

THE JESUS GIRL

The Official Book Club Kit

Discussion questions, dares, and dangerously good flan.

Spoilers from cover to cover — finish the book first! And like the book itself, this kit is for readers 18+.

(Some questions are exactly as nosy as Quini would want them to be.)

A note from Mercy: Thank you for reading — and for dragging your friends into it, which is the highest honor an author can receive. Pick and choose from this kit like a buffet. Skip anything, add everything, and if only one tradition survives the night, let it be the flan. — M.

The Host Kit

Set the scene. None of this is required; all of it is encouraged.

The Menu (Casa Sandoval Rules)

- **Flan.** Non-negotiable. The book has one dessert-shaped heart and this is it.
- Pastelitos, croquetas, and a cafecito bar — a Friday family dinner in miniature.
- Fusion dare: Mimi's *adobo-plantain-cream-cheese rice balls*. Someone at your table is brave enough. Find them.
- A bowl of fun-size chocolates relabeled “**Snookers**” — smuggling optional, but traditional.
- Rabbit stew for the truly committed. (David caught it himself. You may use a grocery store.)

Dress Code

- Unicorn and alien onesies, obviously. Whoever commits hardest picks the first discussion question.
- Alternative: pajamas and one item of neon pink or glow green.

The Playlist

- Merengue for arrivals (someone must attempt the lessons from Chapter 22).
- “Baby, I Love Your Way” for the sentimental portion of the evening — Papi’s retro playlist sends its regards.
- One (1) Linkin Park track, played loud, in honor of David’s Camry.
- The Willow score, for anyone who now cannot hear it innocently. You know why.

Lighting Advisory

When the discussion reaches Chapters 27–29, dim the lights. When somebody’s ice maker rattles, no one is allowed to scream. *(Someone will scream.)*

Reading Plans: How to Pace the Kit

The kit divides on the Chapter Crawl's own seams — four parts of seven or eight chapters (about 120 pages each), a comfortable fortnight or month of club reading apiece. Two proven paces below. (Hosting a single-night gathering instead? That's what the companion *Party Edition* is for.)

Plan A — Four Meetings + a Finale (the kit's natural rhythm)

- **Meeting 1 — The Girl With the Plan (ch. 1–8).** Crawl questions 1–8, with the holo-avatar question as the icebreaker. The Mami Find is the arrival activity — zero book knowledge needed, perfect for a room still learning to talk. Close with Faith Journal Entry One (The Plan). Assign The David Fix-It now; it's due at the last meeting.
- **Meeting 2 — The Fall (ch. 9–16).** Crawl 9–16 — give the bowling trial its full twenty minutes. The Justin show-and-tell lands here (Bronti is active in these chapters), and movie-night clubs may screen the Madmartigan kiss scene as “research.” Close with Entry Two (The Love). Pacing note: trim question 10's Chapter-24 clause here and revisit it at Meeting 4, when it pays off.
- **Meeting 3 — The Rules (ch. 17–22).** Crawl 17–22, anchored by The Quini Round — Chapter 18 is where the Rules exist on the page, so this is the night your club writes its own rulebook. Assign The Mimi Kitchen Challenge (due at the finale), and close with the first Papi Toast, which Chapter 22 has just earned.
- **Meeting 4 — The Reveal and the Deep End (ch. 23–30).** The heavyweight: crawl 23–30 with the lights down for Bad Fishy, David Fix-It reports with photos, The Jess Journal for the brave, and Entries Three and Four (The Fear and The Fight) — this is the stretch of book they belong to.
- **The Finale (optional fifth — honestly the best one).** Everything that needs the whole book: the Superlatives ballots, Would You Rather, Cast the Movie, The Ian pitch round, the Kitchen Challenge feast, Entry Five (The Water) as the quiet beat, sealed Book 2 predictions, and the Papi Toast as the true close. If your club is ready to be done, fold this into a long Meeting 4 instead.

