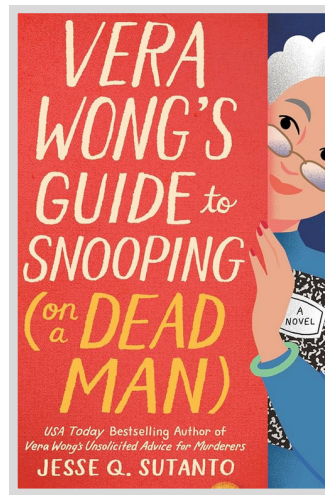


# Vera Wong's Guide to Snooping (on a Dead Man)

by Jesse Q. Sutanto



## Summary

Ever since a man was found dead in Vera's teahouse, life has been good--for Vera, that is. She's surrounded by loved ones, her shop is bustling, and best of all, her son Tilly has a girlfriend! All thanks to Vera, because Tilly's girlfriend is none other than Officer Selena Gray. The very same Officer Gray she had harassed while investigating the teahouse murder. Still, Vera wishes more dead bodies would pop up in her shop, but one mustn't be ungrateful, even if one is slightly-- bored. Then Vera comes across a distressed young woman who is obviously in need of her kindly guidance. The young woman is looking for a missing friend. Fortunately, while catsitting at Tilly and Selena's, Vera finds a treasure trove: Selena's briefcase. Inside is a file about the death of an enigmatic influencer--who also happens to be the friend that the young woman was looking for.

Provided by Berkley Books

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## About the Author

### **Publisher's Biographical Note:**

Jesse Q. Sutanto is the award-winning, USA Today bestselling author of the Aunties series, Vera Wong's Unsolicited Advice for Murderers, I'm Not Done with You Yet, and You Will Never Be Me. Her young adult titles include The Obsession and Well, That Was Unexpected, and her children's fantasy series is Theo Tan and the Fox Spirit. She has a master's degree from Oxford University and a bachelor's from the University of California, Berkeley. She currently lives in Jakarta with her husband and two young daughters.

**Provided by the author's website:** <https://jesseqsutantoauthor.com/about>

A little bit about me: I grew up going back and forth between Jakarta and Singapore and consider both places my homes. I was fortunate enough to do my Masters in Creative Writing at the University of Oxford, which is surely one of the most gorgeous places in the world. I've also made Oxford my entire personality so please excuse the obnoxiousness. I am passionate about women's rights and diversity in publishing. I regularly do giveaways where I critique queries or the first few pages, and I am especially interested in helping writers from marginalized communities. If you are a writer from a marginalized community, come say hello to me on Twitter or Instagram! I love hearing from other writers, even if it's just to say a quick hello.

## Discussion Questions

1. Vera is back with her signature mix of nosiness and warmth. Did her character grow or change between the first and second books?
2. The book opens with Vera in a police station, overhearing Millie trying—and failing—to report a missing person. Why do you think Vera was so quick to involve herself in Millie's situation? Was it instinct, nosiness, or empathy?
3. Millie's missing friend turns out to be Xander Lin, a popular influencer with a secret criminal background. How did your opinion of Xander evolve as the story unfolded?
4. How did you feel about the new characters introduced in this book? Did anyone become a favorite?
5. The theme of found family continues here. How did Vera's circle evolve? Were you happy to see returning characters from Book 1?
6. The crime in this book is less about solving a murder and more about uncovering secrets and untangling grief. Did this shift in tone from the first book surprise you?
7. Vera often assumes people are lying, hiding something, or just plain incompetent (especially the police). Is her suspicion justified here, or does she cross a line?
8. Vera often uncovers information using manipulation, bribery (with food), and bold confrontation. Which of her sleuthing tactics in this book did you find most entertaining — or outrageous?
9. Were you surprised by the darker themes in this book? How well do you think Sutanto balanced those heavier topics with the cozy, humorous tone?
10. Vera has strong opinions about everything from food to parenting. Which of her unsolicited advice moments stood out to you in this book?

## Professional Reviews

### **Booklist** (02/01/2025):

Prodigious Sutanto presents a second delicious serving of her Vera Wong mysteries, spotlighting the eponymous sprightly sexagenarian tea café proprietor whose meddling is driven as much by relentless kindness as by insatiable curiosity. Vera began extending her family in Vera Wong's *Unsolicited Advice for Murderers* (2023) and continues to lure, and nourish, more lost souls into her toothsome fold. The lynchpin here is Thomas, aka Xander, a young man with a (social media-ed) perfect life who turns up dead, allegedly by suicide. His friend Millie misses him most. His girlfriend, Aimes, seems well, aimless. His manager TJ's business is tanking. His grandfather Qiang Wen is lonelier than ever. Vera's heartstrings--and her irresistible pork buns--reel them in, not only for her unconditional care, but they also happen to be her primary suspects. Meanwhile, Vera's next-door nemesis Winifred has claimed a Korean ancestor in order to justify her Chinese bakery's transformation into a K-destination for kimchi croissants. Not everything is delicious (there are elder-targeting scams, toxic social media, and modern slave trafficking) but Sutanto manages to craft another sumptuous, mysterious feast. COPYRIGHT(2025) Booklist, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

### **Publishers Weekly** (02/17/2025):

Edgar winner Sutanto's quirky second adventure for the eponymous tea shop owner (after Vera Wong's *Unsolicited Advice for Murderers*) opens with Vera falling prey to a phone scam. After reporting the incident to Officer Selena Gray--who's dating Vera's son, Tilly--Vera notices a distressed young woman waiting outside the police station. Vera insists on taking the woman, Millie, to her shop, where the woman reveals that her friend Thomas went missing three nights earlier. Then, while feeding Selena and Tilly's cat, Vera stumbles upon Selena's briefcase, which includes a file outlining the apparent suicide of social media influencer Xander Lin. Using her well-honed sleuthing skills, Vera discovers that Xander and Thomas are the same person, and she then proceeds to ingratiate herself with a group of suspects including Xander's girlfriend, talent manager, and grandfather to suss out the young man's fate. Laugh-out-loud antics from the nosy, no-nonsense Vera keep the plot moving at a steady clip, but fans of the first book may be jarred by the somber final reveal. Still, Sutanto's lively storytelling will keep readers on the hook for Vera's next case. Agent: Katelyn Detweiler, Jill Grinberg Literary. (Apr.)