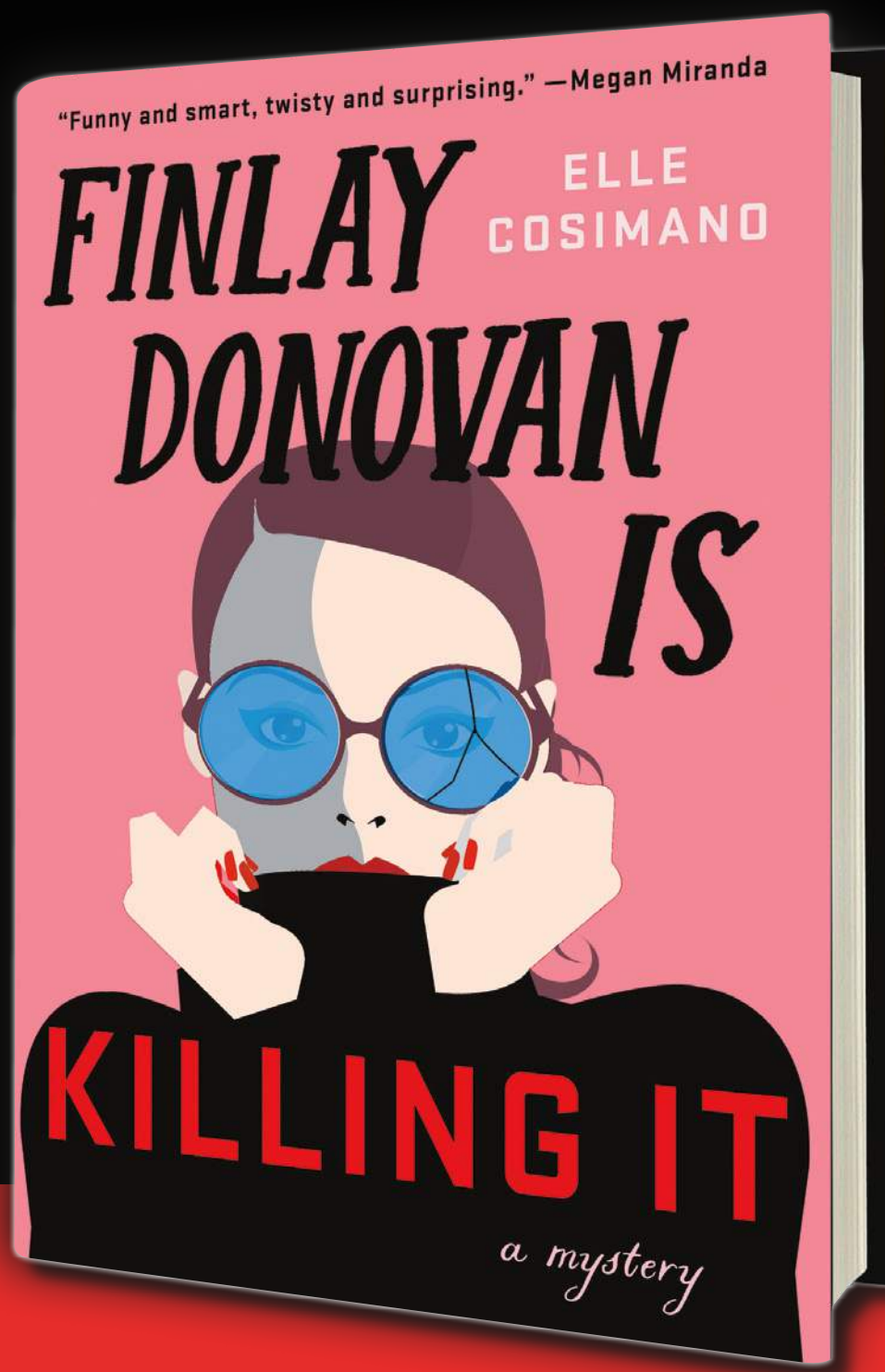


**“It’s a widely known fact that most moms are ready to kill someone by eight-thirty AM on any given Monday.”**

*—from **Finlay Donovan Is Killing It***



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# ***FINLAY DONOVAN IS KILLING IT***

by **ELLE COSIMANO:**

- Elle's Killer Lasagna Recipe
- Killing It: A Playlist
- Discussion Questions

So grab your blonde wig, scarf, dark glasses, Panera pastry, and a  
group of fellow readers...and start killing it!

