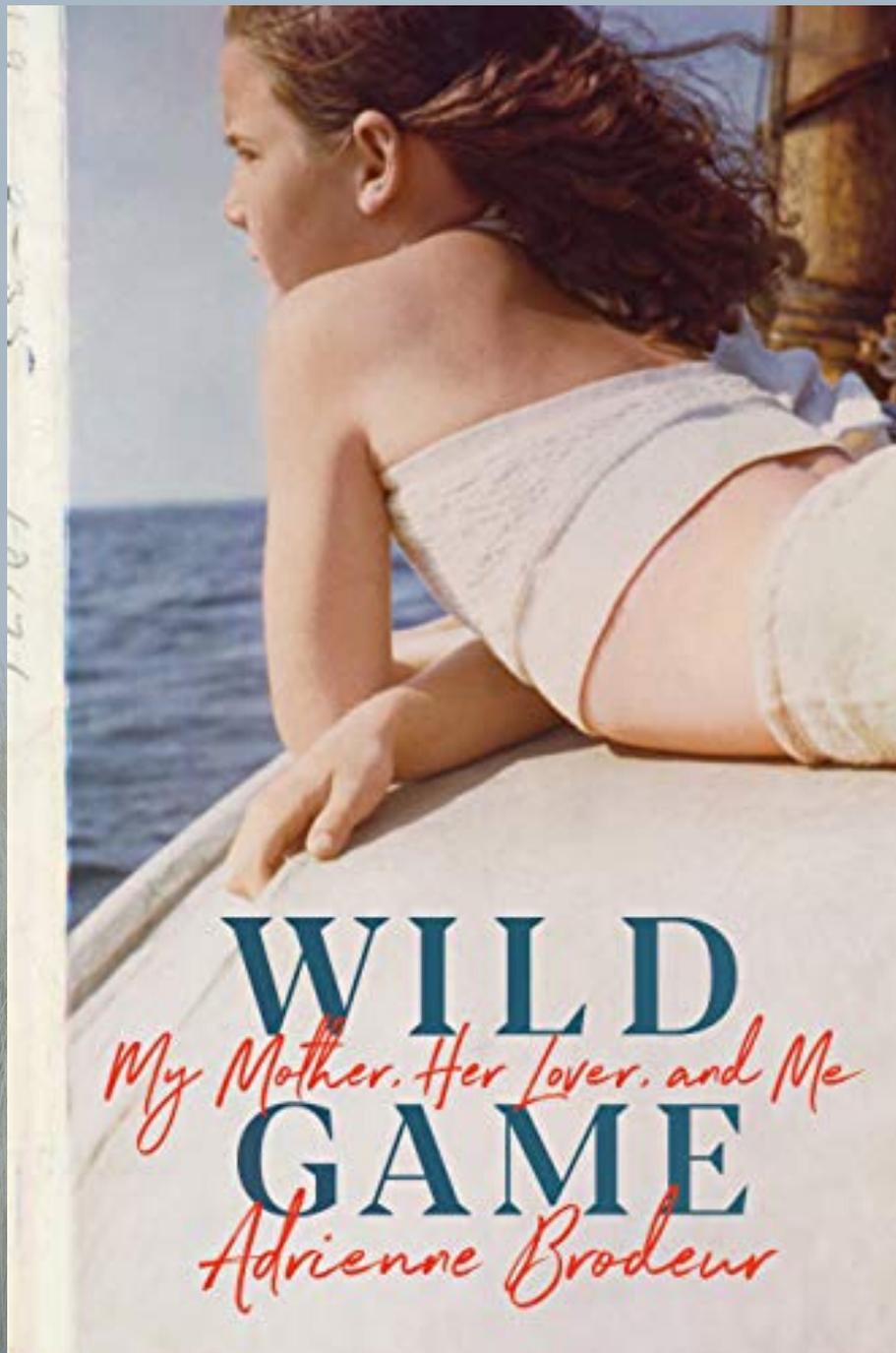


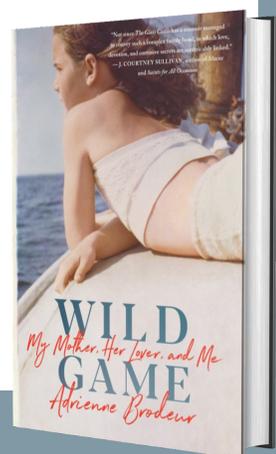
BOOK CLUB KIT



**EVERYTHING YOU NEED FOR A BOOK CLUB MEETING ON
WILD GAME BY ADRIENNE BRODEUR**

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AUTHOR INTERVIEW

How did you decide you were ready to tell this story?

Adrienne Brodeur: I thought I had a pretty good handle on my past, but when I decided to start a family of my own, I realized that I still had work to do. Having children requires revelation, and I knew with certainty that I didn't want to mother as I'd been mothered. I still needed to reckon with how I had been raised in order to be sure that I didn't inadvertently repeat familial patterns. The best way for me to do that, it turned out, was by confronting the past head-on in this memoir.

What was your writing process like? Was writing this story cathartic for you?

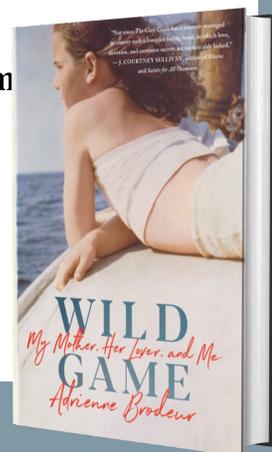
I got a toehold on writing *Wild Game* during a three-week residency program, which was enough to motivate me to start writing daily. I woke up every morning before 5am and had a rough draft in a year. In order to write well about my mother and our relationship, I had to put myself in her shoes and, in doing so, I developed a deep compassion for her. In her lifetime, my mother endured some unimaginable losses, including the death of her first child. The writing process, it turns out, is a highly empathetic endeavor, and forgiving my mother took a backseat to understanding her. In this way, writing *Wild Game* was a heart-expanding process.

