



THE HIT-MOM BOOK CLUB KIT



MINOTAUR BOOKS

Welcome to the Hit-Mom Book Club Guide, the official companion to Elle Cosimano's *New York Times* bestselling Finlay Donovan series.

In this guide, you'll find everything you need for your book club's discussion of *Finlay Donovan Crosses the Line*, publishing March 17, 2026:

- *Finlay Donovan Crosses the Line: A Playlist* [pg. 3]
- Gloria and Norma's Famous Picadillo and Capirotada [pg. 4]
- *Finlay Donovan Crosses the Line* Discussion Questions [pg. 5]
- Five Tips for Throwing the Perfect Poker Night [pg. 6]

Does your book club need more Finlay Donovan? We've compiled the Hit-Mom Book Club Guides for each book in the series into this PDF.

Included in this booklet, you'll find companion guides for:

- *Finlay Donovan Is Killing It* [pg. 8]
- *Finlay Donovan Knocks 'Em Dead* [pg. 14]
- *Finlay Donovan Jumps the Gun* [pg. 21]
- *Finlay Donovan Rolls the Dice* [pg. 27]
- *Finlay Donovan Digs Her Own Grave* [pg. 35]

Whether you're meeting at your sorority house or via your somewhat-shady online women's forum—dust off those wig-scarves and sunglasses, grab a Panera pastry or 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 #FinlayDonovanCrossesTheLine and #HitMomBookClub.

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**Happy Reading,
Minotaur Books**



MINOTAUR BOOKS

FINLAY DONOVAN CROSSES THE LINE:

A Playlist

1. ***Waste a Moment*** by Kings of Leon
2. ***Sugar Sweet*** by Benson Boone
3. ***Live in the Moment*** by Portugal, The Man
4. ***Meet Me at Our Spot*** by THE ANXIETY, WILLOW, Tyler Cole
5. ***Let Me Down Slow*** by Zöelle
6. ***I Love You, I'm Sorry*** by Gracie Abrams
7. ***Walking on a Dream*** by Empire of the Sun
8. ***Sorry I'm Here for Someone Else*** by Benson Boone
9. ***Carry You Home*** by Alex Warren
10. ***Bang Bang*** by Jessie J, Ariana Grande, Nicki Minaj
11. ***Someone To You*** by BANNERS
12. ***us.*** by Gracie Abrams, Taylor Swift
13. ***Black Hole*** by Griff
14. ***Mi Fantasma*** by Zöelle
15. ***Secrets*** by One Republic
16. ***That's So True*** by Gracie Abrams
17. ***Baby Bitch*** by Ween
18. ***t r a n s p a r e n t s o u l*** by WILLOW, Travis Barker
19. ***Riptide*** by Vance Joy
20. ***DEVIL*** by Shinedown
21. ***I Will Not Bow*** by Breaking Benjamin
22. ***Fake It*** by Seether
23. ***The Kill*** by Thirty Seconds to Mars
24. ***crushcrushcrush*** by Paramore
25. ***Wait a Minute*** by WILLOW
26. ***Un Verano Sin Ti*** by Bad Bunny
27. ***Djitos Lindos*** by Bad Bunny and Bomba Estéreo



Scan the QR code
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GLORIA AND NORMA'S FAMOUS PICADILLO AND CAPIROTADA

Gloria got busy filling a small basket with pillowy, warm tortillas, and Norma put me to work serving out bowls of stew from the pot on the stove. The rich red tomato broth was brimming with ground beef, potatoes, and onions, and a pan of something that looked like bread pudding was cooling on the counter. The sugar-crusted top was singed around the edges. Ramón helped me carry it all to the table while Vero filled a bag with ice and pressed it to Javi's lip. She set a place for him at the table, and we all took our seats.

"Thank you for letting us stay for dinner. Everything looks delicious," I said.

"It's picadillo," Gloria said. "We've all been under a lot of stress. I thought a little comfort food might be nice."

PICADILLO

[*Recipe by Mely Martinez / Mexico in My Kitchen*](#)

Serves 6

INGREDIENTS:

1 1/2 tbsp vegetable oil
1 lb ground beef (85/15%)
1/3 cup white onion, chopped
2 garlic cloves
1 serrano pepper
1 1/2 cup diced potato (approx. 8 ounces)
1 lb diced tomatoes (approx. 2 large tomatoes)
1 beef bouillon cube
1/3 cup chopped cilantro
Salt and pepper to taste

INSTRUCTIONS:

Heat oil in a large skillet. Once oil is hot, add the ground meat to cook. Break up large lumps of meat using a wooden spoon to make sure all the little pieces are well cooked. Fry until brown, about 8 minutes.

Add the onion and garlic. Stir and cook for about 1 minute, just enough to allow the onion to get transparent, then add serrano pepper and diced potatoes. Stir and keep cooking until potatoes are slightly tender, but still firm, about 5 minutes.

Add the diced tomatoes and beef bouillon and stir again. Cover your skillet and lower the heat. Keep cooking the picadillo until your potatoes are completely cooked and the tomatoes have formed a thick sauce.

Finally, season with salt and pepper and add the chopped cilantro.

Serve with rice and warm corn tortillas. Enjoy!