Plan B — Two Meetings (the fast club)

- **Meeting 1 — Chapters 1–16.** Crawl parts one and two, The Mami Find, The Justin, and Journal Entries One and Two.
 - **Meeting 2 — Chapters 17–30, plus everything else.** Crawl parts three and four (lights down for Bad Fishy), The Quini Round, then the full Finale Games and the remaining Journal entries in one long, loud night. The Papi Toast closes, as it always should.
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The Chapter Crawl

One question or dare per chapter — thirty tiny doors. Open them all, or let each guest pick a number blind and answer whatever they land on. (*That version is more fun. Just saying.*)

Part One: The Girl With the Plan (Chapters 1–8)

- 1. Pre-Med and Pre-Occupied** — Jess has a five-year plan, early admission, and a direct line to God. What's on your five-year plan, and who or what is the David-shaped complication it refuses to account for?
- 2. Beautiful Best Friend** — Everyone name the exact moment they knew Jess was the last person on Earth to know. Bonus round: what did everyone in your life see before you did?
- 3. Be Mine (Terms and Conditions Apply)** — DARE: Draft your own terms and conditions for a suitor, Jess-style — three clauses, one dealbreaker. Read them aloud. Defend the dealbreaker.
- 4. The Non-Date Date** — Define, as a group, the precise legal boundary between a date and a non-date. Now apply your definition to this chapter. Uh oh.
- 5. The Kelcy of It All** — Kelcy: villain, victim, or vibes? Rank her. Separately. The alabaster figurines enter the closet in this chapter. Who clocked them as trouble on first read? Be honest.
- 6. Quid Pro Quo, Sandoval-Style** — DARE: Negotiate one real favor with the person to your left, Sandoval-style. Both sides must leave feeling like they won.
- 7. A Holo-Av's Not Supposed to Be Hot** — Your holo-avatar arrives as a surprise human-animal hybrid that learns your personality. What do you get? And why is it embarrassing? Now assign one to David. And to Mimi. (Careful.)
- 8. The Scientific Method** — Jess keeps applying science to feelings. Does it work even once in this entire book? Cite your evidence.

Part Two: The Fall (Chapters 9–16)

- 9. Bible Club Chaos** — Kyle is aggressively ideal. Discuss the difference between the person who fits the plan and the person who fits. How long did you give him?
- 10. Aliens vs. Apostles** — The sky anomalies are officially “drones.” What did you believe on first read — and what does this chapter look like now, on the other side of Chapter 24?
- 11. Bowling Ambush** — “It was a date.” Was it? Hold court: prosecution and defense get two minutes each. The host is the judge. The verdict is binding.
- 12. Night Terrors** — The Dear Lord Jesus entries have been with us since Chapter 1, but this is the first one written scared. What do Jess's prayers admit that her narration won't? Find an example anywhere in the book and read it aloud.
- 13. Sandoval-Michaels Camping Trip** — The creek confession: the chapter where the bad-boy story dies. What reputation have you carried that was never true? And did you correct it, or let it work for you?
- 14. What Happens in the Tent** — “Here is what I will say in my own defense, before I tell you the rest.” DARE: Everyone delivers a one-sentence opening statement in defense of a questionable life choice. Then, table vote: this chapter's hottest line vs. its funniest line. They may be the same line.

15. Casa Sandoval — Mimi's firepit cleanse: too far, not far enough, or exactly Mimi? Discuss the theology of burning things, and what, if anything, you'd put on the pyre tonight.

16. Baby Steps — The projector, the snoring bodies, the kiss research. What movie would be YOUR research material, and what scene is doing the teaching? (David's side of this night exists — mercymarlowe.com/free, for after class.)

Part Three: The Rules (Chapters 17–22)

17. The Cheetah Girl — The dog tags David sleeps in, the weekend Jess can't quite cover up. What object would you never take off? And what would it take for you to hand it to someone?

18. Rules of Engagement — The Morris Women's Don't-Be-Stupid Rules of Love and Sex, now in writing. DARE: each guest contributes ONE rule to your group's official rulebook. Somebody types it up. It is now canon.

19. Arm Candy — Mami saw the neck on Sunday and waited until Monday. Discuss: fair parenting, psychological warfare, or both? Someone must argue Mami's side — and win.