There are so many layers to the title of the book: It references the cookbook Malabar works on with Ben, as well as their affair, and the challenges of keeping your mother's secret. How did you come to settle on *Wild Game* as the title?

I had a different working title when I began the book, but when I wrote the chapter where my mother came up with the idea of a wild game cookbook as a ruse to cover for the affair and create reasons for the two couples to spend time together, *Wild Game*—with its double entendre—revealed itself as the perfect title.

In the book, you talk about sharing a birthday with your late brother. That birthday happens to be the day this book is being published. Does it feel, in some ways, like the story is coming full circle?

Once I got over the shock of the proposed publication date, it indeed felt strangely right, and in just the way that you suggested: like the story had come full circle—only this time, I had more agency in the narrative.



AUTHOR INTERVIEW

You're an avid journaler. How did having those old entries help to shape this book?

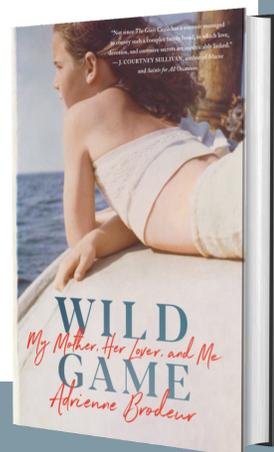
As a memoirist, I am lucky to come from a family that chronicles their lives. My mother gave me access to a bounty of food notebooks, recipes, travel articles, cookbooks, scrapbooks, and photo albums and I have kept journals since I was a young teenager. My diary entries informed *Wild Game* more than they shaped it. From the outset of the book, I knew which scenes I wanted to explore—and those were accurately seared into my memory (perhaps precisely because I'd written them down). I looked to my journals mostly for connective tissue and to understand my frame of mind during different periods of my life.

