



Daiyu Wu Mysteries Book Club Questions

(Gloria can be available for Zoom/Discord/Other chats with the club upon request.)

[Black Jade](#), [The JOY of Murder](#), [Music of Death Blues](#)

Black Jade



A curious lack of corpses. A slew of snobbish suspects. Can this sightless amateur sleuth pinpoint a killer?

Dallas, TX, 1930. Daiyu Wu refuses to be disadvantaged by her blindness. Navigating the world with help from her faithful companions, the young Chinese adventuress celebrates life with a strong thirst for knowledge. So when she scents burned garlic in a customer's garment, the clever laundress runs an experiment that reveals a dress doused in arsenic.

Determined to provide the unaware authorities with a clue in a murder case, Daiyu vows to chase down the garment's mysterious origins even though there's no body to be found. But as the links lead the immigrant girl higher into Texas's social echelons, she clashes with bigotry, short-sightedness, and a web of lies hamstringing her ability to investigate.

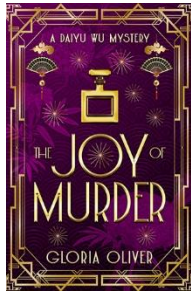
Can she find fresh evidence before she's hung out to dry?

(Kindle/KU, Paperback, and Hardback – Paperback available from multiple retailers)

1. **Character Development:** How does Daiyu Wu's character evolve throughout the story? What key events contribute to her growth?
2. **Themes of Justice:** What role does the theme of justice play in the narrative? How do the characters' actions reflect their views on justice?

3. **Cultural Context:** How does the historical setting influence the characters' experiences, particularly those of Dai and her family as Chinese immigrants in Texas?
4. **Friendship Dynamics:** Discuss the relationship between Dai and Jacques. How does their friendship shape the story, and what challenges do they face together?
5. **Mystery Elements:** What techniques does the author use to build suspense and intrigue in the mystery? Were there any moments that surprised you?
6. **Gender Roles:** How are gender roles portrayed in the book? Consider the characters of Dai, Dr. Campbell, and Mrs. Wu. How do they challenge or conform to societal expectations?
7. **Symbolism of the Dress:** What significance does the poisoned dress hold in the story? How does it serve as a catalyst for the events that unfold?
8. **Moral Ambiguity:** Are there characters in the story who embody moral ambiguity? Discuss how this complexity adds depth to the narrative.
9. **Role of Empathy:** The constable mentions empathy and mercy in his conversation. How do these concepts manifest in the characters' interactions and decisions?
10. **Impact of Secrets:** Secrets play a crucial role in the plot. How do they affect relationships and drive the narrative forward?
11. **Narrative Style:** How does the author's writing style contribute to the overall tone of the book? Discuss any specific passages that stood out to you.
12. **Foreshadowing:** Can you identify instances of foreshadowing in the story? How did they enhance your reading experience?
13. **Community and Belonging:** Explore how themes of community and belonging are presented in the book. How do Dai's experiences reflect her struggle for acceptance?
14. **Role of Animals:** Discuss the significance of Prince Razor in the story. How does he contribute to both the plot and the emotional landscape of the narrative?
15. **Future Implications:** Based on the ending, what do you think lies ahead for Dai and Jacques? What unresolved issues or potential storylines would you like to see explored in future books?

The JOY of Murder



A socialite accused of murder, planted evidence, and mysterious enemies challenge blind detective Daiyu Wu in her new sleuthing adventure.

When a highly respected member of the ‘Little Mexico’ community is killed in 1930 Dallas, all the evidence points towards Grace Pierce, wife of a local businessman and a former member of the Ku Klux Klan. Grace’s son Truman turns to Daiyu Wu and her unique detective skills for help, but Dai quickly discovers that nothing about this case is what it seems.

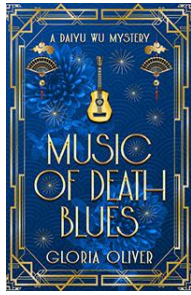
With her companion Jacques and canine bodyguard Prince Razor, Dai must navigate a family in turmoil, racial tensions, and shady business deals to find the actual killer before Truman’s mother is sentenced to death.

