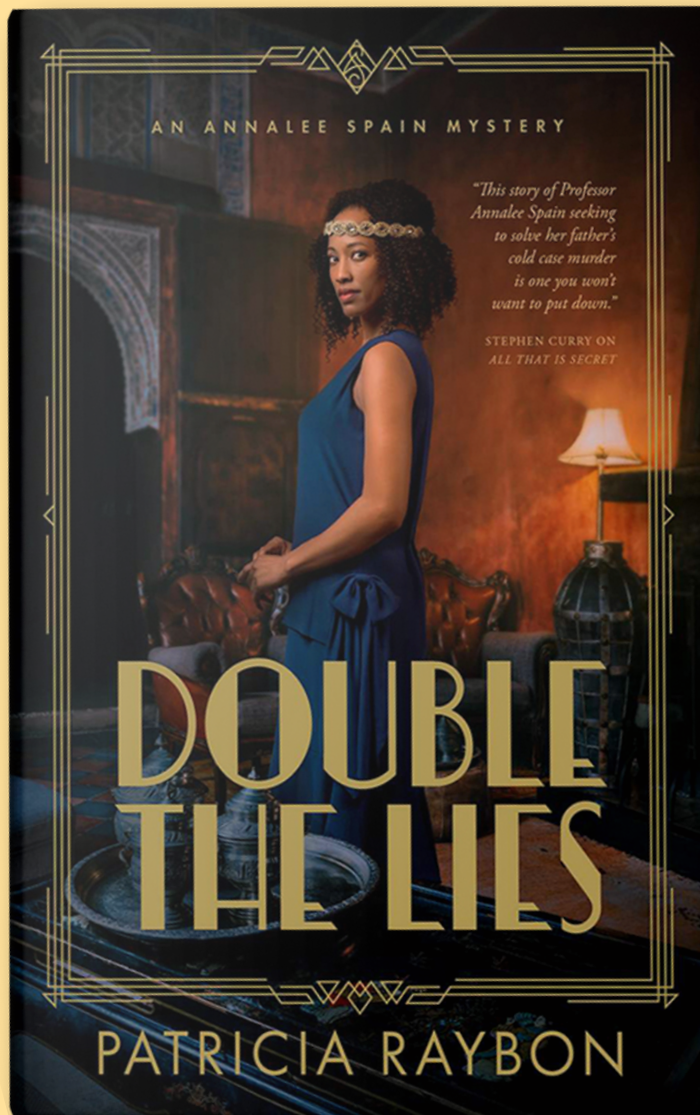


BOOK CLUB KIT



"This story grabs you right at the beginning and takes you on a ride full of plot twists and turns."

Robin W. Pearson, Christy Award-winning author of *Walking in Tall Weeds*



ABOUT PATRICIA RAYBON

Patricia Raybon is an award-winning author and essayist whose books include *All That Is Secret*, Stephen Curry's March 2022 Literati Book Club pick; *My First White Friend*, a Christopher Award-winning memoir about racial forgiveness; and *I Told the Mountain to Move*, a prayer memoir that was a *Christianity Today* Book of the Year finalist. Patricia's essays on faith, race, and grace have been published in national outlets, including the *New York Times Sunday Magazine*, *Newsweek*, *USA Today*, *USA Weekend*, *Country Living*, *Christianity Today*, and others; posted on popular blogs; and aired on National Public Radio. She lives with her husband, Dan, in her beloved home state of Colorado.



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A Note from Patricia Raybon

Thank you so much for reading the sequel to Annalee Spain's first mystery, *All That Is Secret*. This second story, *Double the Lies*, developed after I read several biographies of famed barnstormer Bessie Coleman, the first female pilot of Black and Native American descent to be licensed to fly. Turned down by every flight school she approached in the US, Coleman took her dream of learning to fly to France, where she earned an international aviation pilot's license in June 1921 from the Fédération Aéronautique Internationale.

A subplot to her inspiring story was her effort to start a flight school in the US, open to all, by earning steady income as a pilot—the same challenge for most American barnstormer pilots, many of whom struggled to find work in aviation after serving with the US Air Service during World War I.

A tempting option was flying smuggled goods and people in and out of the US to earn illegal but bountiful pay. (Coleman was offered a smuggling job once but said she turned it down.) At the Stanley Hotel in Estes Park, pilots found work flying 383 tourists around to experience flight, but the pay was minimal and wasn't steady. The US Air Mail had started in 1918, but it took almost a decade, and dozens of crashes and sixteen fatalities, before the service carried mail coast to coast, becoming a viable employer.