Just from reading this book, it's clear that Malabar cooked many memorable meals for her family and friends. Does one stand out for you above the others? Why?

As most meals were events in my mother's home—extravaganzas that could last hours—it's impossible to single out the most memorable one. However, I do remember a period, when my mother was perfecting her donut recipe, as the best culinary experience of my childhood. I might have been ten at the time, and every Sunday morning for months the sweet aroma of fried dough and cinnamon filled our kitchen. The donuts were served with hot tea and, as a family, we assessed the relative merits of each batch, taking into consideration shape (crullers, holes or circles), delicacy of the cake, and most importantly, crunch factor.

It must have been very difficult to anticipate how readers would react to Malabar. Was this something you thought about as you wrote this book?

Yes. My goal was to capture the truth of my relationship with my mother and write a nuanced book that explored our mutual humanity. Early in the writing process, I read a line that Vivian Gornick wrote in *The Situation and The Story*: “For the drama to deepen, we must see the loneliness of the monster and the cunning of the innocent.” I taped that to my computer where I could consider it daily. That said, one of the most difficult things about writing a memoir is that it is not just your book and your writing that gets judged, it is your life, too. Interpretation is, of course, the readers' right, but that interpretation often says more about the reader's perspective than it does about the book.



AUTHOR INTERVIEW

The cover features a photograph of your mother as a young girl. What drew you to this photo in particular? Did you consider other options or was this the favorite from the start?

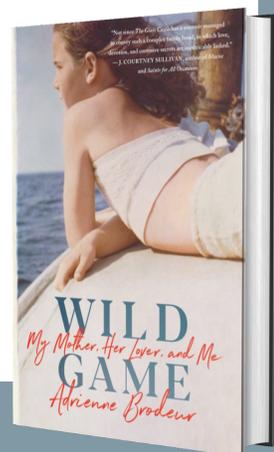
When I first discovered that photograph in my mother's file cabinet, I thought it was a picture of my daughter. When I showed it to my husband, he thought it was of me. It turned out to be my mother, Malabar, circa the mid-1940s. It's an iconic shot: a girl on a boat gazing at the horizon. Immediately, I wondered what she was thinking and what her future held. I posted the image on Instagram because I thought it was a beautiful shot. From there, my editor identified it as the perfect jacket photo.

The book ends with you reflecting on your relationship with your own daughter, and you recently shared on Instagram that she was reading *Wild Game*. What was it like to share this story with her?

On that particular August morning, I found my daughter reading *Wild Game*. As far as I know, she didn't finish it that day, which is 100% okay with me. Having spent so much of my childhood overly concerned with and involved in my mother's life, I am gratified that my daughter, at 14, puts her own friendships and activities first. She knows the story behind the book, but as far as she's concerned, that's the past and it doesn't have too much to do with her.

Margot says at one point, "You have no idea how much you can learn about yourself by plunging into someone else's life." Is there anything you hope readers, particularly those with complicated relationships with their mothers, take away or learn about themselves from reading *Wild Game*?

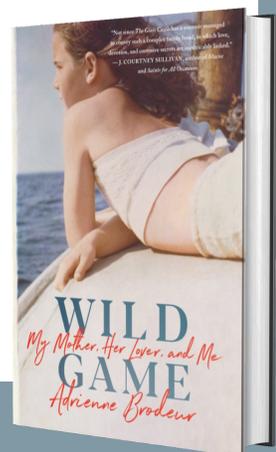
I hope that readers, especially those with complicated childhoods, know that they can move beyond their pasts. When we deny our stories, they have power over us. When we confront them, we're able to move toward a brighter future.



