

## ***A Clue in the Crumbs***

### **Book 13 of the Key West Food Critic Mysteries**

#### Discussion Questions

1. Miss Gloria, Bettina, and Violet Booth have been described by readers as role models for older women—in real life! How did you feel about these three older women in *Crumbs*?
2. If you were preparing a dish for a baking contest, what would you choose? Why?
3. It's been interesting to write about the evolution of Hayley and Nathan's relationship. As they get more comfortable with each other, he trusts her opinions more and even asks her along on the visit to see the acupuncturist. She tries to be more aware for the reasons he is protective. How do you feel about the direction their marriage is taking?
4. A serious theme in *Crumbs* is the balance between Miss Gloria's need for independence and her sons' worrying about her from a distance and their wish to keep her safe. Talk about how this theme is handled in the book. Does it ring bells for your life?
5. Key West has such a powerful sense of setting, especially as a holding place for people who need a respite for the stress in their own lives—in this case, the backdrop of St. Patrick's Day. The island can feel like a place where visitors can let their hair down in a way that doesn't seem possible at home. (Although, believe me, with the explosion of social media, nothing stays private!) How do you feel about this setting? Have you visited the island? If so, what did you love about it? If not, what does not sound appealing?
6. From Rex Stout's famous foodie hero Nero Wolfe to Virginia Rich's the Nantucket Diet Murders to Diane Mott Davidson's *Dying for Chocolate*, and now the Key West Mysteries, what do you think explains our passion for combining cuisine and crime? Why do you choose to read culinary mysteries?

7. One of the biggest challenges when writing an amateur sleuth mystery is developing a reason for the sleuth to get involved. How did you feel about Hayley's stake in solving the mystery of the man found murdered outside the Scone Sisters' bed and breakfast? How would you handle coming across such a scene?