

Reading Group Guide
Murder in the Palais Royal
By Cara Black

1. Gabrielle de la Pecheray, the aristocratic Ministry press attache's job is damage control and averting government scandals. This touches close to home for Gabrielle who has her own dirty laundry: a father who was a Vichy collaborator during World War II. How does Gabrielle change in the story? Does she come to terms with the past, and does Olivier, her son, also caught in a scandal, change too?
2. The exclusive Palais Royal area is likened to a village in the center of Paris, a closed community inhabited by Ministry officials and local shopkeepers. Do you sense the village atmosphere? How does the community seem closed Aimée and other outsiders?
3. Clémence, a young woman from Toulouse, struggles working in Paris as a waitress. What are her different ways of coping with the men in her life and with her future? Does your sympathy for her grow?
4. Aimée's penchant for bad boys is always leading her into trouble, this time with a man who turns out to be married. Does she meet her match in the police detective Melac from Brigade Criminelle? Could you see a future for them?
5. The themes of loss and the past affect the characters in different ways. Gabrielle is affected by her father's shameful collaborationist past while Aimée is haunted by the loss of her father in an explosion. Do you see a parallel? How is the impact of the past different for each of them?