DISCUSSION GUIDE

- 1) *Wild Game* is filled with twists, turns, and powerful memories. Which scenes were the the most thought-provoking, the most relatable, and the most shocking?
- 2) Do you think Adrienne's relationship with Malabar made her an unreliable narrator?
- 3) In this book, the author and her mother are frequently described as being two halves of the same whole. Do you see them that way?
- 4) The book focuses on Adrienne's relationship with her mother, and doesn't delve as deeply into the ramifications of Ben's actions. Do you think Ben is let off the hook too easily?
- 5) What does the necklace seem to symbolize to Adrienne, and what does it symbolize to Malabar? What do you think happened to it?
- 6) What was *Wild Game*'s impact on you as a reader? Does the author's story make you think about your own life or experiences differently?

Find more questions on the next page!



DISCUSSION GUIDE

7) What did you think of Adrienne's evolving opinion of Lily? Did you as the reader begin to see her differently as the story progressed?

8) The book with a story about the author and her own daughter. How do you think her experiences as Malabar's daughter shaped the brief interactions readers see of her with her own children?

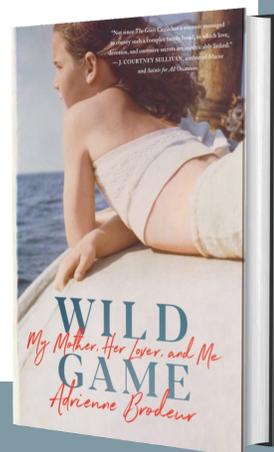
9) Margot says, "Books come into your life for a reason." What books do you feel came into your life at the right time?

10) *Wild Game* is being adapted for film. Who would you cast as Malabar and Ben?

As an added bonus, here are two questions suggested by the author Adrienne Brodeur:

11) How does sharing a secret create a false sense of intimacy, when in fact it is often a burden placed on someone? How do secrets keep us from being known?

12) Are we all destined to become our parents in some way, shape, or form?



MALABAR-INSPIRED RECIPES FOR YOUR WILD GAME MEETING

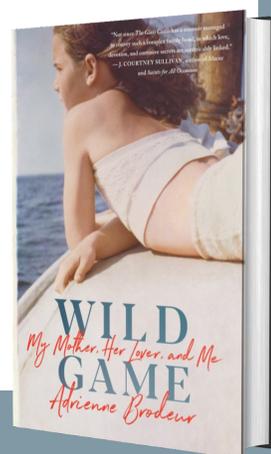
To throw the perfect *Wild Game* meeting you'll need to create a spread that Malabar herself would be proud of. On the following two pages you'll find recipes for roasted pigeon and a power pack cocktail.

MAKE YOUR OWN WILD GAME COOKBOOK

On page 11, you'll find recipe sheets.

Print enough for all of your group members and pass them out at the meeting. Each member can share a favorite recipe.

Combine your finished sheets in a binder for your very own book club cookbook!



Roasted Pigeon

Then came the pièce de résistance: Ben's squab, served family-style on an enormous carving board with grooves that caught their abundant juices. Using long tongs, Malabar scooped up a tiny pigeon for each plate. Roasted to medium-rare, the meat was silky and tender, fine-grained and richer than I'd expected.

At the first bite, my mother moaned with satisfaction. She never shied away from enjoying the fruits of her labor.

The best pigeons are squab, (baby farmed pigeons), rarely over one month old.

Preheat oven to 400°F

Wash the pigeons, and blot dry with a kitchen towel, making sure cavity is clean/dry

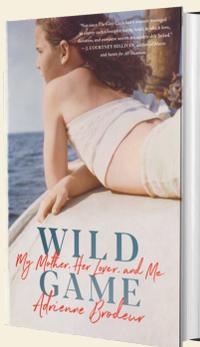
Season pigeons to taste

Place oil in a heavy-bottomed skillet over medium-high heat and sear birds on all sides

Place birds breast-side-up in a roasting pan and place in preheated oven

Roast for 10 – 12 minutes for medium-rare (pink) meat, basting halfway through the cooking

Allow meat to rest for 5 minutes before serving



The Power Pack

Then Malabar ordered a power pack in her usual rapid-fire staccato: "A dry Manhattan. Standing up. With a twist. No ice. No fruit." When the waiter tilted his head quizzically, Malabar exhaled her annoyance and repeated the order at exactly the same speed as she had the first time. I asked for a Taj Mahal beer.

