

THE BOOKBINDER'S SECRET

Discussion Questions

- 1) In 1901 Oxford, Lilian is a woman in a man's profession. How does her struggle for independence mirror the mystery she uncovers? Do you think her pursuit of the truth is an act of rebellion or self-discovery?
- 2) How does the hidden confession inside the Bell books handle themes of secrecy and censorship, both in personal relationships and in society?
- 3) Isabel and William's story is at the heart of the mystery but ends in tragedy, mirroring some of Lilian's own history. How do you think the book explores the line between love and destruction?
- 4) As Lilian's search for the six Bell books becomes all-consuming, do you think her obsession is justified? What does the story suggest about the cost of pursuing knowledge or truth at all costs?
- 5) If you were Lilian, would you have kept digging into the mystery, even when it became dangerous, or walked away? Why?
- 6) How does the novel depict the limitations placed on women in Edwardian England? In what ways does Lilian navigate and challenge these restrictions?
- 7) The novel revolves around uncovering truth hidden within fiction, both in the literal bookbinding and in people's lives. What do you think the story says about the reliability of the stories we inherit?
- 8) What role do you think Mr. Caxton play in shaping Lilian, as both a bookbinder and a person? Do you see their relationship as supportive, limiting, or both?
- 9) The story is full of rare books, secret libraries, and dusty archives. Which setting would you most love to explore in real life?

