**READING GROUP GUIDE**

1. One of the themes of this book is how your gene pool shapes choices and family interactions. How did Miriam’s gift, passed on to Violet, change all the relationships in the family? Is there something in your own gene pool that you have inherited, wish you’ve inherited, or dread that one of your children will inherit? Were you ever pushed to take lessons in things you weren’t interested in or discouraged from pursuing something that felt essential to your being?
2. Another theme of this book is the immigrant experience. How did Miriam’s family’s escape from Russia impact on her even though she was born in the U.S.? Has the immigrant experience impacted you or other members of your family?
3. Haunting has many meanings in this novel besides the actual ghostly presence. What memories haunt Cara? Rory? Dan? Miriam? How do these memories shape their actions?
4. Because the author is also psychic, she was able to show how visions arise in a psychic’s mind. All of us have had “coincidences,” the uncanny way we think of a person and then he calls or a feeling comes over us, like a warning not to drive down a certain street, and later we find out that there was an accident that our intuition helped us avoid. Have any of you had experiences like this?
5. Have you ever thought that you’ve seen a ghost? What were the circumstances?
6. Miriam lives in the present with her dead relatives, their opinions and arguments. Do you try, in your own way, to make contact with someone who is deceased? Do you find yourself calling out a person’s name when you’re in stress even though you have attended that person’s funeral? Who do you sense around you, communicate with, unbounded by conventional ideas of space and time?
7. Some people are frightened by psychic experiences, but there are cultures where dreams are discussed at the breakfast table and everyone has a relative who reads tea leaves or tarot. What is the ESP climate of your family?
8. Shapiro addresses the issue of personal privacy. The only thing that’s private anymore is what is in our own minds (provided we don’t put it on Facebook or Twitter.) But Miriam, being a psychic, can be intrusive to those close to her. Have you had to set boundaries with people close to you? What were the circumstances?
9. The theme of mother /daughter relationships is strong in this novel. Cara has to rebel against Miriam in order to feel as if she has her own life as Miriam had to with her mother. What price is Violet paying for her psychic gift in her relationship with her mother and both of her grandmothers? What have you done to try to break away from your mother? If you have children, how are they expressing this archetypal conflict?
10. In the novel, parents are shown to put too much pressure on their kids. How does this express itself in Dan’s life? In Cara’s? In Violet’s? In Miriam’s life? Have you been pressured by family or by teachers to fulfill something they wanted you to?
11. In *Kaylee’s Ghost*, Violet’s teachers don’t understand her. Has there been a teacher in your life who really “got” you and helped you accept yourself or develop yourself in some way? In your children’s lives?