My mother's Manhattan recipe was fairly standard, except that she tripled the typical amount of booze and never, ever added a cherry. If I were to hazard a guess — recipes were not Malabar's thing — it would go like this:

4 – 5 oz. Maker's Mark bourbon
1 oz. dry vermouth (she preferred Noilly Prat)
2 dashes Angostura bitters
1 cup ice

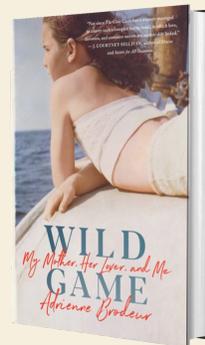
Place martini glass in freezer

Put ice in empty cocktail shaker

Add bourbon, dry vermouth, and Angostura bitters to ice-filled shaker, and shake until it starts to "sweat" on the outside (Malabar often would open the top, contemplate what was inside, and add another splash of booze)

Remove chilled cocktail glass and strain/pour Manhattan into it

Garnish with a lemon twist



SNAPSHOTS

These photos from Adrienne Brodeur can offer your group a special look into the lives of the people you read about in *Wild Game*.



Malabar



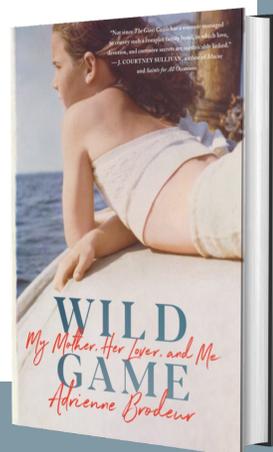
Malabar's parents



Adrienne at 16



Malabar and Adrienne



BOOK CLUB TRIVIA:

HOW CLOSELY WERE YOU READING?

1. What is Malabar's preferred cocktail, or "power pack"?

- A) Dry Manhattan with a twist
- B) Gin and tonic
- C) Margarita
- D) Red wine

2. What is the very first meal described in this book?

- A) Flank steak with green beans and potatoes au gratin
- B) Takeout
- C) Homemade pasta with cherry stone clams
- D) Soft-shell clams and squab with corn pudding

3. Which book did Margot *not* recommend to Adrienne?

- A) *A Room of One's Own* by Virginia Woolf
- B) *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen
- C) *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Brontë
- D) *Love in the Time of Cholera* by Gabriel García Márquez

4. What did Malabar fall against during the physical fight with her mother?

- A) A fireplace
- B) A lamp
- C) A trash can
- D) A stove

5. Where in NYC did Ben and Malabar like to hold their secret meetings?

- A) The InterContinental
- B) Central Park
- C) Times Square
- D) The Strand

6. What color is the velvet case that Malabar's necklace is stored in?

- A) Blue
- B) Purple
- C) Red
- D) Emerald green

7. What was the name of the shipwreck that fascinated Charles?

- A) The Whydah Gally
- B) The Mary Rose
- C) The Vasa
- D) The Titanic

8. What was the name of Charles' caretaker?

- A) Maude
- B) Charlotte
- C) Hazel
- D) Greta

9. What was the name of the prep school Adrienne attended?

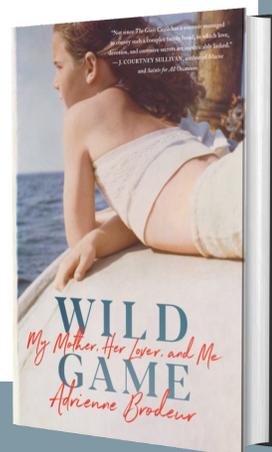
- A) Taft School
- B) Milton Academy
- C) Andover
- D) Choate Rosemary Hall