In *Double the Lies*, I'd planned for Bessie Coleman to make an appearance. But when my fictional pilot Buddy Mann emerged and, to my surprise, showed romantic interest in Annalee, I followed that thread, learning more about America's contentious anti-miscegenation laws that defined interracial marriage as a criminal offense.

During the time of *Double the Lies*, all but seven of the then forty-eight states in the US had passed such laws, with thirty of the states—including Colorado—enforcing them. In 1957, however, Colorado's legislature repealed its law as unconstitutional. Ten years later in 1967, the US Supreme Court, in the famed *Loving v. Virginia* decision, overturned unanimously any anti-miscegenation statutes still in effect, at that point, in sixteen states.

As for interracial adoption, formal legislation to protect that right in the US wasn't passed until 1994 with the Multiethnic Placement Act, which aimed to reduce pervasive discrimination against cross-racial adoptions.

Amid such racial and cultural turmoil, my characters in the Annalee Spain Mysteries seek to live out their lives with hope and dignity. Thus, Pastor Jack Blake visited, in this story, the real town of Dearfield—a farming settlement founded in Weld County, Colorado, by Black businessman Oliver Toussaint Jackson for African Americans looking for opportunities denied them elsewhere. A bustling community of some two hundred at its height, Dearfield surpassed all expectations until hit hard by the Depression and Dust Bowl. Now a ghost town, it was listed in 1995 on the National Register of Historic Places.

Dearfield's promise, however, is reflected in the dreams of my young detective Annalee Spain, who found herself aloft in a Ford Tri-Motor airplane—which, as students of vintage aviation will know, didn't arrive until 1925, a year after my story. I pushed that boundary by saying the pilot Buddy Mann was testing a prototype. (Yes, that's literary license.)

A true historical backstory to this mystery, however, was the Spanish expulsion of the Jews in 1492. One of the cruelest inquisitions in recorded history, the mandate of King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella followed Spain's defeat of its longtime conquerors, the Muslim Moors, by expelling from Spanish lands all Sephardic Jews who didn't convert to Christianity. (*Sepharad* is the Hebrew word for the Spanish Iberian Peninsula.)

Impacting anywhere from 100,000 to 800,000 Jews, who had developed one of Europe's most thriving and advanced Jewish communities, the edict gave Jews three months to leave Spain. Forced to sell their houses, vineyards, fields, and cattle for a pittance, they also had to surrender all silver and gold for cloth or skins. Many fled to Portugal but, after six months, faced expulsion and horrific atrocities there as well.

(In 2015, Spain sought to atone for the expulsion by offering citizenship to Sephardic Jews whose families were expelled, an effort met thus far with mixed results.)

I referenced the event in *Double the Lies* as context for what Jews in Colorado experienced when they found themselves targeted by the state's Ku Klux Klan. By the time of this story, in 1924, some one million Jews had immigrated to the US. Hoping to find a warm welcome, they instead encountered rampant bigotry, including by the Klan.

In Estes Park, Colorado, for example, more than two thousand hooded Klansmen gathered in June 1922 for the initiation of three hundred recruits in a ceremony rife with anti-Jewish, anti-Black, and anti-Catholic rhetoric.

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Keeping a close eye on all this activity was the US Bureau of Investigation, precursor to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, renamed as such in 1935. My fictional agent, Robert Ames, "hired" Annalee to help unravel the murder in *Double the Lies*. The FBI's first African American agent, however, was a World War I veteran and explosives expert, James Wormley Jones, hired in November 1919 to work undercover as a special agent under future FBI director J. Edgar Hoover. The bureau's first female agent was Alaska Packard Davidson, hired in October 1922. The first Black female agent was Sylvia Mathis, who received her special agent badge in June 1976 after passing the agency's grueling four-month training program.

America's dynamic social landscape informs my character Annalee's life, dreams, friendships, and even her romantic love. What's next for Denver's newest young detective? Her next mystery, coming soon, will dish up more intriguing adventures and answers.



"This richly layered mystery set against the backdrop of Klan-run Colorado will leave readers breathless, guessing, and desperately awaiting the next installment. A truly magnificent read."

