



To Disguise the Truth **Discussion Guide**

1.) Eunice Holbrooke is a lady with secrets and has gone to great lengths to keep those secrets, hiding beneath widow's weeds and weeping veils for years to conceal her past. Why do you believe she risked the possibility of having her secrets revealed at some point when she opened The Bleecker Street Inquiry Agency?

2.) Arthur Livingston is on a quest to find the missing heiress, Miss Eugenia Howland. He's also determined to marry her if he finds her, which will allow him to honor his word to her deceased grandfather. Do you think he had ulterior motives for that decision, and if so, do you believe those motives changed by the end of the story?

3.) Eunice has been estranged from her family for years—and for good reason. Do you believe it's possible for families to reconcile, or, in some cases, is it for the best to remain estranged?

4.) When Eunice goes undercover at Blackwell's Island Insane Asylum, she is appalled to discover the abysmal conditions there. Why do you believe such neglect of the country's most vulnerable went unnoticed for such a long period of time (not brought to light until Nellie Bly wrote her book *Ten Days in a Madhouse*, released in 1887)?



An Open Book

5.) Arthur has a plan for his life—reach the pinnacle of mining success and marry a lady of high social standing. That plan was directly influenced by a rejection he received from a young lady in his youth. Have you ever made a plan that was ill-conceived from the very beginning, but you kept pursuing it simply because of a hurt you experienced in your past?

6.) Eunice had always been of the belief that her mother left her without a word after an argument with Eunice's grandfather. When she uncovers her mother's whereabouts, do you believe her motives are only to disclose the extent of her mother's inheritance? What other motives do you think Eunice has that she won't admit that to anyone?

7.) When Arthur finally speaks with the lady who rejected him in his past, he learns that she did not mean her refusal to be so harsh but had merely been surprised. Have you ever suffered a misunderstanding with someone that affected you for years, only to discover it had been a case of misinterpretation? If so, what happened next?

8.) It's disclosed in the story that Eunice's grandfather was a reprehensible man. Do you think he was actually changing toward the end of his life, and do you think Eunice will ever be able to forgive him for the hurt he caused her and her family?