store while Gina was away in Florida, getting to know her fiancé's relatives. While she was gone, Carmine was busy switching the stones out of clients' jewelry as they brought them into the store for cleaning and servicing.

Angered by her cousin's devious actions—and by how his criminal behavior could destroy her reputation as a jeweler—Gina sets out to return the stones to their rightful owners without being detected. She arranges to replace the fake stones from her own stock, absorbing the loss herself. Meanwhile, Uncle Sammy strikes out to dig up some dirt on Carmine that they can use for the purposes of blackmail. He's not going to get away with those stones!

Gina co-opts Tiffany and her brother, Nico, to help. Their plan is to break into the homes of the people whose jewelry have been tampered with in order to replace the fake stones with authentic ones. During these reverse robberies, Nico—a budding interior designer, it turns out—spends his time rearranging people's furniture in a more stylish manner. Immediately upon discovering they've been broken into, people call the news, reporting their delight or dismay at having their homes restyled. Nico quite quickly develops a reputation as The Lone Rearranger, and a cult following springs up as a result of the media coverage.

Hijinks and humor follow as Gina breaks into several more houses with her crew.

Eventually, Sammy digs up some dirt on Carmine: he's been caught on video having sex with someone other than his wife. As this information comes to light, Gina learns that her best friend, country singer Lainy McSwain, is coming into town. Gina is excited, and looks forward to introducing Lainy to her fiancé Pete.



RAVEN BOOKS *an imprint of*
ORCA BOOK PUBLISHERS
www.rapid-reads.com • 1-800-210-5277

Pete and Gina hop a plane to New York to confront Carmine and get the stolen jewels back. In exchange for secrecy about his affair, Carmine agrees to get the stones back from the man who's now in possession of them. The book finishes at Aunt Pinky's Halloween party, where Lainy McSwain has agreed to play. Lainy forces Carmine—one of her biggest fans—to promise never to mess with Gina again, or she'll fill him full of bullets. Carmine agrees, Lainy sings, and Gina breathes a sigh of relief that she's brought yet another of her family's ridiculous crises to a close.

Questions for Discussion

1. Before you begin reading *The Goddaughter's Revenge*, brainstorm what you already know about the mob from movies and other forms of media. As you read the book, consider how this background knowledge helps you understand the story.
2. What do you know about the effects of the black-market trade in gems?
3. At the end of chapter 2, Gina reflects that her cousin Sammy “may look insignificant, but he's sharp as a hornet's stinger.” This is a simile—a comparison using the words *like* or *as*. How do similes enhance the telling of a story? Find more similes in *The Goddaughter's Revenge*.
4. Throughout the story, Gina tries to minimize crossover with other members of her mob family, but it's impossible. Can you ever truly escape family? As you see it, do the ties of family become more or less binding as we get older?
5. Gina's character has a distinctive voice. What makes it so? How does her voice give the reader clues to her personality? Find evidence to support your answer.
6. Gina lies to Pete on several occasions, including telling him she's going to the store when she's really on her way to break into a house. When is it okay to lie? Where's the line between the “little white lie” and the bigger lies?
7. When Gina and Nico arrive at Mrs. Wilson's house to switch rings, Nico sniffs at the house's appearance: “I'm not looking forward to this one, Gina. I mean, really. Look at that exterior” (ch. 7). Is Nico a snob? Or is he simply an honest reflection of the strong social messaging so common in our society that appearance matters? Why does it matter? Are we better people because of this belief? Discuss.
8. As Gina's sidekick, Nico provides comic relief. Name and describe another fictional character (from a play, movie or another book) who fulfills this role.
9. In chapter 12, when Carmine realizes he's been caught on camera with a woman who isn't his wife, he demands that Gina give him the flash drive. But in the age of cloud computing, data doesn't necessarily have to be on a device to be widely accessible. Talk about privacy concerns in the digital age. How is it advantageous for us to be able to transmit information instantly and widely? How is it a curse? How do you manage your own digital footprint?
10. Read the first paragraph of chapter 14. Why is Pinky Palmerston's marriage considered to be a “good” one? Discuss this in a historical context, and contrast it to the modern day. Have things changed for women? What makes a “good” marriage for a man?





11. Read over several of the chapter endings. What techniques does the author use to close out each scene? How does she keep the reader interested in what's to come? What makes her chapter beginnings engaging?
12. Aunt Miriam says: "Divorce, never. Murder, maybe" (ch. 14). Why?
13. Aunt Miriam is a force to be reckoned with. Everyone knows her. Everyone's childhood has been touched in some way by her wisdom and direction. Although she never appears in the book, what is her role in the story?
14. Gina's family is huge and deeply intertwined. Draw her family tree, adding as much detail as you can.
15. Develop a headline that summarizes the story. Try for no more than eight words.