Jennifer L. Wright, author of *Come Down Somewhere*, on *Double the Lies*





Q&A with Patricia Raybon

Q. What kind of research did you do while writing *Double the Lies*?

A. I'd read several biographies of famed barnstormer Bessie Coleman, the first female pilot of Black and Native American descent to be licensed to fly. In *Double the Lies*, I'd planned for Bessie Coleman to make an appearance. But when my fictional pilot Buddy Mann emerged and, to my surprise, showed romantic interest in Annalee, I followed that thread, learning more about America's anti-miscegenation laws banning interracial marriage as a criminal offense.

During the time of *Double the Lies*, all but nine states in the US had passed such laws, with thirty of the then forty-eight states—including Colorado—enforcing them. In 1957, however, Colorado's legislature repealed its law as unconstitutional. Ten years later in 1967, the US Supreme Court, in the famed *Loving vs. Virginia* decision, unanimously overturned any anti-miscegenation statutes still in effect, at that point, in sixteen Southern states.

As for interracial adoption—another issue arising in the Annalee Spain Mysteries (because of Annalee's friendship with the young white orphan Eddie Brown Jr., who wants to join her in a family), I learned that formal legislation to protect that right in the US wasn't passed until 1994 with the Multiethnic Placement Act. Meantime, I dove into history of Sephardic Jews, whose past informs the plot in *Double the Lies*.

I'm enjoying the process of learning about historical incidents and situations in the time of my novels by following plot twists involving my characters. I hope to continue the process in the third book in the series as well.

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Q. What can readers learn from your protagonist, Annalee Spain, in *Double the Lies*?

A. I didn't see it at first, but Annalee Spain invites readers, through her fictional journey, to personally meet a young woman of color, engage with her life story, understand her lived reality as a target in a prejudiced world, and surrender to cheering for her—both to solve mysteries and to discover an affirming path in her life.

I've been buoyed during book club discussions to hear white readers identify with a young Black female protagonist and hear them rooting for her—and thus for all women of color fighting to stand and thrive—while these readers also bravely explore racism, sometimes even their own. Fiction is amazing like that. It lets us look safely at hard, scary things.

Q. What themes do you explore in *Double the Lies*?

A. The taut tension between truth vs. lies is the core theme. Annalee battles people who lie, both in high and low places, but comes to realize how lying—especially to herself—may be her weakness, too. She'd come to think that Jack, the young pastor, was the one with the lying problem in book two—or even on a larger scale, that the Klan and its lies represented falsehood in her world. As the story unfolds, however, she has to confront her own ability to lie when it's convenient—but don't we all? The story invites all of us to examine that tendency in ourselves.

In these times, when truth is often a pastiche of revisionist untruths—tainted with conspiracy theories or bans against studying the full truth of human history—*Double the Lies* dares to argue that truth matters, especially if we're willing to unearth it and talk about it.

In that way, the truth of racial injustice also continues to operate as a real-life theme in the Annalee Spain Mysteries. In *Double the Lies*, one of the characters is a wealthy Jewish banker whose family story is heavily impacted by the anti-Semitism they encountered going back generations. That religious hate rears its head again as the banker, Simon Wallace, finds himself a target of Klan-led efforts to thwart his plan to help the city of Denver finance a new municipal airport. When Wallace concocts a scheme to outfox the Klan, he and his family pay a high price, as Annalee's sleuthing finally reveals.

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Q. As your story developed, did any characters surprise you, or did the storyline unfold in surprising ways?

A. Surprises galore, yes. I'd planned on a twisty mystery about my amateur detective Annalee Spain being forced to solve a curious murder because, if she didn't, the Klan-run police in Denver would blame her for it.

Then, out of the blue, the brother of the murder victim—a dashing young pilot who is white—fell head over heels for Annalee, taking the story in a completely new direction. The twist surprised me because I'd already established, in the debut story *All That Is Secret*, Annalee's budding if complicated romance with a handsome young Black pastor, Jack Blake.


Q. What is your hope for *Double the Lies*?

A. That it continues to inspire honest conversations about racial dynamics in the world while igniting fresh commitment in readers to help heal our racial divisions. I've always found it curious that some think talking openly about race relations is divisive, or a taboo. In my experience, it's not talking openly that keeps people insensitive and ignorant about each other's lived realities and stories. I'm praying that *Double the Lies* helps keep these vital conversations going.