20. Por Fin — The kiss cost two weeks of ban and was named an amendment. Worth it? And of the DJ Rules amendments, which one is most doomed, and by which chapter did it fall?

21. French Advanced Placement — "Baby" slips out, gets corrected to "sweetie," gets reclaimed: "It feels mine now." Discuss the politics of pet names. Which wins: first use, or reclamation?

22. Carne Asada and Consequences — Alonso's voice cuts through David's rage when nothing else could. Who is that voice in your life? And — gently — this is also Lindsey's chapter. What does the Sandoval family do with grief that most families don't?

Part Four: The Reveal and the Deep End (Chapters 23–30)

23. Lifestyles of the Rich and Modified — "One kiss. You may sneak ONE. No necking!! —Love, Mgmt." Best note in the book? Also: design your own Animus patch. Mimi disapproves of this activity, which is what makes it fun.

24. Ctrl+Alt+Reveal — Rank the reveals by impact: the article, the toy chest, "Alex," the half-brother. Did anyone at the table see Ian coming? They're lying. Make them prove it.

25. Dancing Around It — David disappears into the flats for three days and comes back with rabbit stew for her family. Discuss: how the men in this book process what they can't say. (The strapless bra logistics are also an approved topic.)

26. Alexander — "I think I believe He's real. I just... I'm still mad at Him." Is being mad at God a form of faith? And was Sobo right about the conditions, the test, all of it?

27. Bad Fishy — Lights down for this one. Justin knew first. Discuss: what children sense that adults rationalize and what YOU rationalized on first read. Scariest beat: the vent, the voice, or the toy? Wrong answers allowed, cowardice is not.

28. Eviction Notice — "You call a thing by its name, and it cannot pretend to be something smaller." What thing — habit, fear, situation — changed for you once you finally named it? (Share only what you want. Mimi wouldn't push. Much.)

29. The Deep End — Which hit harder: the yes on the patio, or the water in the pool? And why is it Alonso, of all people, in that pool? Also: the vent inventory. Discuss the magpie hoard, item by item, and vote on the most chilling.

30. However Long It Takes — The video. Since thirteen. Let the table sit with that for a second. Then: reread the final mailbox pages aloud as a group, and go around the room; everyone states their Book 2 theory for the record. Seal them in an envelope. Open at the next book.

In Character: Activities From the Cast

Each of these is hosted, in spirit, by someone from the book. Assign them to your most fitting members.

- **The Quini Round.** Compile the rulebook from Chapter 18's dare, print it, and title it after your group. First rule is free: Rule One is Rule One.
 - **The Mimi Kitchen Challenge.** Next meeting, everyone brings a fusion snack that marries two heritages: yours, or two you love. Blessed be the casserole that should not work but does.
 - **The David Fix-It.** Before next meeting, fix one broken thing with your hands: a hinge, a hem, a wobbling chair. No replacing. Fixing. Report back with photos.
 - **The Justin.** Bring your Bronti: the comfort object you'd rescue in a fire. Show and tell. Zero shame. He's a brontosaurus; he eats leaves; he's scared of the bathtub — and he was right about everything.
 - **The Mami Find.** Bring your greatest thrift-store victory — the item AND the receipt, because Mami requires proof of the deal. Show it off, tell the story of the hunt, and let the table vote on the best flip. Winner gets bragging rights. Mami gets first refusal on reselling it.
 - **The Ian.** Pitch the table your hypothetical body mod with a completely straight face. The table votes: visionary or menace. (There is no third option. Ian would not want one.)
 - **The Jess Journal.** Write one journal entry — Dear Lord Jesus, or Dear Universe, writer's choice — about this book, this group, or this year. Read it aloud only if brave. Keep it either way.
 - **The Papi Toast.** End the night the Sandoval way: cafecito poured, one line each, quiet and absolute. Start with his: not in my house, and go around saying what IS in yours.
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The Finale Games

Would You Rather: Armageddon Edition

- A holo-av that falls in love with you, or a six-foot robo-teacher that folds into a briefcase and grades your life choices?
- Mimi cleanses your bedroom (everything she finds gets discussed), or Mami reads your texts aloud at Friday dinner?
- Camp with the Sandovals (chaos, burnt pancakes, love), or a weekend at the mansion (weeping walls, vaults, Ian narrating)?
- Know the exact date the world ends, or know exactly what came back with him?