10. What did Malabar wear to Adrienne's wedding?

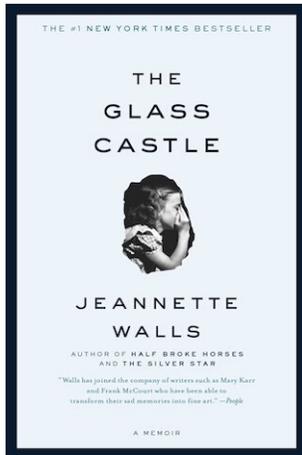
- A) A blue-green dress
- B) Her own wedding dress
- C) A black cocktail dress
- D) An elegant silver ball gown

ANSWERS

1. A 2. D 3. C 4. A 5. A
6. B 7. A 8. C 9. B 10. A

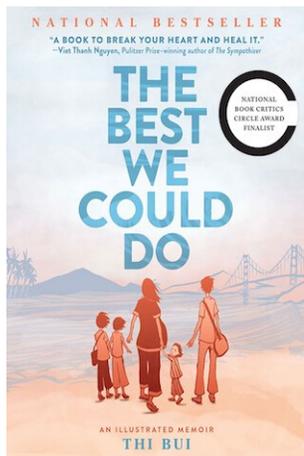


LOVE THIS, READ THAT: WHAT TO READ AFTER YOU FINISH WILD GAME



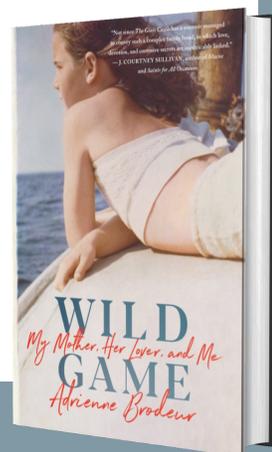
If you enjoy memoirs about complex relationships between parents and their children... ***The Glass Castle* by Jeannette Walls**

The Glass Castle is a book club classic, and if you haven't read it yet, now is the perfect time. Jeanette Walls' memoir recounts an unusual and transient childhood with her parents and siblings. Walls specifically focuses on her relationship with her father, a charming and intelligent man who struggled with alcoholism and was often unable to provide for the family. If you loved the way that Brodeur captured both her idealization of her mother and her realization of how codependent their bond could be, you'll love the way Walls writes about the complicated nature of loving a parent who sometimes looks out for themselves more than their children.

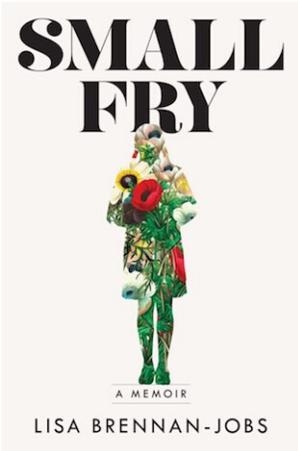


If you're interested in how parents' pasts affect their relationships with their children... ***The Best We Could Do* by Thi Bui**

Thi Bui's parents fled Vietnam in the 1970s, and the challenges they faced in leaving their old lives and settling into the United States would inform the way they parented. That influence would live on in Bui's own experiences as a parent, which will remind readers of how Malabar's difficult childhood affected how she parented Adrienne, which would then influence how Adrienne raised her own daughter. If your book club loves stories about multiple generations, *The Best We Could Do* is a great pick.



