ReadingGroupGuides
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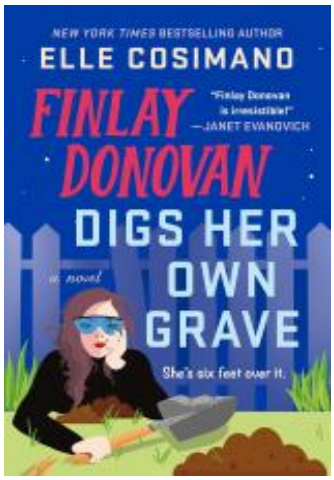
Finlay Donovan Digs Her Own Grave

by Elle Cosimano



About the Book

From *New York Times* bestselling author and Edgar Award nominee Elle Cosimano comes FINLAY DONOVAN DIGS HER OWN GRAVE, the hugely anticipated next installment in the fan-favorite Finlay Donovan series.

Finlay Donovan may have skeletons in her closet...but at least there's not a body in her backyard.

Finlay Donovan and her nanny/partner-in-crime, Vero, have not always gotten along with Finlay?s elderly neighbor, Mrs. Haggerty, the community busybody and president of the neighborhood watch. But when a dead body is discovered in her backyard, Mrs. Haggerty needs their help. At first a suspect, Mrs. Haggerty is cleared by the police, but her house remains an active crime scene. She has nowhere to go...except Finlay?s house, right across the street.

Finlay and Vero have no interest in getting involved in another murder case --- or sacrificing either of their bedrooms. After all, they?ve dealt with enough murders over the last four months to last a lifetime, and they both would much rather share their beds with someone else.

But when the focus of the investigation widens to include Finlay?s ex-husband, Steven, Finlay and Vero are left with little choice but to get closer to Mrs. Haggerty and uncover her secrets?before the police start digging up theirs. But who will solve the mystery first?

Discussion Guide

1. FINLAY DONOVAN DIGS HER OWN GRAVE features Mrs. Haggerty?s book club throughout the story. What role does the book club play in building a community for its members? Have book clubs created a sense of community in your own lives?

2. The novel begins with Delia being suspended from school for defending herself against a bully. How does this mirror the way society and authority figures often dismiss aggression against women? Did the principal?s response to the incident surprise you? How about that of Cooper?s mother? Or Mrs. Haggerty?

3. Both Finlay and Vero explore the theme of honesty in a relationship as they grow closer to Detective Nick and Javi, respectively. Bearing in mind all of their past experiences, the knowledge of which could potentially endanger their loved ones, what is your opinion about the amount of information they share --- or don?t?

4. Finlay once again faces the many challenges of parenthood. But with Vero, Mrs. Haggerty and Finlay?s mother around, Finlay gets to see firsthand how different generations view the proper way to handle these situations. How do these characters, in particular, take on different responsibilities when caring for Finlay?s children? What do those choices reveal about their priorities when it comes to parenting?

5. Women supporting women plays such a large role in this novel. In what ways do the different characters --- namely Finlay, Vero, Mrs. Haggerty and the book club members --- demonstrate this through their actions?

6. Mrs. Haggerty makes a point that everyone in her book club has a role to play. What are some examples of this in the story? Do your book club members take on different roles in real life? How do each of you contribute to the club?

7. Finlay faces many twists and turns, but one of the most shocking moments for her is when she realizes that her perception of Mrs. Haggerty is very different from reality. Has someone in your life ever surprised you once you got to know them?

8. One running storyline features Finlay?s agent chasing down a TV deal for Finlay?s novels. Do you agree with Finlay?s hesitations about broadcasting her writing to a wider audience, given the connections between her stories and real crimes she?s found herself mixed up in? What book-to-film or TV adaptations have you watched that were based in some truth? Did that affect how you felt about the content or its creator?

9. Once you learned of the true intentions behind Mrs. Haggerty?s book club, did your feelings change toward her as a character? How about by the end of the book? In general, does the end ever justify the means?

10. At the end of the novel, Vero is extradited for old charges of thefts, though she claims she is innocent. What do you predict will happen to her in the next book? How do you think this will affect the future of Finlay and Vero?s relationship?

Author Bio

Elle Cosimano is a *New York Times* and *USA Today* bestselling author, an International Thriller Writers Award winner, and an Edgar Award nominee. Elle?s debut novel for adults, FINLAY DONOVAN IS KILLING IT, kicked off a witty, fast-paced contemporary mystery series, which was a *People* magazine pick and was named one of New York Public Library?s Best Books of 2021. The third book in the series, FINLAY DONOVAN JUMPS THE GUN, was an instant *New York Times* bestseller. A TV show based on the series is now in development by Tina Fey and Lang Fisher for

Peacock**.** In addition to writing novels for teens and adults, her essays have appeared in *HuffPost* and *Time*. Cosimano lives with her husband and two sons in Virginia.

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