- Get caught mid-kiss on the balcony by Ian (“How’s the view?”), or bowl a 74 in front of everyone you love, forever, with a banner?

The Superlatives Ballot

Vote as a table. Campaigning is allowed and encouraged.

- Best Banter Exchange • Hottest Scene (18+ table, act like it) • Scariest Moment • MVP Side Character
- The Kyle Award for Aggressive Idealness • Line Most Likely to Be Quoted at a Wedding

Cast the Movie

Jess, David, Quini, Ian, Mimi, Mami, Papi, Justin, Iris, Kelcy — cast them all. Budget unlimited. Arguments mandatory. The Snookers bowl goes to whoever wins the David debate.

Jess’s Faith Journal: The Quiet Page

Jess works everything out on paper — the fear, the plan, the boy — and always to the same Listener. This last section is hers: five short entries, each with a verse, a question for the table, and a page’s worth of journaling if you want it. For readers who share the faith, pray them. For everyone else, treat them as reflection prompts; Jess would still pour you cafecito either way. (*Scripture quoted from the King James Version.*)

Entry One: The Plan

“Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.” — Proverbs 3:5

Jess would ask: Which of your plans is really just a prayer with a spreadsheet attached?

Journal it: Write out your own five-year plan, then circle the one line you’d actually dare to hand over.

Prayer starter: Lord, You saw my plan before I ever made it... Close it the way Jess does: In Your Name, I pray, Amen.

Entry Two: The Love

“Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up.” — 1 Corinthians 13:4 (*Charity means love, Justin. It means love.*)

Jess would ask: This is the passage that ends up written on a certain someone’s palm. Which phrase of it is David’s entire arc, and which one is hardest for you to live out?

Journal it: Rewrite the verse with a name in it: yours, or the person you’re slowest to be patient with.

Prayer starter: Lord, teach me the long-suffering kind... In Your Name, I pray, Amen.

Entry Three: The Fear

“I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.” — Psalm 34:4

Jess would ask: Mimi teaches that a thing called by its name cannot pretend to be something smaller. What fear have you been letting go by a nickname?

Journal it: Name it. The real name. One sentence is enough; Jess's bravest entries are the shortest ones.

Prayer starter: *Lord, You heard me from the deep end... In Your Name, I pray, Amen.*

Entry Four: The Fight

"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." — James 4:7

Jess would ask: Eviction Notice is the loud version. What does resistance look like on an ordinary Tuesday — the small, unphotogenic kind?

Journal it: Write the eviction notice for whatever's been squatting in your head this year. Be as specific as Mimi would be.

Prayer starter: *Lord, not in my house... In Your Name, I pray, Amen.*

Entry Five: The Water

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." — Romans 8:28

Jess would ask: It was the water that brought David. What's the worst thing that ever happened to you that carried your best thing in on its tide?

Journal it: Tell that story in three sentences: the wave, the wreckage, the gift. Thank God for exactly one part of it or all of it — your choice which.

Prayer starter: *Lord, I didn't see what the water was carrying... In Your Name, I pray, Amen.*

Before You Scatter

If your group loved it, the kindest thing a book club can do for an indie author takes three minutes: a quick review on Amazon and Goodreads — even a line or two per person makes an enormous difference. And every member who wants David's side of movie night can claim the free bonus chapter at mercymarlowe.com/free.

And if your club made a night of it — the flan, the onesies, the sealed prophecies — I want to see it! Post a photo and tag [@mercymarlowe](https://www.instagram.com/mercymarlowe) on Instagram, and give me a follow while you're there. Book club photos are my favorite thing on the internet, and yes, I will absolutely repost you.

The Armageddon Rules of Dating continues in Book Two, **The Alien Boy**, coming in 2027 — sign up at mercymarlowe.com to know the moment it lands. Your sealed Book 2 predictions are waiting.

Happy reading. (Now go get more flan.)

