

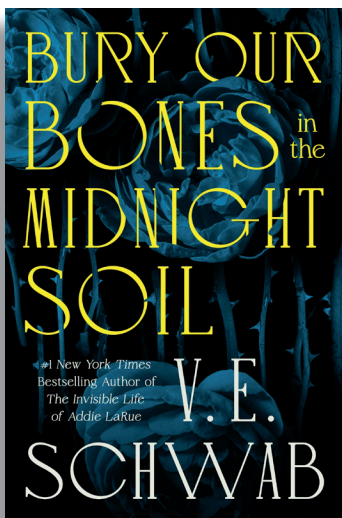
QUESTIONS AND TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. From Spain (sixteenth century) and Italy (seventeenth century) to England (nineteenth and twentieth centuries), Paris in 1914, and contemporary Scotland and America, the novel transports us to a dazzling array of moments in the human experience, in sumptuous detail. Which time and place—and wardrobe—would you most want to slip into?
2. As you watched Maria's childhood unfold, what did she do in order to gain even a smidgen of control over her life, no matter how strict the cultural limitations were? How would you have fared in that world?
3. When Hector introduces Sabine to the verses that begin with "Bury my bones in the midnight soil," he insists that "we are no monster, no mean thing. We are nature's finest flower" (Sabine's first scenes, chapter III). Is this true? What beauty can be found in the characters' seemingly savage quest for survival?

BURY OUR BONES in the MIDNIGHT SOIL

#1 NEW YORK TIMES
BESTSELLING AUTHOR

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4. Sabine learns important lessons from Hector (always be found ahead of your corpses and never in their wake; the heart is the source of fragility) and Renata (savor, don't devour), and also from Matteo (how to hide in plain sight and lay claim to a space). Yet she is fiercely independent and rarely concerns herself with the needs of others. As the centuries pass, does she ever gain wisdom—not just knowledge?
5. How does mortality, along with an extreme age difference, affect the relationship between Alessandro and Matteo and between Giada and Charlotte? Would you be able to endure such sacrifices? Would you want to be immortal, and if so, what price would you be willing to pay for it?
6. Despite being nicknamed Bones and chided by her sister for being cowardly, how does Alice represent a new path of empowerment? What forms of inspiration did Alice glean from Catty and their mother? How does Alice's determined sleuthing differ from the experiences of the prey who preceded her?
7. Alice's memories of Catty and the aftermath of their mother's death become heightened when she has intense experiences, and the same is true for Lottie's memories of Clement Hall. What does this say about their altered minds? What are your defining memories? Does your mind whisper, or does it blare?
8. For Sabine, Lottie, and Alice, the moment of their turning is highly erotically charged, leaving them with a multitude of new hungers. What do their three interwoven stories illuminate about hunger and the heightened pleasure of a prelude? In the novel and in real life, what determines whether someone will cross the line and become a ravager, with no interest in mutual pleasure, taking far more than they need?
9. While Sabine loves luxury, Lottie prefers a cozy home. What do these contrasts tell us about money and its limitations? As Jack and Antonia, along with Ezra, provide safe havens across time, what does the novel demonstrate about the value of friendship?
10. Why does Charlotte stay with Sabine? Would you have tried to escape sooner? As much as Maria was tormented by her husband, Andres, does she become just like him in her relationships? Could you have endured a sham marriage as Jocelyn does when she accepts James's proposal?
11. Although the novel's female characters often have to contend with social disadvantages, when is their gender an asset?

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