

BOOK  
CLUB  
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# THE LOST BOOK OF ELEANOR DARE

## BY KIMBERLY BROCK

In this sweeping tale, the answers to a real-life mystery may be found in the pages of a story that was always waiting to be written. *The Lost Book of Eleanor Dare* explores the meaning of family legacy and the sacrifices every mother makes for her daughter.





## DEAR READER,

I was in your shoes when a message just like this one reached me and introduced me to Eleanor White Dare - a woman so determined to endure that she carved her story into stone. Eleanor believed her mark on the world would be unforgettable and nearly four hundred years after her disappearance from our known history, she was right. Our stories have a way of remembering us in the truths they keep, as well as the hopes they hold. I believe that, just as Eleanor Dare must have.

Between the day I first read Eleanor's message left on a slab of rock and the day I sat down to write this novel, I was haunted by the idea of what is lost when we don't tell our stories. It took me many years of living my own life before I was ready to share Eleanor's tale through the work of fiction you now hold in your hands. *The Lost Book of Eleanor Dare* is a little of her story, a little of mine, maybe not the truth, and maybe only an imagining, but I'm convinced that a story matters most because it is told.

I hope you enjoy the world of Evertell and the discovering of the Commonplace Book filled with the stories of the heirs of Eleanor Dare. I hope, too, that you enjoy meeting Alice and Penn Young and are inspired to take heart in the mysteries of life.

I hope you find a little of yourself in Eleanor, just as I did, with the reminder that we are all storytellers.

Yours sincerely,

Kimberly Brock





# REVIEWS AND PRAISE



*“The Lost Book of Eleanor Dare is an intriguing, dreamy story about the impact of one unhealed woman who has yet to reconcile her past in such a way that lends itself to transparency with her young daughter...”*

*—NEW YORK JOURNAL OF BOOKS*



*“Amid the atmospheric backdrop of the Lowcountry, Brock stirs up a beguiling blend of family legacy, historical mystery, and generational connections, examining the unbreakable ties of mothers and daughters, the power of stories told and stories hidden, and the unquenchable need to understand those who came before us.”*

*—LISA WINGATE*

*New York Times bestselling author of *The Book of Lost Friends**



*“Compelling and immersive, *The Lost Book of Eleanor Dare* is the story of Dare’s descendant Alice, who pushes away the pain of the past until her daughter Penn holds her accountable to the family story.”*

*—ADRIANA TRIGIANI*

*New York Times bestselling author of *The Shoemaker’s Wife**



*“In this complex, compelling, and beautifully crafted novel, Kimberly Brock explores not only the enigma of the Lost Colony of Roanoke, but also the boundless mysteries of love, family, and the human heart.”*

*—WILLIAM KENT KREUGER*

*New York Times bestselling author of *This Tender Land**

# REVIEWS AND PRAISE



“Expect the book to attract an eager audience of readers who enjoy women’s fiction.”

—**BOOKLIST**



“Kimberly Brock has crafted a luminous story, multi-layered and shimmering with beautiful prose, that deftly ponders the way of sacrificial love.”

—**SUSAN MEISSNER**

Bestselling author of *The Nature of Fragile Things*



“A richly atmospheric, distinctively Southern story of mothers and daughters, family secrets, and what it means to find home.”

—**ELIZABETH BLACKWELL**

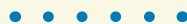
Bestselling author of *Red Mistress*



“A masterful work by an expert craftswoman, *The Lost Book of Eleanor Dare* is not to be missed.”

—**AIMIE K. RUNYAN**

Bestselling author of *The School for German Brides*



“Kimberly Brock should be on everyone’s Southern fiction auto buy list. *The Lost Book of Eleanor Dare* is an absorbing, lyrical love letter to the magic of the South and to the almost supernatural tie that binds one generation’s life song to the next.”

—**JOY CALLAWAY**

International bestselling author of *The Fifth Avenue Artists Society*



# BOOK CLUB IDEA

Book clubs are about reading good books, of course, but they're also about so much more: making connections, enjoying delicious snacks, socializing with friends, considering new perspectives and ideas, and maybe even learning or trying something new.

Why not discuss the novel while enjoying good food? This recipe is great to make for your book club discussions, whether you're gathering in person or virtually.