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1. **Character Development:** How does Daiyu Wu's character evolve throughout the story? What key events contribute to her growth?
2. **Themes of Justice:** Dai expresses a strong desire for justice. How does this theme manifest in the narrative, and what does it reveal about her character?
3. **Cultural Context:** How does the setting of 1930s Dallas, particularly the racial dynamics and societal expectations, influence the characters and plot?
4. **Friendship Dynamics:** Discuss the relationship between Dai and Jacques. How does their friendship impact the investigation and their personal lives?
5. **Role of Gender:** How are gender roles portrayed in the book? In what ways do Dai and other female characters challenge or conform to these roles?
6. **Influence of Family:** How do Dai's parents' protective instincts shape her actions and decisions throughout the story?
7. **Mystery Elements:** What techniques does the author use to build suspense and keep readers engaged in the mystery? Are there any particular twists that surprised you?
8. **Social Commentary:** What commentary does the book make about societal norms and prejudices during the time period? How do these issues affect the characters' lives?
9. **Symbolism:** Discuss any symbols present in the story (e.g., the ballgown, the laundry). What do they represent in relation to the plot or themes?
10. **Moral Dilemmas:** What moral dilemmas do the characters face, particularly Dai? How do these dilemmas affect their choices and relationships?

11. **Narrative Style:** How does the narrative perspective (Jacques as the narrator) influence your understanding of the events and characters?
12. **Impact of Secrets:** Secrets play a significant role in the story. How do they affect character relationships and the progression of the plot?
13. **Community Dynamics:** How does the community's perception of Dai change throughout the story? What factors contribute to this shift?
14. **Foreshadowing:** Can you identify instances of foreshadowing in the text? How do they enhance your reading experience?
15. **Personal Reflection:** Which character did you relate to the most, and why? Did any particular moments resonate with your own experiences or beliefs?

Music of Death Blues



A suicide that wasn't. Racial prejudice pushing a murder to be swept under the rug. Can Daiyu Wu throw back the covers to reveal the killer?

Dallas, TX, 1930. Daiyu Wu resigned herself to life inevitably returning to normal after dipping her toes into the pursuit of justice. But a new case falls onto her lap when she hears screeching tires and a woman calling out in pain. The older lady is wary of her offer to help, but Daiyu knows people aren't kidnapped off the street just to be set free again—something terrible is coming.

As Daiyu feared, things take a turn for the worse—the rescued woman's youngest son committed suicide. But for a kidnapping and a suicide to occur to the same family on the same day smells of devilry, but the police can't be bothered to investigate—so Daiyu has no choice but to get involved or risk allowing a killer to run free.

Can Daiyu and her friends unravel what's really going on before the case is closed forever?

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1. **Character Development:** How does Daiyu Wu's character evolve throughout the story? What key events contribute to her growth?
2. **Themes of Justice:** What role does the theme of justice play in the narrative? How do Dai and Jacques navigate the complexities of seeking justice in a racially charged environment?
3. **Historical Context:** How does the setting of 1930s Dallas influence the characters' actions and the plot? In what ways does the historical backdrop enhance the story?
4. **Blindness as a Metaphor:** Daiyu is blind, yet she possesses unique insights and abilities. How does her blindness serve as a metaphor in the story? What does it reveal about perception and understanding?
5. **Family Dynamics:** Discuss the relationship between Dai and her parents. How do their views on her detective work reflect broader societal attitudes?
6. **Racial Tensions:** How are racial tensions depicted in the book? What impact do these tensions have on the characters and their interactions?
7. **Friendship and Loyalty:** Explore the friendship between Dai and Jacques. How do their backgrounds and experiences shape their bond?

8. **Role of Music:** Music, particularly the blues, plays a significant role in the story. How does it influence the characters and the plot? What does it symbolize?
9. **Moral Ambiguity:** Are there moments in the book where characters make morally ambiguous choices? Discuss how these choices affect your perception of them.
10. **Foreshadowing:** Identify instances of foreshadowing in the narrative. How do they build suspense or hint at future events?
11. **Conflict Resolution:** How do Dai and Jacques resolve conflicts throughout the story? What strategies do they employ, and are they effective?
12. **Symbolism:** What symbols can you identify in the book? How do they contribute to the overall themes or messages?
13. **Narrative Style:** Discuss Gloria Oliver's writing style. How does her choice of language and structure affect your reading experience?
14. **Empathy and Understanding:** How does Dai's perspective as a blind woman shape her understanding of others' struggles? In what ways does this foster empathy in her interactions?
15. **Ending Reflection:** What are your thoughts on the ending of the book? Do you feel it provides closure, or does it leave room for further exploration of the characters' journeys?

