

... laugh-out-loud dialogue with touching characters.
-Laura Blount, Award-Winning Author of *Lost and Found Faith*

Sweet Rivalry



AWARD-WINNING AUTHOR
TERRI GILLESPIE

Sweet Rivalry Questions for Discussion (Spoiler Alert)

1. Sarah and Raven are very different. Discuss how they are different.
2. Yet the sisters are similar in many ways. Discuss those similarities.
3. Sarah's childhood was filled with love and warmth and acceptance. Granny loved her and raised her in a Christian household. Yet, Sarah felt rejected her whole life. Why do you think that is? Have you felt like Sarah?
4. Lizzy chose to kidnap Raven. Why do you think she didn't take both sisters? Why choose Raven? Discuss.
5. Both sisters had "brother" figures in their life. Raven had Will. Sarah had Asher. Have you had brother or sister figures in your life? Or perhaps mother or father figures? Did they help or hinder you? How?
6. We know Sarah struggled with rejection. How did that affect her behavior? Especially in her relationships?
7. Raven struggled with trusting people. How did that affect her behavior?
8. Drew, Sarah's boyfriend had exciting plans for them. Several things were missing from those plans. Discuss.
9. Raven did not trust Drew almost immediately. Why do you think she deemed him untrustworthy, even before the bad blood developed between them?

10. There were many emotional scenes in *Sweet Rivalry*. One of the most emotional scenes I wrote was the “burial” scene when Raven and Sarah symbolically said their final good-byes to their mother. How did that scene affect you? Why?
11. Another emotional scene was the scene, when Raven discovered the drugs that her mother had hidden inside her teddy bear. How did it affect Raven? How did it affect Sarah?
12. There are many reasons why the teddy bear is so important to Raven. Discuss the ones most obvious to you.
13. Granny is a Godly woman. She loves the Lord and her granddaughter. But Granny had many secrets. How did those secrets affect Sarah? Raven? Lizzy?
14. Have you ever kept a secret—thinking it was protecting a loved one—but it had the opposite effect? How did that play out? What did you learn?
15. I debated how and when and with whom Will would accept Jesus as his Messiah and Savior. I finally decided that the unconventional Will would have a very conventional experience. What did you think of that scene?
16. Despite that decision with Will, I did want Raven to have an unconventional conversion. What did you think of that scene?
17. Before Raven’s conversion, Will shared the Good News in a very Will way. Discuss how it was different than the pastor’s message. Discuss how it was the same.
18. Lizzy had an addiction to drugs and alcohol. Do you know someone with an addictions problem?¹ Did you know there are support programs for loved ones who have an addict in their life?²
19. Another bittersweet scene between Raven and Sarah was the morning of the breakfast “hug.” How did you feel about Lizzy’s “hug” with Raven?
20. Drew’s trip to Europe was quite eventful. Why do you suppose Drew thought he would receive a warm welcome from the sisters’ biological father, Howard?
21. When the sisters are invited to compete on the new baking show *Sweet Rivalry*, the producers wanted to pit the twins against each other. Discuss why they may have done that?
22. What was the outcome of the network’s attempts to create rivalry?
23. In the epilogue, the sisters receive a surprise phone call. What were your feelings about that call?

¹ Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) is an international fellowship requiring no membership dues or fees dedicated to helping alcoholics peer to peer in sobriety through its spiritually inclined Twelve Steps program.[1][2][3] Non-professional, non-denominational, self-supporting and apolitical, an avowed desire to stop drinking is its sole requirement for membership. www.aa.org

² Al-Anon's primary purpose is to help families and friends of alcoholics, rather than stopping alcoholism in others or assisting with interventions. <https://al-anon.org/>

24. What was your favorite scene?
25. Who was your favorite character?
26. Other than Drew, which character bothered you the most?
27. Which recipe from the book would you like to try? (There are a few in the back pages.)
28. Which sister do you think will get married first? Why?
29. What is your takeaway from *Sweet Rivalry*?
30. How would you see the sisters in five years?

Have any questions?

Have a book club, I'd love to "visit" in person or via technology.

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