

A GRAVE DECEPTION BOOK CLUB QUESTIONS

A Grave Deception is set in the small village of Hartwell, Suffolk, where a student archaeological team from the University of East Anglia is excavating the site of a medieval village, abandoned when the plague killed all but a handful of its citizens.

1. When the body of a 14th century woman is found in the crypt of the church and examined forensically, protesters demand the dig be abandoned because human remains should never be disturbed. This is a controversy in archaeology today. What are your thoughts? Which is more important—gaining historical information or respecting the dead? Can you think of instances where forensics have added to our knowledge of the past?
2. One of the themes of the book is the use of power. Head archaeologist Simon Sinclair uses his power over his underlings to enhance his own reputation and career. Kate's husband, DCI Tom Mallory, is accused by one of his DIs of using his power to undermine her advancement. Do you see differences in the two cases? Have you ever been the victim of a manipulative boss?
3. Edlyn Dark, daughter of an amateur historian, becomes the victim of a fraud called a "grief bot," in which AI technology reproduces the image, words, and voice of a deceased loved one to make it appear they can still communicate. Proponents say it's a way of easing grief. What do you think? Has AI gone too far?
4. Solving a serious crime like murder not only identifies and punishes the guilty; it also exonerates the innocent. Wealthy entrepreneur Alex Belcourt has lived for 10 years under suspicion of his beautiful young wife's murder. How would an unsolved crime psychologically affect both the guilty and the innocent? Can you think of a real-life equivalent?
5. Three senior characters play major roles in the Kate Hamilton mysteries— Lady Barbara Finchley-fforde, the local peeress; the redoubtable Vivian Bunn, Kate's former landlady; and Ivor Tweedy, Kate's colleague at The Cabinet of Curiosities. Characters "of a certain age" have become popular since the publication of Richard Osman's *The Thursday Murder Club*. Why do you think this is so?
6. Part of the mystery of *A Grave Deception* is solved when Kate delves into a treasure-trove of 14th-century historical records. Have you researched your own family history? Did you uncover any interesting or shocking secrets?

7. Plot-wise, the relationship between Kate and her husband, DCI Tom Mallory is the calm center of the storm. Why do you think they work so well together? What other fictional marriages or relationships have you enjoyed reading about?

8. Which was your favorite scene or character in the book—and why?

A GRAVE DECEPTION TRIVIA GAME

(10 points for each correct answer)

1. What is the name of the medieval plague village on Alex Belcourt's estate?
2. What is the name of the village pub in Hartwell?
3. Why is the young man, Zach Valentine, so afraid of the police?
4. How did the archaeologist Niall Nevin gain access to Edlyn Dark's computer?
5. What hold did the victim, Simon Sinclair, have over Nevin?
6. What is the name of the 14th-century poem Kate finds in the Suffolk archives?
7. What job did Alex Belcourt's deceased wife, Carrie Holgate, have when they met?
8. Why is the term for student archaeologist Tamzin Oliver's style of dressing?
9. What is the name given to the Foxe's newborn daughter?
10. Who will soon be part of the Mallory household?

Answers: 1) Egmore Close 2) The Six Bells 3) He was "nighthawking" 4) Pretended to be a computer repairman 5) His addiction to pain killers 6) The Pearl of Wyck 7) Runway model 8) Geek chic 9) Scarlett Genevieve 10) A Springer Spaniel puppy