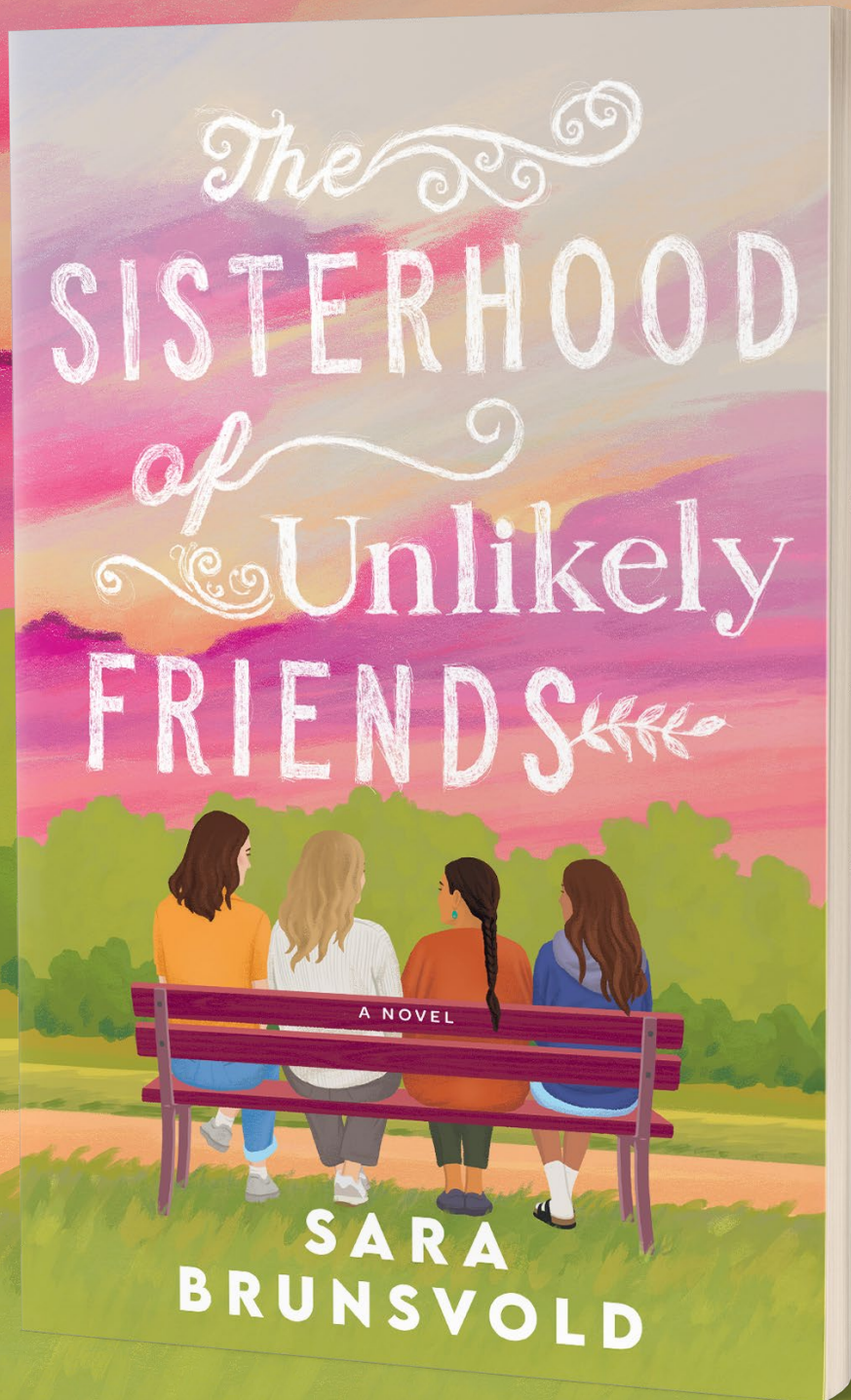


BOOK CLUB KIT



CONTENTS

LETTER FROM SARA

SIX QUESTIONS WITH SARA

KYLA'S FAVORITE DIRTY SODA RECIPE

THE PERFECT PIZZA GAME

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

LETTER FROM SARA

DEAR READERS:

While your book club formed for many reasons, one likely reason was because you all believe that community can help shape, lift, and edify each member. That's what *The Sisterhood of Unlikely Friends* is about: the power of togetherness.

Have you ever felt like you were on the outside, wondering where you fit in? I was in that space not too long ago when my family had to say a very hard goodbye to a much-loved community and start all over in a new one. I found myself wondering, Would these new people accept me—the *real* me? Jess Becker, the main character of the novel, wrestles with all those questions and emotions, made more complex when a devastating diagnosis threatens to isolate her even more.

This is a story about letting go and letting others in, about women who become like sisters when real family relationships leave gaps, and about the immeasurable joy when someone sees the real you and says, "How beautiful."

Thank you for reading *The Sisterhood of Unlikely Friends* together. I wish you a meaningful and memorable discussion.

WARMLY,
SARA

SIX QUESTIONS WITH SARA

Get a closer look at *The Sisterhood of Unlikely Friends* with these insights from the author.

