

Book Club Questions – The Goddesses of Kitchen Avenue

Goddesses is about four very strong women who are not yet aware of how strong they are at the beginning of the book, and throughout the story they find strengths they didn't know they had. Which character's story resonated with you the most? Why?

When Trudy's husband cheats on her, she feels she has no choice but to kick him out, even though she still loves him with a deep and fierce passion. Her story is about surviving this loss and finding the woman she was before she gave up her dreams to care for her family. What do you think about Trudy's journey? How does her maybe-to-be-ex-husband adapt, or does he?

We get to know much about what goes on in Shannelle's life through her email exchanges with her mentor, Naomi. What did you think of this method of revealing her story? Was it an effective storytelling technique? How did it make you feel about Shannelle as a character?

Jade comes to Kitchen Avenue to take care of her grandmother, Roberta, who has lost her husband after sixty-two years of marriage. Jade is also mourning the loss of her ex-husband, a charismatic scammer who is sent to prison. Even though their situations are different, their grief has moved into their lives and taken over in many ways. Jade channels hers into becoming a boxer. What do you think of Jade's circumstances and how she wrestles with them?

Is it ever too late to make changes or start new things in life? Use examples from the book to discuss what some of these revelations were for the characters and how those decisions played out for them.

One reviewer has this to say about *Goddesses*: "The strength of women comes through in each page, not brassy or sassy, but faithful and steadfast and caring. I'm finding understanding and strength and comfort - and LOTS of insight and wisdom." Choose a passage or a part of the story that supports or refutes this reviewer's opinion.

Each of the women in the book are going through experiences ripe with pain, but *Goddesses* is full of hope, too. Give examples of hope throughout the book and discuss how this played out in the characters' stories.

What do you think the overarching theme of the book is?

Do you think *The Goddesses of Kitchen Avenue* is an appropriate title for the book? For fun, brainstorm other titles you think could have been used.

Did your opinion of *Goddesses* change as you read it? How?

Have you read any of Barbara's other books? What are the qualities in a Barbara O'Neal book that brings you back for more? How does *Goddesses* compare to her other books?

If you could talk with Barbara O'Neal, what burning question would you want to ask her?