“Patricia Raybon’s second adventure for her intrepid sleuth, Annalee Spain, is historical mystery at its finest. . . . *Double the Lies* is double the action, double the intrigue, and double the insight into the human heart.”

Stephanie Landsem, author of *In a Far-Off Land* and *Code Name Edelweiss*

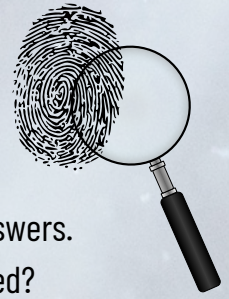


The mountain air in March was cold as ice, especially after sundown. But the night sky was spectacular. Stars lit the heavens like a holy fire, millions twinkling in every direction.

Looking across the landscape, Annalee saw the only place on earth that she knew might be a safe haven.

DOUBLE THE LIES by Patricia Raybon

Discussion Questions



Read these questions together in your book group and then share and discuss your answers. How has your understanding of the story grown? What new insights have you discovered?

- 1.)** Annalee is establishing herself as a detective but still struggles at times to know what to do next or to feel confident in her skills. Describe a time when you've felt in over your head, unsure of your next move or of your abilities. What did you do? What was the outcome?
- 2.)** When she stops in a neighborhood church to pray, Annalee wonders, "Why did the church, on an ordinary weekday, feel not fancy but like a good ol' home?" What images does the word church bring up for you? What feelings?
- 3.)** Annalee thinks several times about the meaning of hospitality, especially when confronted with difficult people like Mrs. Mason. What does she conclude about the nature of hospitality? How would you define what it means to extend hospitality to others?
- 4.)** Mrs. Quinlan cautions Annalee about making assumptions based on what library visitors read. How does that end up relating to her case? Is Mrs. Quinlan right to protect the privacy and confidentiality of her patrons? Later in the story, Annalee concludes that information she has been told about Buddy Mann isn't hers to reveal—even to him. Do you agree, or do you think Annalee should tell him what she learned?
- 5.)** Jack tells his congregation, "We're wounded. So some of us might make mistakes in life. Especially when it comes to looking for love." How does this message come to apply to Jack himself? To Annalee? What do they each learn about themselves and their relationship as a result?
- 6.)** Speaking to an audience at the First Denver National Bank, Annalee advises, "If you keep talking to the right people and asking the right questions and knocking on the right doors, one will open. Then you'll see the light—which is what we're all looking for in life, right? . . . So don't stop looking. Like a detective, if you want truth in your life, never stop searching for it. Truth wants to be found." Do you agree with her perspective on finding the truth? How could this advice be applied in your own life? Where do you turn to find truth?

Continued on next page

7.) As Annalee tries to solve Jeffrey Mann’s murder, she uncovers a tangle of secrets and lies in the Wallace family, some of them going back generations. How do these pieces of the past contribute to Jeffrey’s death? Are there past incidents or patterns in your own family that are still showing consequences even today?

8.) One of Annalee’s gifts is an ability to look deeply at people and understand the things that have made them who they are. Where in the story do you see her extending this insight and compassion to others? How does it help her solve her case?

9.) When Annalee is surprised by Della’s suggestion about another character’s racial identity, Della challenges her with the question “What, you need proof?” What conclusion does Annalee reach? Why do you think many in our world today still look for labels or categories when it comes to race?

