



Readers Discussion Guide
To Win Her Favor
a Belle Meade Plantation novel (book 2)
by Tamera Alexander

Spoiler Alert! As would be expected in a discussion guide, crucial plot points and events are revealed in the following questions. So if you haven't finished reading *To Whisper Her Name* and don't wish to have these "surprises" spoiled, you might want to skip reading the group guide until you have.

Check out the Belle Meade Plantation novels page on Tamera's website for pictures of the mansion and real people who lived at Belle Meade, as well as videos Tamera filmed on location at the plantation in Nashville:

<http://www.tameraalexander.com>

Dear friends,

I'm thrilled you've chosen *To Win Her Favor* as your reading group selection. I hope you enjoyed Cullen and Maggie's story and the lovely setting of the [Belle Meade Plantation](#). Christ drew me closer to Him as I wrote this story, and my prayer is that somewhere along the way as you read, you took a step closer to Him too.

I'd love to join your group discussion!

If you're interested in having me join your group via a Virtual Book Club Meeting, visit my website (www.TameraAlexander.com) and click on BONUS FEATURES to learn more about Virtual Book Club Meetings. Also, if you're ever in Nashville, please make a point to see the Belmont Mansion. See www.belmontmansion.com for details, and be sure to ask them about the special "novel tour" for readers.

Incidentally, if you enjoyed *To Win Her Favor*, the second standalone novel in the 3-book Belle Meade Plantation series, I think you'll also enjoy *To Whisper Her Name* (book 1) and also *A Lasting Impression*, a Belmont Mansion novel. I've written these 2 three-book Southern series to be read together, because the families in the mansions knew one another. So seeing that their lives connected in the 1800s, it only makes sense that they should connect again...on the page of these novels.

Continued blessings,
Tamera

-
1. Knowing Cullen and Maggie as you do now, how would you describe their personalities? What are their biggest strengths and weaknesses? And their biggest difference from one another?
 2. Were you able to put yourself in Cullen's place? Did you feel the prejudice and bias he experienced? Were you able to identify with Maggie's "fall from grace" in a social sense? Which character did you identify with most and why?
 3. How did you feel about Gilbert's Linden "offer" to Cullen? How do you think you would fare with an arranged marriage? Would you trust your parent to choose for you?
 4. Maggie is initially very resistant to the idea of marrying Cullen. Not surprising. Discuss her reasons for finally agreeing. Put yourself in her shoes. What would you have done?
 5. In Ch 10 (approximately page 93, search for the paragraph starting with "For so long she'd tried to live right..."), Maggie reflects on God's presence in her life, or perceived lack of it. Have you ever felt as though God were punishing you for a choice you made as Maggie did?
 6. In Ch 11 (approximately page 100, search for the paragraph starting with "A moment when a life was defined..."), Cullen reflects on little turning points in life. What are these as he defines them? Have you experienced these?
 7. In Ch 16, (approximately page 137, search for the paragraph starting with "Another memory surfaced..."), Maggie is thinking about childhood memories and experiences that shaped who she became, who she is. What were those experiences? What childhood experiences have shaped you (for the good and the bad)?
 8. In Ch 17 (approximately page 147, search for the paragraph starting with "Seeing her next thought swiftly forming..."), Cullen talks about hardships in his life. What were some of the hardships in his life and how did they effect him? Why do you think God allows hardships in our lives?
 9. This novel delves into the issues of prejudice in the 19th century. Do you believe the same issues exist today? Which issues? Cullen shares with Maggie that people are rarely what they appear to be (from outward appearance). Do you agree or disagree?