LOVE THIS, READ THAT: WHAT TO READ AFTER YOU FINISH WILD GAME



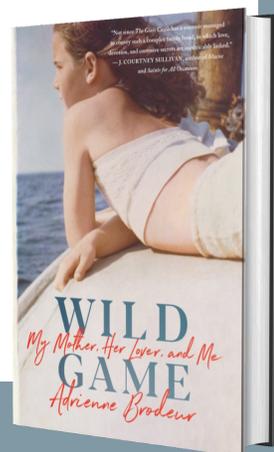
If you're fascinated by the dynamic between a child and a larger-than-life parent... *Small Fry* by Lisa Brennan-Jobs

Lisa Brennan-Jobs' father was Steve Jobs, the famous co-founder of Apple. In *Small Fry*, Brennan-Jobs writes about her relationship with her often-absent father. Jobs became more involved over the years, and his attention (and lack thereof) had a huge impact on Brennan-Jobs' young life. For book clubs who were interested in what impact having a larger-than-life parent can have on a young person, we recommend *Small Fry*.



If Malabar's cooking left you craving more fabulous recipes...
Cravings: Hungry for More by Chrissy Teigen

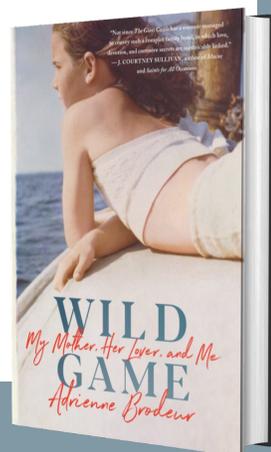
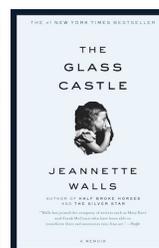
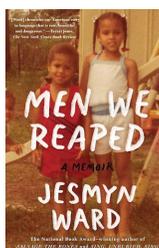
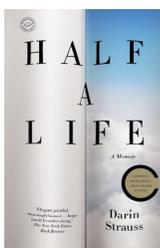
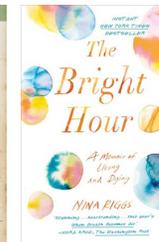
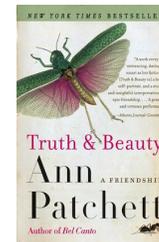
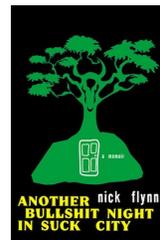
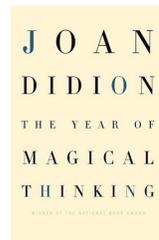
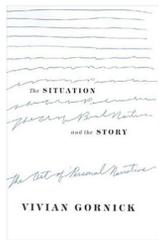
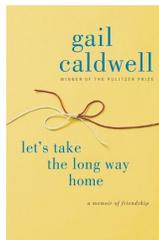
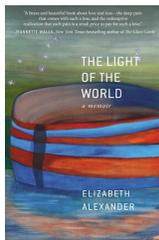
We don't know about you, but reading *Wild Game* made us really, really hungry. If you're feeling inspired by Malabar's prowess in the kitchen and want to check out some recipes, we recommend Chrissy Teigen's *Cravings: Hungry for More*. In addition to sharing recipes, Teigen writes about being a mother, experiencing postpartum depression, and using food and cooking as a way to feel better again. We absolutely aren't comparing Malabar and Teigen as mothers, but we do think that you'll love these delicious recipes that are sure to delight your family and friends.



RENNIE RECOMMENDS: BOOKS THAT INSPIRED ADRIENNE BRODEUR

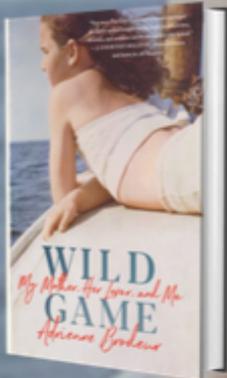
We asked author Adrienne Brodeur what books helped to inspire her while she was writing *Wild Game*.