And whether you're gathering in person or on Zoom, we'd love  
to see photos of your Hit-Mom Book Club meeting. Please share  
photos on social media using #FinlayDonovanIsKillingIt and  
#HitMomBookClub, and don't forget to tag us!

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# ELLE'S KILLER LASAGNA RECIPE

"Clearly amateur-killer-in-sweaty-yoga-pants was not my best look."

—from *Finlay Donovan Is Killing It*

## WHO ISN'T ROCKING THE YOGA PANTS THESE DAYS?! AND MAKING THEIR FAVORITE COMFORT FOOD? LET'S GET COOKIN'!

**SERVES:** Your Entire Book Club  
(or 12 servings)

**PREP TIME:** 40 minutes

**COOKING TIME:** 1 hr

**PREHEAT OVEN:** 375 degrees

**STEP 1:** Coat a 9.5 x13 DEEP casserole dish with non-stick cooking spray. This lasagna is HUGE! It will overflow a standard baking dish and spatter the bottom of your oven. Never leave evidence at the scene of the crime!

**STEP 2:** Pre-cook and drain a box of lasagna noodles. (If you're in a hurry, you can substitute No-Boil lasagna noodles for this recipe. Throw away the box. I won't tell. Your secret is safe with me.)

**STEP 3:** Prepare all three fillings. The key to solving a murder boils down to three essential ingredients: means, motive, and opportunity. Or in the case of a killer lasagna: meat, sauce, and cheesy goodness.

### THE MEAT OF IT

1 ½ lbs ground meat (I prefer a mix of beef and pork, but you do you)

1 clove garlic, minced

½ large onion, chopped

2 tsp fennel seed

Dash of salt & pepper

*Sauté meat, garlic, onion in olive oil until browned. Drain excess fat, season, and set aside.*

### GETTING SAUCED

58 oz tomato sauce

12 oz can diced tomatoes

½ large onion, chopped

1 clove garlic, minced

2-3 tbsp milk

1 ½ tbsp sugar

Italian seasoning, salt, and pepper to taste

*Sauté onion and garlic in olive oil until softened. Add tomato and simmer for ~5 minutes. Add tomato sauce and remaining ingredients. Simmer for an additional 15-30 minutes.*

### A LITTLE CHEESY

24 oz of ricotta cheese

3 eggs, beaten into submission

¾ cup shredded parmesan

4 ½ cup shredded mozzarella (2 of these will be reserved, so don't get carried away!)

Dash of ground nutmeg

Dash of parsley

Dash of salt and pepper

*Set aside two cups of mozzarella. Mix the remaining ingredients in a large bowl. Pat yourself on the back and have a glass of wine*

### STEP 4: Assemble the lasagna.

Spread a thin layer of sauce on the bottom of the pan (1 ½ - 2 cups to keep the noodles from sticking). Arrange a single layer of 4 noodles to cover the sauce. Spread 1/3 of the ricotta mixture over the noodles. Sprinkle half of the meat mixture over that. Sprinkle one cup of the

reserved mozzarella over the meat. Spread a thin layer of sauce (1 ½ - 2 cups). Layer 4 more noodles, 1/3 of the ricotta mixture, and 1 ½ cups of sauce. Layer 4 more noodles, the remaining ricotta mixture, the remaining meat mixture, and 1 ½ - 2 cups sauce. Layer 4 more noodles, 2 cups of sauce, and sprinkle one cup of mozzarella over the top.

*You'll see my sauce measurements are rough. If you like a wetter lasagna, go saucier. If you prefer it a little firmer, maybe go lighter on the sauce. Yeah, I went there. Don't judge. If you're using a 4-inch baker, use a sheet of aluminum foil under your pan to collect any sauce that bubbles over.*

**STEP 5:** Cover in foil. Bake until bubbling, approximately one hour. Remove foil and continue baking for additional 5 minutes until the cheese on top is melted.

**PRO TIP:** Prepare ahead, refrigerate, and pop back in a 350 degree oven about an hour before dinner until heated through. It will be easier to slice and serve after it's had time to set.