## RECIPE

### VIKING RECIPE – ICELANDIC FISH SOUP

3-4 tbsp butter + salt and pepper to taste + 2 small onions – finely sliced

1/2 leek – finely sliced + 3 tomatoes – chopped into very small pieces

2 small stalks celery – finely sliced + 6 cups / 1.5 liters chicken or vegetable stock

3 tbsp tomato concentrate + 1/2 cup / 100ml sherry or port or Noilly Prat

3-4 tbsp wine vinegar + 3/4 cup / 160 ml dry white wine

4 cups / 950ml small shrimp (without shells)

5 cups / 1175ml mixed nordic fish – salmon, haddock, trout, halibut – cubed

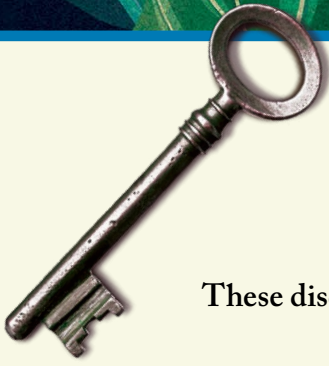
Melt butter in a large pot, add all the vegetables (except tomatoes) and cook for 10 minutes until tender. Add sherry / noilly prat / port and white wine and reduce for

4 minutes. Add the stock, tomato concentrate, and vinegar. Boil for 15-20 minutes.

Add the fish, shrimp, and chopped tomatoes. Bring to a soft boil and simmer for 5 minutes.







## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

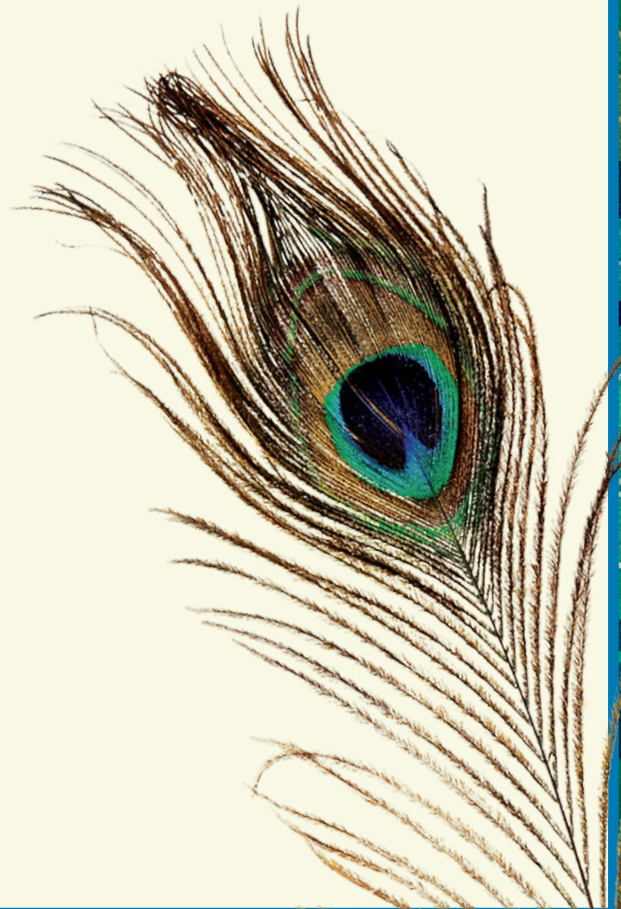
These discussion questions can also be found on pages 449–450 of the book.

- 1 The theme of loss and grief weighs heavy in this book. If you are comfortable doing so, can you share an experience you've had with loss and grief? What helped and what did not?
- 2 How are stories passed down in your family? Is there a special book, similar to the journal the Dare descendants pass down? Or perhaps your family passes memories down through the art of storytelling?
- 3 What do you think is the truth of the Dare stone found in 1937? Is it an historical artifact of the Lost Colony or artifice?
- 4 Which character's story engaged you the most and left you wishing for more?
- 5 "A story doesn't matter because it's true but because it's been told." What do you make of Claire's words to Alice?
- 6 There is great symbolism in this book: Penn's quest to restore the Belle Isle chapel bell; Penn slowly removing the loose bricks from Evertell house's chimney; homecomings at Evertell. What drove Penn to do these things? What was she hoping to gain?
- 7 Discuss Penn and Doris's relationship and how it develops throughout the book. What is each able to provide the other?
- 8 The question, "Who are you?" runs throughout the book. Have you ever grappled with that question? At what times in your life?

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These discussion questions can also be found on pages 449–450 of the book.

- 9 Bill Hawkes said to Penn that history depends on “who’s telling the story.” What does Bill mean by this? How might this story change if it was narrated by Sonder, Doris, or Bridie Quillian? What other character’s perspective might you appreciate?
- 10 How does the specter of World War II play a role in this book and for many of the characters’ stories? Consider Sonder, Walter Kreischer, Alice and Penn, Imegine, Bill Hawkes, Sammy Hunt, among others.
- 11 What did you think of Eleanor White Dare’s story, interspersed in chapters throughout the book?

