

Queerly Beloved

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BOOK CLUB KIT

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Amy loves weddings, but Charley is more ambivalent. How do you feel about weddings—are you more of an Amy or a Charley, or does it depend? What was the best wedding you’ve ever been to, and why is it your favorite? Also: Say you’re planning a destination wedding—what would be your dream locale, and why?
2. Imagine walking into Daily Bread and smelling fresh-baked delights. What do you order and why?
3. “Amy had turned to baking when things got tough.” What’s your outlet when the going gets tough? How do you deal with stress?
4. “Amy’s beloved rom-coms had prepared her so well for many of her bridesmaid tasks: *27 Dresses* for the perfect facial expressions during the ceremony, *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* for tricky family dynamics, and *The Wedding Planner* for keeping a cool head under fire, to name a few.” What are your favorite rom-coms and why? Or do you have a different beloved genre (horror, action/adventure, historical, etc.)?
5. Do you remember a time you felt an instant attraction to someone, like Amy does with Charley? What did you do, or what do you wish you did?
6. We’ve all crossed paths with someone like Donna, whether it was a difficult boss, someone we didn’t agree with, or someone whose personal beliefs had a negative impact on us. Who was your Donna?
7. It’s trivia night at Ruby Red’s. Let’s play! The topic: LGBTQ+ history (answers at the bottom):
 - **What was the name of the first lesbian rights organization in the United States?**
 - **The Stonewall riots took place in June of what year?**
 - **Who was the first openly gay man elected to public office in the United States?**
 - **The original Pride flag—designed by Gilbert Baker and known as the “Retro-8”— had eight stripes: which two additional colors were included?**
 - **Which state became the first to legalize civil unions for same-sex couples?**
8. On your first date, you’re giving a tour of your hometown. What three places are must-sees, and why?

Trivia answers: Daughters of Bilitis; 1969; Harvey Milk; pink and turquoise; Vermont

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

9. Amy asks her mother: “So how do you reconcile your Christianity with the way people have used Christianity against you?” Religion can be a fraught topic for many, not just the LGBTQ+ community. Have you had any experience with people using religion against you or someone else? How have you navigated that?
10. Damian says Amy has “one of the most important queer superpowers. . . . The ability to read a room and know what needs to happen and who you need to be in one second flat.” Have you ever felt the need to be a social chameleon? What was the situation? What kind of toll does this code-switching take on you?
11. On the second date, Amy asks Charley: “Okay. If you were a cheese, what kind of cheese would you be and why?” Now it’s your turn to answer that question.
12. Amy’s favorite holiday is Thanksgiving, especially the time she spends baking with her mom and the evening celebration with her chosen family at Ruby Red’s. What is your favorite holiday? Do you spend it with family of origin, chosen family, or a combination? Do you have any traditions?
13. It’s karaoke night at Ruby Red’s. What 3 songs would you sing? Why did you choose them?
14. Amy has a clear memory of her first visit to Ruby Red’s on her 21st birthday. How did you celebrate the big twenty-one?
15. *Queerly Beloved* is set before the Supreme Court made marriage equality legal in all 50 states. Do you remember what you were doing on that historic day? How did it change your life or the life of your LGBTQ+ family and friends?



CHARACTER CARDS

AMY

Semi-closeted baker/bartender turned bridesmaid-for-hire trying to find her very own happily-ever-after.



FAVORITE DESSERT:
Tiramisu

CHARLEY

An environmental engineer who's new in town and looking for someone like Amy to show her around.



FAVORITE DESSERT:
Croissant

JOEL

Amy's best friend since freshman year of college. Joel is adventurous and charming, and just a touch dramatic.



FAVORITE DESSERT:
Chocolate peanut butter cupcakes

DAMIAN

Amy's friend and Joel's partner. A personal trainer with a calm, steady presence and a can-do attitude.



FAVORITE DESSERT:
Funfetti cupcakes

TERESA

A college professor and single mom to Amy. Warm, tough, and optimistic.



FAVORITE DESSERT:
Pumpkin cheesecake

PLAYLIST

- CLOSER** | Tegan and Sara
- HAPPY** | Pharrell Williams
- C'MON** | Ke\$ha
- WRECKING BALL** | Miley Cyrus
- DANCE APOCALYPTIC** | Janelle Monáe
- RAISE YOUR GLASS** | P!nk
- GIVE ME ONE REASON** | Tracy Chapman
- COME & GET IT** | Selena Gomez
- THE STORY** | Brandi Carlile
- LOST** | Frank Ocean
- SOMEBODY LOVES YOU** | Betty Who
- MARRY YOU** | Bruno Mars
- BANG BANG** | Jessie J, Ariana Grande, and Nicki Minaj
- HANG WITH ME** | Robyn
- SCREAM & SHOUT** | will.i.am feat. Britney Spears
- YOÜ AND I** | Lady Gaga
- BRAVE** | Sara Bareilles



RECIPES



RUBY RED'S WHITE WINE SANGRIA

INGREDIENTS

- 1 bottle (750 mL) dry white wine, like Pinot Grigio or Sauvignon Blanc
- 1 large or 2 small pears, cored and coarsely chopped
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup apple brandy (or any other kind of brandy)
- 1 orange, sliced and cut in quarters
- 1 can (12 oz.) hard apple cider
- 2 cinnamon sticks
- 2 sprigs of rosemary
- 1 large or 2 small apples, cored and coarsely chopped

DIRECTIONS

Combine all ingredients in a large pitcher. Chill in the refrigerator for at least one hour and up to twelve hours. Serve in a wine glass or highball glass over ice.

