



A VIV AND CHARLIE MYSTERY

# DIG DEEP MY GRAVE

"A delightful debut mystery."

—VICTORIA THOMPSON,  
bestselling author of *Murder in Morningside  
Heights*, for *The Darkness Knows*

CHERYL HONIGFORD

# READING GROUP GUIDE



1. If you were in Charlie's shoes, how would you feel meeting Vivian's extended family on Oakhaven? Have you ever been introduced to a friend or significant other's family? How did you feel in that situation? Have you ever introduced a significant other to your own family? How did that go?
2. Compare Hap and Charlie. How do they each fit into Vivian's world? Who do you think is her better match?
3. Why do you think Vivian won't accept Charlie's proposal? Do you think her reasons are valid? If you were Vivian, how would you react to the countless proposals?
4. How do you think Vivian feels when she sees Charlie standing with the scissors over Hap's dead body? At any point, did you believe that Charlie could be guilty?

5. Do you think you would make a good radio star like Vivian in her program *The Darkness Knows*? Why or why not? What is your dream career?
6. Viv gives up an opportunity of a lifetime in Los Angeles to go find Charlie after receiving a telegram on the train to Hollywood. If you were in her shoes, would you get off the train or would you continue? What do you think would've happened if she had stayed on the train?
7. When Vivian returns to Oakhaven, her family bands together to shut her out of the investigation, attempting to protect one of their own. How do you think Vivian feels being split between her family and the man she loves? If someone in your family did something terrible, would you try to protect them?
8. Why do you think Vivian continues to dig into Hap's murder after she learns of his espionage secret? If she already knows Charlie is innocent, what does she have to gain from solving the real crime?
9. Between Gwen, Constance, and David, who do you trust the most? Who do you trust the least? Why? Do you think Vivian can rely on anyone?

10. Do you think Aunt Adaline was right for sending Hap away from Vivian that summer when she was seventeen? If you were in her position, would you do the same?
11. What do you make of Lillian? How do you think David feels after she dupes him?
12. Compare Lillian and Constance. Both turn out to be villains in the story. How do they differ? Do you hold one more accountable than the other? Why?
13. What do you think happens after the story ends? Do you think Vivian and Charlie end up happily married?

# A CONVERSATION WITH THE AUTHOR

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**We see Vivian finally announce that Charlie is her fiancé at the end of the story. What do you think happens to the pair after the story closes?**

They do get married—eventually—but let’s just say the course of true love doesn’t run smooth. Honestly, what else would you expect from those two?

**You paint a very vivid picture of 1930s Chicago in *Dig Deep My Grave*. What kind of research went into this?**

I loved researching this book! I live close to Lake Geneva, so I went several times to Black Point Estate, a beautiful Victorian cottage built by a beer barren in the 1880s. You have to take a boat there, and it’s such a lovely place. That’s what Oakhaven is modeled after. I spent a lot of time at the Geneva Lake Museum (and stayed so late, they turned the lights off on me). I also really got into the Superchief research, and I found an old book that had such incredible detail about

the train—menus, decor, engines, schedules, etc. I wish it (or anything remotely like it) still existed. I'd love to take a trip cross-country on that train.

**What do you think is Vivian's greatest quality? Charlie's?**

Vivian has chutzpah. She's really grown as a person throughout the series. She's more independent and willing to fight for what she believes in in this book. Charlie, on the other hand, is steady and reliable (while also managing to be a bit dangerous).

**Which character did you connect with the most?**

Hap, surprisingly. He started out as this shallow, one-dimensional cad, but the more backstory that came out about him, the more interesting he became to me. I'm almost sorry he had to die.

**Vivian makes a hard choice on the train heading toward LA, deciding to seek out Charlie instead of pursuing her opportunity in Hollywood. If you were in Vivian's shoes, what would you have done?**

I'd like to think I would have done the same as Viv in that situation, but until I find myself on a luxury train headed toward a screen test in Hollywood and receive word that my love is running from a murder rap—well, I really don't know how I'd react.

**There's a major plot twist in the story that will leave readers reeling. How do you go about writing such a winding narrative?**

I got stuck. That's the short answer. I remember sitting and staring at the blinking cursor on the screen and having no idea what came next in the story. I did some brainstorming and wrote down a list of the most unexpected things that could happen at that point in the plot. The twist I ended up with was the craziest on the list, and I had a lot of fun figuring out how to make that work within the framework of the existing story.

**When you're not writing, how do you spend your time?**

Writing is the kind of pursuit where you might not see the finished product of your work for years. I also have a day job that requires long hours at the computer with not a lot of tangible output. So when I'm not writing I like to hand-make things. I crochet, knit, bake—anything creative that I can see the results of almost immediately. It's really satisfying. And probably saves my sanity, to be honest.