

BOOK  
CLUB  
KIT

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NOVEL  
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# Evvie Drake Starts Over

LINDA HOLMES





## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Small towns like Calcasset, Maine, can be wonderful—Evvie has a strong support network, community traditions, stability—but there can also be downsides. After her husband's death, Evvie keeps secret her previous plans to leave him. Why do you think she does this? Have you ever found it difficult to voice an ugly truth?
2. What does Dean's unexpected and inexplicable inability to pitch a baseball mean to you? Have you ever found yourself in a situation where you haven't been able to perform as you would like to?
3. Evvie and Dean are both thrown huge curve balls—Evvie loses her husband, Dean his livelihood. Do you think they handle the changes in their lives well?
4. Andy and Evvie are close friends with no romantic interest in each other—but things get complicated when Andy starts dating Monica. Have you ever had to balance a relationship and a close friendship?
5. Do you think that balance is further complicated if that friend is a member of the opposite sex? Is this an experience you can relate to?
6. As Evvie and Dean become closer, Evvie reveals more about her marriage. What does she come to understand about her marriage to Tim by the end of the book, and how does this new understanding change her?
7. Evvie finds it difficult to rely on others or to ask for help. Can you relate? Do you find it hard to depend on other people for emotional or practical support?
8. Why does Evvie decide to take a break from speaking to her mother? Do you think she makes the right decision?
9. Evvie, Andy, and Dean are all struggling with different forms of grief. What is each character grieving and how do they find ways to heal?
10. Why do you think Evvie puts off contacting Nona about her job proposition? Why do you think she finally does call Nona back? Have you ever put off an opportunity? What made you finally take the plunge?
11. Do you think Evvie successfully “starts over” by the end of the novel? How does she change from the beginning to the end of the book?
12. What actors would you cast in a film version of *Evvie Drake Starts Over*?

# RECIPES INSPIRED BY *EVVIE DRAKE STARTS OVER*

## MAINE LOBSTER ROLL

### Ingredients

- Two 1-1/2 to 1-3/4 pound lobsters, boiled or steamed
- 3-4 tablespoons good mayonnaise
- 1/4 cup finely chopped celery (optional, for those who like a little “crunch”)
- freshly-squeezed lemon juice (optional)
- sea salt and freshly-ground black pepper
- 4 leaves lettuce (optional, I use Boston)
- 4 top-split, flat-sided hotdog buns (New England style)
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened

### Instructions

1. Remove tail, knuckle, and claw meat from the lobsters and cut into 1/2-inch chunks. You should have about 1 pound of lobster meat. Refrigerate until chilled.
2. Drain lobster meat, discarding any liquid. Gently toss lobster with 3 tablespoons mayonnaise and celery (if using). The lobster should be coated, but not weighed down by the mayonnaise. Add an additional tablespoon of mayonnaise, if needed.
3. Taste the lobster salad. Some brands of mayo have more tang than others. If the salad needs more brightness, add a squeeze of fresh lemon juice. Season to taste with salt (if needed) and pepper.
4. Cover the lobster salad and refrigerate for 30 minutes, or up to 6-8 hours.
5. When ready to serve, preheat a griddle over medium heat. Butter the sides of the hotdog buns and grill 1-2 minutes on each side, until toasted.



Source: <https://stripedspatula.com/maine-lobster-rolls>

# RECIPES INSPIRED BY *EVVIE DRAKE STARTS OVER*



Source: <https://thefarmsteadtable.com/recipe/maine-blueberry-fizz>

## MAINE BLUEBERRY FIZZ

### Ingredients

- 1 cup frozen blueberries
- 2 oz bourbon
- 1/2 oz lime juice
- 2 oz kombucha, preferably blueberry ginger
- 1/2 oz maple syrup

### Instructions

1. Defrost blueberries in microwave.
2. Smash (or puree) blueberries and strain so you have a thin juice.
3. Pour 2 oz of blueberry juice into a cocktail shaker with bourbon, lime juice, maple syrup, and ice.
4. Shake and pour into a glass with ice.
5. Top with kombucha and garnish with blueberries.

# RECIPES INSPIRED BY *EVVIE DRAKE STARTS OVER*

## NEW ENGLAND CLAMBAKE

### Ingredients

- 1 cup cold water
- 2 cups dry white wine
- 2 1/2 tablespoons store-bought or homemade Old Bay seasoning
- 1 teaspoon coarse sea salt
- 4 garlic cloves, smashed
- 1 red onion, roughly chopped
- 2 pounds new potatoes, halved
- Two (1 1/2-to 2-pound) lobsters
- 2 dozen Manila clams
- 4 ears fresh corn, cut into quarters
- Small bunch tarragon or flat-leaf parsley, roughly chopped
- 2 sticks unsalted butter (8 oz), melted
- Crusty bread
- 6 lemons, halved or cut into wedges

### Instructions

1. In a large pot, bring the water, wine, Old Bay, salt, and garlic to a boil.
2. Toss the onion and potatoes in the pot, cover, and cook over medium-high heat for 15 minutes.
3. Nestle the lobsters on the onion and potatoes, cover the pot again, and cook for 3 minutes.
4. Add the clams and corn and continue to cook, still covered, until the clams have opened, 8 to 10 minutes.
5. Carefully remove the pot from the heat and drain the cooking liquid. Remove and discard any clams that haven't opened.
6. Tip the contents of the pot onto a table lined with newspaper or butcher paper or transfer to a large platter. Sprinkle everything with the herbs and set out small bowls of melted butter along with some crusty bread and lemon wedges and dishes or small buckets so folks have a place to toss the spent shells. Don't forget gobs of napkins.



Source: <https://leitesculinaria.com/87266/recipes-new-england-clambake.html>



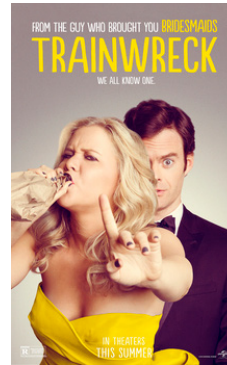
# LINDA HOLMES' RECOMMENDATIONS

## EVVIE DRAKE STARTS OVER PLAYLIST

1. Love Will Come to You / Indigo Girls
2. Am I The Only One / Maria McKee
3. I Wish I Was / The Avett Brothers
4. No Hard Feelings / The Avett Brothers
5. Don't Carry It All / The Decemberists
6. The Usual Thing / Marshall Crenshaw
7. I'll Wait for You / Ruth Brown
8. And I Love You and You / The Avett Brothers
9. Everything I Need / Melissa Ferrick
10. I'll be Satisfied / Ryan Shaw
11. Say Hey / Michael Franti & Spearhead
12. Soul on Fire / LaVern Baker
13. The Bleeding Heart Show / The New Pornographers

Play on **SPOTIFY**

## ROMANTIC COMEDIES



*Trainwreck*



*Always Be My Maybe*



*Notting Hill*



*The American President*



*The Cutting Edge*



*Sleepless in Seattle*