# ***KILLING IT: A PLAYLIST***

**“This was my life. A three thousand dollar contract for months of work, no sleep, and ten minutes in the bathroom alone.”**

**—from *Finlay Donovan Is Killing It***

- **Train in Vain (Stand by Me) - The Clash**
- **Celebrity Skin - Hole**
- **Nighttiming - Coconut Records**
- **I Write Sins Not Tragedies - Panic! At The Disco**
- **I'm Not Okay (I Promise) - My Chemical Romance**
- **It Ends Tonight - The All-American Rejects**
- **Choke - I DONT KNOW HOW BUT THEY FOUND ME**
- **Do It All The Time - I DONT KNOW HOW BUT THEY FOUND ME**
- **Absinthe - I DONT KNOW HOW BUT THEY FOUND ME**
- **Misery Business - Paramore**
- **Hard Times - Paramore**
- **I'll Sleep When I'm Dead - Set It Off**
- **Money Problems - Max Frost**
- **No Promises - Shawn Mendes**
- **Killer - The Ready Set**
- **Partners in Crime (feat. Ash Costello) - Set It Off, Ash Costello**
- **Kill Everyone - Hollywood Undead**
- **I Don't Wanna Die - Hollywood Undead**
- **Somebody That I Used To Know - Mayday Parade, Vic Fuentes**
- **Death of Me - PVRIS**
- **Blonde - Waterparks**
- **I See You - MISSIO**
- **We Don't Have To Dance - Andy Black**
- **If It Means a Lot to You - A Day To Remember**
- **Dream Boy - Waterparks**
- **Unsteady - X Ambassadors**
- **Killer In The Mirror - Set It Off**
- **Rocketeer - Far East Movement, Ryan Tedder, Ruff Loaderz**
- **Pressure - Muse**
- **Midnight - Coldplay**
- **Serious (with Matthew Koma) - Midnight Kids, Matthew Koma**
- **Icky Thump - The White Stripes**
- **Feeling Good - Muse**
- **Circles - Post Malone**
- **Another Way Out - Hollywood Undead**
- **Hit and Run - LOLO**
- **Kill the Lights - Set It Off**
- **Happy Ending Story - Hole**

**IF THIS SOUNDS REMOTELY CLOSE  
TO YOUR LIFE, TAKE A BREAK,  
AND LISTEN TO SOME KILLER MUSIC  
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# ***FINLAY DONOVAN IS KILLING IT***

## **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

- *Finlay Donovan Is Killing It* takes a slightly different tone than many crime and thriller novels. How does Finlay's character contribute to this tone? Did you appreciate this twist on the genre?
- Were you surprised that Finlay is so intrigued by the note that she actually decides to scope out Harris Mickler? Why or why not?
- The lines between fiction and life are slightly blurred in this novel: Finlay is a character, but she is also a writer herself, and later in the story she uses the crimes she's been involved in as inspiration for her new book. What does this book-within-a-book setup add to *Finlay Donovan Is Killing It*?
- As early as chapter 5, the Russian mafia is mentioned. When did you put the pieces together that Finlay's accidental hit/well-planned murder by others was connected to organized crime? How does their involvement affect the story?
- Vero and Finlay's relationship is central to the story—how does it change throughout the novel?
- How does Finlay's relationship to her motherhood (and especially single-motherhood) play out throughout the novel?
- Finlay catches the attention of two very different potential romantic partners: Detective Nick Anthony and bartender/law student Julian Baker. In what ways are these men different or similar to each other? What unique heroic traits, character flaws, or potential challenges does each man present? Do you agree with the romantic decisions Finlay made through the course of the book?
- In chapter 32, Julian recites a quote inspired by the principles of Hanlon's razor: "Let us not attribute to malice and cruelty what may be referred to less criminal motives." He tells Finlay that he "makes it a point never to assume the worst about people." How does this idea reflect what we know of his character? How does Finlay's response reveal more about hers?
- Consider the theme of women supporting women. What examples of this did you see in the story? Did any of these instances surprise you? Why?



- During several scenes, Finlay wears a wig-scarf and sunglasses to hide her identity, or while she's masquerading as her ex's fiancée, Theresa. She wears the same wig-scarf and glasses in her author photo, which appears in the books she's written. What do you think the wig-scarf represents to Finn, and how does her attitude toward it change throughout the book?
- Finlay's view of her career is often self-deprecating, reflecting the various attitudes of her agent, her family, the market, and her ex toward her work. How do these attitudes change after Finn is awarded a lucrative book deal? How did Finlay's attitude change toward herself? What role do you think money plays in how society values women's contributions at home and in the workplace?
- Finlay toes the line between right and wrong throughout the book, yet she somehow manages to stay on the right side of it. Though she's tempted by the money—and curious about the potential victims—she never actually commits any of the murders herself. How would your feelings about Finlay have changed if she had killed Harris Mickler or Andrei Borovkov? Does her identity as a woman and a mother influence your answer?
- Were you surprised by the note Finlay received from Patricia Mickler at the end of the book? Do you have any predictions about who the guilty party might be?

