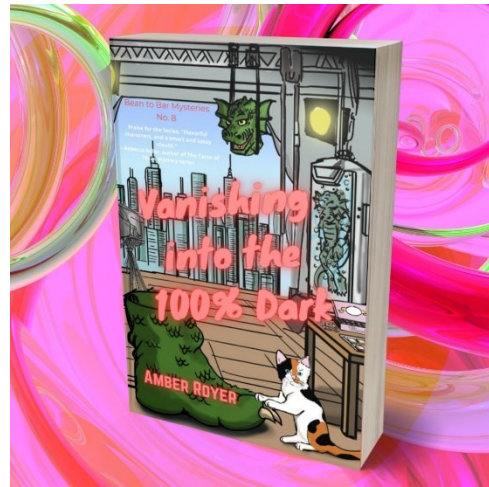


Discussion Guide: Vanishing into the 100% Dark

1. This book takes the characters from the Bean to Bar Mysteries series to Japan. There is a bit of discussion of the history of Japanese mystery novels. How do Japanese mysteries riff off of Western mystery classics? And how are modern American and British mysteries influenced by the Japanese tradition?
2. In every book in this series, Felicity is given a “grounding book” with parallels to the case at hand. This time it’s *The Honjin murders*. How is a book set in a different time period still relevant? What do you think of Detective Kendaichi?
3. This book talks a lot about social media and YouTubers. How does this reflect today’s society. There is an off-cited statistic that over half of today’s youth want to have a career as social media influencers. How do you feel about this? Authors are also expected today to be social media experts, and the author has a YouTube channel. Does this make you feel any differently about the book?
4. Felicity has experienced grief in her personal life. How does this affect her ability to deal with the grief expressed in this book by others? How has she healed over the course of the series?
5. Sometimes secondary characters steal the show. Fan favorites in this series include both Chloe and Ash. Why do you think these characters are so compelling? How do you feel about the sense of community that comes from recurring cameos and larger appearances from friends and relatives of the protagonist in this and other cozy mystery series? This book takes the characters halfway around the world. How would this book be different if she had gone to the chocolate festival by herself?
6. Do you enjoy the setting? How does the idea of dropping Felicity in Japan without a cell phone increase the stakes and tension in the book? Have you ever visited Japan? Or a country where you don’t speak the language? Felicity tried to learn some phrases to get around. How hard is it to learn a new language?
7. How do you feel about Honda the Calico Cat? How can pets help their owners through hard times? How does Cheeseburger compare with Knightley the Bunny, Clive the Octopus, Satchmo the Therapy Dog, Ruffles the Cat, Renoir the Cockatoo and Princess Buttercup the Goat and Cheeseburger the Ferret? (introduced in previous books in the series)? How is her role in this book different than these other animal companions?



8. Felicity visits a movie set, and has to solve the murder of a stunt man. How do you feel about movies in general? Or stunt performers? Have you ever seen a classic kaiju or monster movie? Did you think it was cheesy? Did you still like it? What makes a movie good? When the characters discuss which of them like kaiju movies, were you surprised by any of their answers?
9. How does this book help develop Felicity's relationship with Logan's sister and her husband? How does Felicity fit into this new family dynamic? How are Felicity and Logan similar to the other couples traveling with her? How are they different?
10. At what point did you think you knew the outcome of the mystery? Were you right or wrong? If you guessed right, were you right about WHY the murder was committed? Were there any particular plot twists you enjoyed?
11. There's a lot of food mentioned in this book. Did any of it make you hungry? Anything from the catering table, or the high-end dinner Felicity gets to attend? Henri's drinking chocolate or pain au chocolat? Were you surprised by the amount of French influence on the chocolate festival, and on pastry chefs in Japan?