CAPIROTADA

[*Recipe by Yvette Marquez / Muy Bueno*](#)

Serves 8-10

INGREDIENTS:

4 bolillo or French rolls
4 1/2 cups water
12 ounces piloncillo
(or 1 1/2 cups packed dark brown sugar)
4 cinnamon sticks
1 serrano pepper
6 whole cloves
3 cups shredded cheese
(Longhorn Cheddar, Colby, or cheese of your choice)
1 cup raisins
4 tablespoons butter or spray butter

INSTRUCTIONS:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees fahrenheit

Cut rolls in 1/2 inch slices and butter both sides. Layer the slices on a baking sheet and bake for 3 minutes on each side, until lightly toasted and dry. Remove and cool.

Combine water, piloncillo, cinnamon sticks, and cloves in a large saucepan. Bring to a boil then reduce heat, creating a syrup. Simmer syrup uncovered for 20 minutes. Remove from heat and let steep, covered, for 2 hours. Pour through a strainer and discard cinnamon sticks and cloves. Set syrup aside.

Spray an 8 x 10 1/2" baking dish with non-stick spray and then layer ingredients in the following order: a third of the toasted bread, a third of the raisins, a third of the cheese, and 1 1/2 cups syrup, poured evenly over the cheese. Wait 15 minutes, and then layer another third of the bread, raisins, cheese, and 1 1/2 cups syrup evenly over cheese. Let that soak for another 15 minutes, and again top with the remaining bread, raisins, cheese, and syrup. Before baking, let the dish set for another 15 minutes.

FINLAY DONOVAN CROSSES THE LINE

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Stacey's social media page becomes a hub for Finlay's gossiping neighbors. Do you think public figures (including authors) deserve privacy? Do you feel Stacey's posts violated Finlay's?
2. Nick's offer to watch the children so Finlay could go to Maryland to help Vero marks a big step forward in Finlay and Nick's relationship. How do you feel about the direction of their relationship and the secret Zach accidentally revealed?
3. How did you feel about Bennett at the beginning of the story versus the end? Why do you think he came to Finlay's aid when she was confronted by Officer Dates?
4. In what ways do Norma and Gloria's relationship and antics mirror those of Finlay and Vero? When you picture Vero and Finlay five, ten, and twenty years in the future, what do you imagine?
5. Vero's family has different feelings about law enforcement than Finlay does. Why do you think that is? In what ways have your own cultural and life experiences shaped your attitudes toward law enforcement and our legal system?
6. Do you feel Vero responded appropriately to each of her sorority sisters' apologies at the end of the book? Was she right to forgive them? How would you have responded if you had been in Vero's shoes?
7. In the book, Vero says, "Why is it always up to the victim to be the bigger person?" Do you feel this is an accurate statement? Can you think of a time in your own life when you were hurt and you were expected to be the bigger person?
8. Javi's relationship with his mother is strained. Did your attitude toward Regina shift from the beginning to the end of the story? What, if anything, changed your feelings about her?
9. Jealousy is one theme explored in the book. Which characters were forced to confront their jealousy? How did you feel about the ways those characters dealt with their feelings?
10. The shower curtain became a metaphor through the story. What do you think it represents? Have you ever jumped to a conclusion only to discover you were wrong? Can you think of a few instances in the book when Finlay or Vero let their imaginations get the best of them?
11. Found family is a theme in this installment of the series more so than the rest. What examples of found families can you identify in this story? Do you have a found family in your own life?
12. At the end of the story, Finlay confronts Stacey about her social media posts. Do you think Finlay made the right decision to speak up? Do you agree with the way she handled the situation? How do you think her choice might impact her in the next installment of the series?

FIVE TIPS FOR THROWING THE PERFECT POKER NIGHT

Adapted from Entertainment For Hire

Planning a poker night is a great way to bring friends together. Just be sure you're not doing any underground fundraising for your sorority on the side! Below, you'll find a few tips for throwing a fun, casual poker night with your book club.

1. **Curate the vibe:** The perfect poker night isn't just about the card game – it's also about room setup, the snacks, and the playlist.

Most importantly, you'll need a comfortable table, where everyone can reach the cards and chips. A poker table is ideal, but a dining table or portable table with a green tablecloth will work just fine. Dim the lighting or use candles for a sophisticated vibe – and to eliminate glare on the cards. Then, queue up the perfect poker night playlist. Think sophisticated background music: jazz or lo-fi beats.

Plan your menu around easy-to-eat finger food and simple drinks that won't interfere with the card game: chips and dip, veggies and hummus, bowls of chips, nuts, or popcorn, or mini sliders or pizza. For drinks, consider beer, wine, and a signature cocktail. Be sure to provide plenty of non-alcoholic options so that players can keep a clear head for the game!

2. **Pick the right poker style:** Texas Hold 'Em is a simple and fast-moving poker style for groups of 4-10 players, making it ideal for most poker nights. If your group is more advanced, you might want to try Omaha, Seven-Card Stud, or a fun novelty round.
3. **Agree on a buy-in:** Based on the skill levels of your attendees, decide in advance whether your poker night will be casual or competitive. Then, determine whether there will be a buy-in, or if you'd rather play for chips with no money involved. If you do decide to go with a buy-in, keep it small – \$10 to \$20 range – and agree on the prize splits in advance.
4. **Make the rules clear:** One of the biggest obstacles to a perfect poker night is confusion around the rules. Before any cards are dealt, make sure everyone agrees on the points like blind structure and chip values, buy-in and re-buy options, table etiquette, and game end time or win condition. It may be helpful to print or write down the rules on a sheet of paper for easy reference throughout the night.
5. **Stick to the plan:** Set a clear end time before the evening begins. A typical poker night will run anywhere from 3-4 hours. And then, before any players leave – schedule your next event!