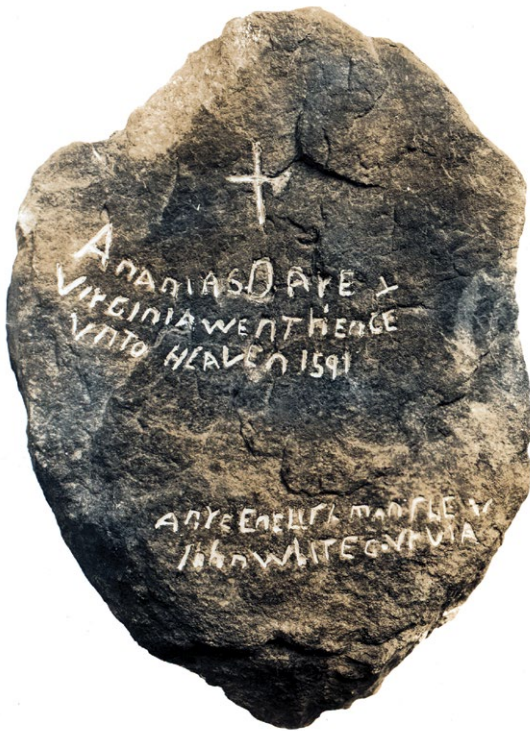




# DARE STONE

In 1587, an entire colony of English settlers disappeared from Roanoke Island, just off the coast of what is now known as North Carolina. In 1937, along a winding river leading inland from the Roanoke site, a large stone was found. Bearing a message that seemed to be the answer to the fate of the colony, the world believed the oldest mystery in American history had been solved. According to the stone, a massacre had left only a few survivors, including the governor's daughter, Eleanor White Dare. Her initials marked the stone: EWD.

See below for a picture of the front of the first stone and its translation.



FRONT

Ananias Dare &  
Virginia went  
to Heaven, 1591

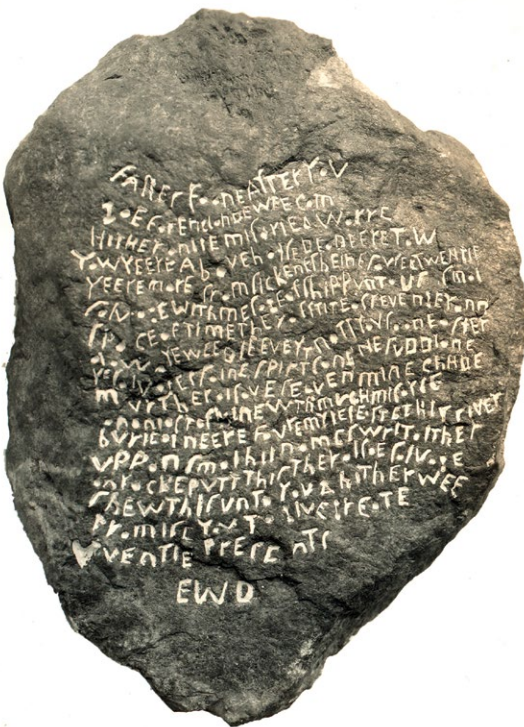
Any Englishman show this rock to  
John White, Governor of Virginia



# DARE STONE

Excitement grew as subsequent stones were found and soon dismissed as an elaborate hoax. But the first stone has never been conclusively disproved. If it is a hoax, its origin is a mystery as extraordinary as Eleanor, herself. If it is authentic, it is the legacy of a woman so determined to endure that she carved her story into stone.

See below for a picture of the back of the first stone and its translation.  
Translation of the inscriptions can also be found on page 153 in the book.



BACK

Father, soon after you  
left for England, we came  
here. We've known only misery and war for  
two years. Above half of us have died over these two  
years, more from sickness, being twenty-four.  
A Savage with a message telling of a ship came to us.  
In a short time, they became frightened of revenge and  
all ran away. We believe it was not you. Soon after,  
the savages said spirits were angry. Suddenly  
they murdered all of us, save seven. My child and  
Ananias, too, were slain with much misery.  
We buried all nearly four miles east of this river,  
upon a small hill. All names were written there  
on a rock. I put this there also. If a Savage  
shows this to you here, we  
promised you would give them great and  
plenty presents.

EWD



# THE LOST BOOK OF ELEANOR DARE



**KIMBERLY BROCK** is the award-winning author of *The Lost Book of Eleanor Dare* and *The River Witch*. She is the founder of Tinderbox Writers Workshop and has served as a guest lecturer for many regional and national writing workshops, including the Pat Conroy Literary Center. She lives near Atlanta with her husband and three children.

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