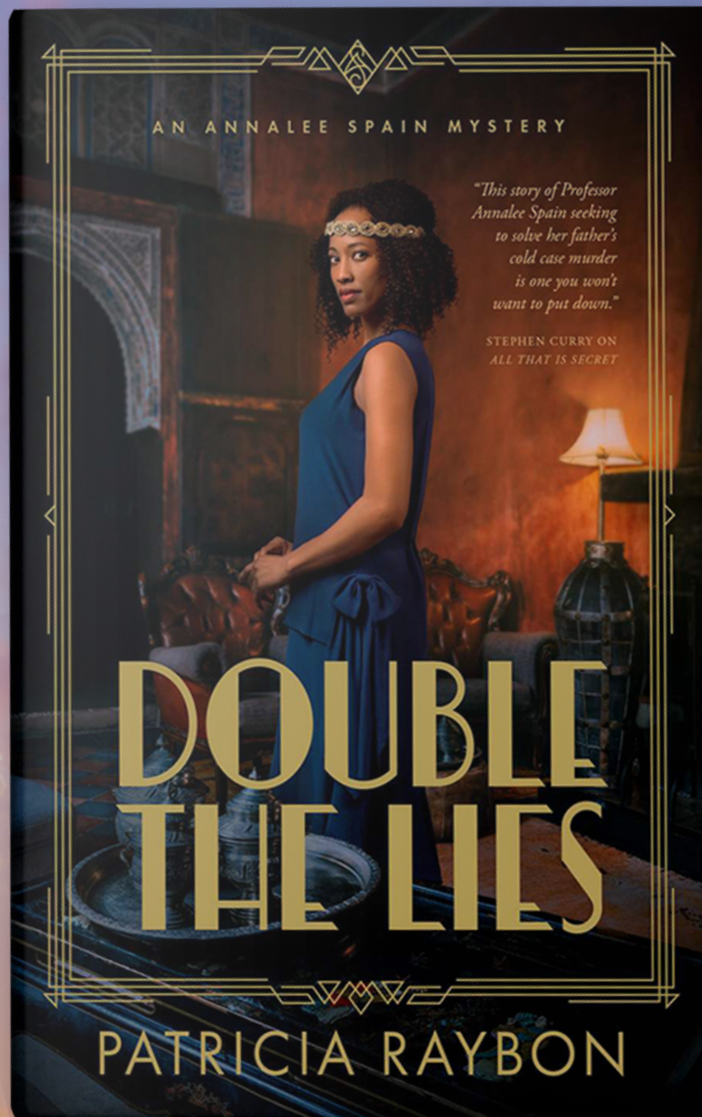
10.) Along with everything else she is juggling, Annalee has not given up on the search for her birth mother. Does she come any closer to finding her in this story? Where do you think her search will go from here?

My discussion questions:

Use this space to jot down some questions you want to ask in your book club meeting.

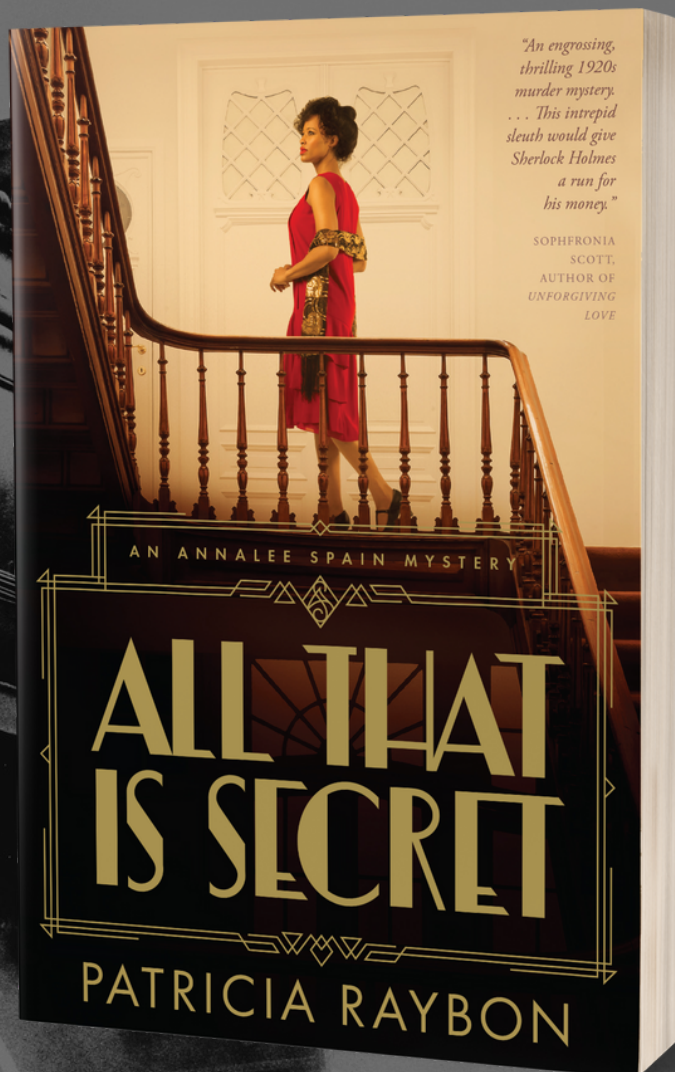


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