1. THIS BOOK, LIKE YOUR OTHERS, CELEBRATES INTERGENERATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS.

WHAT KEEPS YOU COMING BACK TO THIS THEME?

My focus on intergenerational relationships started because of a personal passion for them. But the more I write about such relationships, the more I see how fictional generational building can nurture real-life generational building. I see it happening in book clubs. I hear it in readers' discussions and read it in their reviews and emails. I write the world I love to see.

2. DO YOU HAVE A FAVORITE CHARACTER?

I love each of them in a different way and for different reasons. Jess sticks with me the most. She's flawed but generous, funny but sensitive, and she has an ability to keep house plants alive that I find admirable (I'm so *not* a green thumb). Out of all the characters, she also best encapsulates the desire to connect with others tempered by not always knowing how.

3. IN THE STORY, JESS IS DIAGNOSED WITH MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS. WHY DID YOU CHOOSE MS?

When I started dreaming up this story, MS was in the news a lot, in part thanks to celebrities of my generation like Selma Blair. My growing awareness of MS prompted me to learn more. I had the honor of getting to know people who either have been diagnosed or who support MS patients. Their stories helped me understand both the unpredictability of the disease and the irreplaceability of community when it comes to living with a chronic illness. For all of these reasons, MS fit with the story I was wanting to create. And if the novel helps further awareness of MS even a little bit, then all the better.

4. WHAT WAS THE HARDEST PART TO WRITE?

The medical scenes, by far. Scenes like those have to be written with great care, sensitivity, and meticulous fact-checking. Fortunately, God surrounded me with people who could help me understand not just the facts but also the emotional nuance.

5. WHAT WAS THE EASIEST PART TO WRITE?

The scenes with Kyla. They flowed so easily. She was a fun character to write.

6. WHAT DO YOU WANT READERS TO TAKE AWAY FROM THIS STORY THE MOST?

I want them to feel inspired and encouraged to open up their lives to trusted people in new ways. And to give grace for others to do the same.

DID YOU KNOW?

You can request a free, 30-minute virtual visit from Sara on her website, SaraBrunsvold.com/for-book-clubs/.

KYLA'S FAVORITE DIRTY SODA

Add extra sweetness to your club meeting with Kyla's favorite drink. Of course, she always starts with one of Jess's chilled diet sodas.

INGREDIENTS:

Cubed ice

½ tablespoon of lime juice (fresh-squeezed is best)

1 tablespoon coconut syrup

One chilled 12 oz can of Diet Coke

2 tablespoons cream or half-and-half

DIRECTIONS:

Fill a large cup with ice. Add soda, then the juice and syrup. Stir. Pour in the cream. Stir again, if desired, or go straight to enjoying.

TIPS:

This is the classic version of a dirty soda, but you can use any combination of soda, syrups, and juices, with or without cream. Not a fan of the fizz? Replace soda with iced tea.



THE PERFECT PIZZA GAME

Pizza and game nights at Jess's house quickly became a thing in the book. Each character certainly had her preferences when it came to the perfect pizza, and don't we all?

Object: The goal of the Perfect Pizza Game is to correctly identify your fellow book club member based on his or her "perfect pizza" description.

Supplies needed: 1 sheet of paper per player; 1 writing utensil per player; a basket or similar receptacle to collect entries.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Place the basket or receptacle in a central spot.
2. On the top half of your paper, describe your perfect pizza. Include things like type of crust, favorite sauce, preferred protein, and other must-have toppings.
3. When finished, fold your paper in half and put it in the basket.
4. When all participants have handed in their entries, pass the basket around the room and draw one entry at random. It's okay if you get your own.
5. Unfold the entry you drew. You will use the bottom half of the page for this next part.
6. The youngest player will read aloud the pizza description on the entry they drew. All players write their guess as to whose pizza it is on the bottom half of their paper. Go clockwise around the room, with each player reading off the description on their drawn entry and everyone writing their guess on their papers.
7. When everyone has written down their guesses for each description, it's time to reveal whose pizza was whose. Starting again with the youngest player, read aloud the descriptions one at a time. After each description, everyone say aloud whose pizza they think it is. The true owner will then announce him/herself.
8. Keep track of which guesses you got right. The player with the most correct guesses at the end, wins.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Which character did you relate to the most? Why?
2. Why was it so hard for Jess to be open about what was going on in her life? Was her struggle with honesty understandable?
3. Jess, Reva, Austie, and Kyla are so different. Why do you think they bonded so well?
4. Every choice an author makes is purposeful and intentional. Why do you think the author chose to write this book in first person from Jess's point of view?
5. Both Jess and Reva cite hymns as being influential in their lives. How have hymns or other songs added value to your life?
6. Each of the primary characters had someone who helped them turn a corner. For example, Jess had Tillie Watts and Reva had her coworker Jackie. Do you have a Tillie or Jackie? Tell the group about that person.
7. What was your biggest takeaway from your time with Jess, Reva, Austie, and Kyla?
8. The "one another" verses in the New Testament played a central role in the book. Which instruction stuck with you the most? Why?