- The Light of the World* by Elizabeth Alexander
After This by Claire Bidwell Smith
Let's Take the Long Way Home by Gail Caldwell
The Situation and The Story by Vivian Gornick
Fierce Attachments by Vivian Gornick
The Year of Magical Thinking by Joan Didion
Another Bullshit Night in Suck City by Nick Flynn
Happiness by Heather Harpham
Bettyville by George Hodgman
The Liars Club by Mary Karr
Truth and Beauty by Ann Patchett
The Bright Hour by Nina Riggs
Half a Life by Darin Strauss
Men We Reaped by Jesmyn Ward
The Glass Castle by Jeannette Walls



BOOKMARKS

"The lonely feeling comes from not being known."



BOOKish



"THERE ARE NO MONSTERS HERE. EVERYONE IS FLAWED, HUMAN."



BOOKish

BOOKish

"I KNEW THAT EVERY TIME I FAILED TO BECOME more like MY MOTHER, I BECAME more like me."



BOOKish

"Books will change your life."



BOOKish

MEET ADRIENNE BRODEUR ON THE
WILD GAME

Tour

New York, NY

Greenlight Bookstore, 10/14

***in conversation with J. Courtney Sullivan**

Book Culture on Columbus, 10/15

Washington, D.C.

Politics & Prose, 10.16

Aspen Institute's Michelle

Smith Arts and Culture Series, 10.17

Massachusetts

Harvard Book Store, 10/18

Boston Book Festival, 10/19

Buttonwood Books, 10/24

Titcomb's Bookshop, 11/12

Eight Cousins Books, 11/13

An Unlikely Story, 11/14

Wellesley Books, 11/18

San Francisco, CA

Cafe Zoetrope, 11/6

Read It & Eat Series,

Towne Center Books, 11/7
(Pleasanton)

Seattle, WA

Elliott Bay

Book Company, 11/8

Providence, RI

Cardigan Connection
Series, 11/19

Miami, FL

Miami Book Festival,
11/22-11/24

Aspen, CO

Wheeler Opera House, 12/6

Denver, CO

Tattered Cover
Book Store, 12/7

Kingston, NY

Rough Draft, 10/20

Portland, ME

Print, 10/22

Austin, TX

Texas Book Festival, 10/26-10/27

Connecticut

The New Canaan Library/

Elm Street Books, 10/29

***in conversation with Alisyn Camerota**

RJ Julia, 10/30

***in conversation with Dani Shapiro**

Riverside Yacht Club/

Diane's Books, 11/20

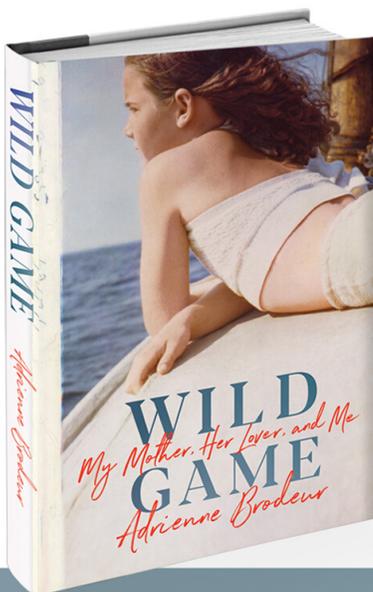
San Diego, CA

Good Earth/Great Chefs Series, 11/2

Los Angeles, CA

Vroman's Bookstore, 11/4

***in conversation with Kelly Fremon Craig**



LEARN MORE AT ADRIENNEBRODEUR.COM



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

ADRIENNE BRODEUR

Adrienne Brodeur began her career in publishing as the co-founder, along with filmmaker Francis Ford Coppola, of the fiction magazine *Zoetrope: All-Story*, which won the National Magazine Award for Best Fiction three times and launched the careers of many writers.

She was a book editor at Houghton Mifflin Harcourt for many years and, currently, she is the Executive Director of Aspen Words, a program of the Aspen Institute. She has published essays in the *New York Times*.

She splits her time between New York City and Cape Cod with her husband and children.

www.adriennebrodeur.com



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