RECIPES



QUEERLY BELOVED RAINBOW CAKE

INGREDIENTS

FOR THE CAKE:

- 24** tbsp. (3 sticks) unsalted butter, softened
- 3** cups granulated sugar
- 7** large eggs, room temperature
- 1** tbsp. vanilla extract
- 5** cups all-purpose flour
- 2** tbsp. baking powder
- 1** tsp. salt
- 1** $\frac{1}{2}$ cups buttermilk, room temperature
- Gel food coloring

FOR THE FROSTING:

- 24** tbsp. (3 sticks) unsalted butter, softened
- 2** lb. (32 oz.) powdered sugar
- 1** tsp. vanilla extract
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. salt
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup milk (2% or whole), room temperature

RECIPES



QUEERLY BELOVED RAINBOW CAKE

DIRECTIONS

1. Make the cakes: Preheat the oven to 350°F. Prepare 9" cake pans using desired method**. Depending on how many cake pans you have, you will likely need to wash and reuse them between baking layers.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer or in a large bowl using a hand mixer, cream butter until light and fluffy, about 2–3 minutes. Add 3 cups sugar and mix until thoroughly combined. Mix in 1 tbsp. vanilla extract.
3. Add eggs one at a time, mixing after each egg. Scrape down sides of the bowl as needed.
4. In a separate bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, and salt.
5. Add $\frac{1}{3}$ of the flour mixture to the butter mixture, mixing until almost combined. Add $\frac{1}{2}$ of the buttermilk ($\frac{3}{4}$ cup) and mix until almost combined. Repeat process: add $\frac{1}{3}$ of flour mixture, then remainder of buttermilk, then remainder of flour mixture, mixing each time until almost combined and scraping down the sides of the bowl as needed.
6. Separate batter into five equal portions. Use gel food coloring to color one layer each an orange-red, yellow, green, blue, and purple. Put each portion of batter in a separate cake pan, spreading for even layers, and bake for 16–20 minutes until cake is light and springs back when gently poked.

RECIPES



QUEERLY BELOVED RAINBOW CAKE

DIRECTIONS

7. As each layer is removed from the oven, let cool for 2 minutes before turning out onto a wire rack. Let all layers of cake cool completely.
8. Make the frosting: In the bowl of a stand mixer or in a large bowl using a hand mixer, cream butter until light and fluffy, about 2–3 minutes.
9. Add powdered sugar gradually, about 1 cup at a time. (You may not use the full 2 pounds.) Once the butter and sugar mixture becomes thick and dense, about halfway through the sugar, add the milk, vanilla, and salt. Mix thoroughly, then continue gradually adding sugar until you've reached your desired, spreadable consistency. If the frosting becomes too thick, add an extra tablespoon of milk.
10. Assemble the cake: Once cake is completely cooled, place purple layer on a cake plate and top with a thin layer of frosting. Repeat process with other cakes in this order: blue, green, yellow, orange-red.
11. Apply crumb coat: Spread a thin layer of frosting across the top and sides of the cake. Let stand at room temperature for about 20 minutes or in the refrigerator for about 10 minutes, until the frosting is less sticky to the touch.
12. Use the remaining frosting to smooth out the exterior of the cake. If desired, top with sprinkles, edible flowers, or piped frosting. Enjoy!

PLACES TO VISIT IN TULSA, OKLAHOMA

THE GOLDEN DRILLER

One of the tallest freestanding statues in the U.S., the Golden Driller is a beloved Tulsa icon and the first place Amy takes Charley to show her around town in *Queerly Beloved*. This strangely fantastic 75-foot statue of an oil worker is located on the Tulsa Fairgrounds. If you're visiting Tulsa in the fall, see the Golden Driller and go to the Tulsa State Fair in one trip!

THE CENTER OF THE UNIVERSE

It may not be much to look at, but the Center of the Universe is a must-see, or at least a must-hear. Located on a downtown pedestrian bridge, the Center of the Universe is a spot marked by a circular pattern of bricks with a famous "acoustic anomaly." While standing at the center, everything you say will echo loudly back to you, but to anyone standing outside of the circle, your speech will be muffled and difficult to understand.

ROUTE 66

Route 66 is one of the most famous highways in the U.S., and it runs directly through Tulsa. The city has done a lot of work in recent years to pay homage to the historical road. A drive down Route 66 can lead you to unique art pieces, retro neon signs, and popular local businesses. Be sure to stop for a meal at Mother Road Market, a food hall featuring over 20 local restaurants, breweries, and shops, plus a Route 66-themed mini-golf course.

TULSA ARTS DISTRICT

The Tulsa Arts District has everything you need for a fun day in Tulsa. You can find art galleries, museums, music venues, green outdoor spaces, unique stores, and some of the city's best restaurants and bars in this area of downtown. Be sure to visit Magic City Books while you're there, and if it's baseball season, catch a Tulsa Drillers game at ONEOK Field.

THE GATHERING PLACE

This gorgeous, multifunctional, interactive outdoor space spans 100 acres along the Arkansas River. There are no entry fees to visit, and it features gardens, bike trails, imaginative playgrounds, and more. The Gathering Place didn't exist at the time *Queerly Beloved* takes place, but it would certainly be one of Amy's favorite ways to spend a sunny day now!

DENNIS R. NEILL EQUALITY CENTER

Owned and operated by Oklahomans for Equality, the Dennis R. Neill Equality Center is one of the largest LGBTQ+ equality centers in the region. The facility features a busy event center, lending library, wellness center, and a store with great souvenirs.