10. Mr. Linden tells Maggie that through the years he's had to "let go of her" in a sense. Discuss the conversation that occurs at the beginning of Ch 19 (search for the paragraph starting with "He turned to look at her, and the creak of the rocker fell away..."). What is Mr. Linden referring to? What significance does this have in Maggie's life? Can you identify with Mr. Linden's statement regarding people you love? How do you "let go" of someone you love even when you know that their chosen path might bring them hurt, rejection, and pain?
11. At the end of Ch 24 (approximately page 195), Maggie considers whether souls in Heaven are aware of happenings on earth. Do you believe saved souls can "see" into this earthly life? Give scriptural evidence for your opinion. (For a richer discussion on this topic, Tamera highly encourages you to read Randy Alcorn's non-fiction book *Heaven*. It's a spectacular read for a book club and is a book that will change how you view this life—and the one to come.)
12. In Ch 33 (approximately page 251, search for the paragraph beginning with "Cullen stared down at his hands..."), Cullen reflects on vengeance and what it can cost a person. Did you agree with the actions he took in the book toward Stephen Drake? Do you think he should have done more? Less? What would you do if faced with the same challenge of protecting those you love?
13. In Ch 38, Maggie wonders at all the events that led to her and Cullen being together. What is your opinion of God's orchestration in peoples' lives? Do you believe in coincidences? Is there an incident in your life that you're convinced had divine intervention?
14. In Ch 41, (approximately page 292, search for the paragraph starting with "Four years back, or thereabouts."), Ethan and Cullen are discussing life choices on the front porch. Read Romans 7:14-25 and discuss the similarities between Ethan's "excuses" for sinning and what Paul says. Do you relate to the same struggle? How?
15. Kizzy is a character Tamera quickly fell in love with as the story unfolded. What are your thoughts about Kizzy? Were you familiar with horse racing in the 19th century and how all the jockeys were young black boys? Would you allow your young daughter to ride in a race like Kizzy did?
16. When Cullen sees Stephen Drake after the race, what were your initial thoughts? Would you have responded the way Cullen did? Why or why not? What did you think about General Harding's cautions to Cullen (about pursuing vengeance). What does the Bible say about seeking revenge (Romans 12:19)? How is revenge different from self-protection?
17. Was the ending of the novel satisfying to you? What did you like best about that final scene with Cullen and Maggie?

18. In the course of the story, we catch a glimpse of someone from a past Colorado novel of Tamera's. Did you recognize the character (in Ch 37)? What novel is he from? (Hint: it's one of the Timber Ridge Reflections novels.) Did you know that in each of Tamera's novels there is a character from a previous series featured? Sometimes the character isn't even named (may be a brief, cameo appearance). But if you've read all of Tamera's books, you're sure to recognize them.
19. Who is your favorite character in *To Win Her Favor*? Why are they your favorite?
20. Do you have a favorite scene? What is it about that scene you liked best?

Would you be willing to send Tamera a picture of your book club? She'd love to feature it on her Facebook Page. Send the picture to TameraAlexander@ymail.com with your name(s), your group's name, and the city where you're located. Be sure to hold up your books!

Tamera's website: www.tameraalexander.com
Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/tamera.alexander>
Twitter: <http://twitter.com/tameraalexander>
Pinterest: <http://pinterest.com/tameraauthor>
Tamera's group blog: <http://inspiredbylifeandfiction.com>
Contact Tamera: tameraalexander@ymail.com

Recipe Ideas for Group Gatherings—

Aunt Issy's Lemon Cookies

(as featured in the story)

Cookie Ingredients

4 1/4 c. unsifted all-purpose flour
1 tsp. baking soda
1 tsp. cream of tartar
1 tsp. salt
1 cup (1/2 lb.) butter, softened
1 cup confectioners' sugar
1 cup granulated sugar
2 eggs
1 cup oil
1 tsp. lemon extract
1 tsp. grated lemon peel

Icing Ingredients

3 1/2 cups confectioners' sugar
7 Tbsp. freshly squeezed lemon juice

Cookie Directions:

In mixing bowl combine flour, baking soda, cream of tartar, and salt. Set aside. In larger mixing bowl, beat softened butter and both sugars on medium until well blended. Beat in eggs, one at a time, until dough is light and fluffy. Add oil, lemon extract, and lemon peel. Beat until well mixed. Gradually add dry ingredients to creamed mixture and beat until well blended. Wrap and chill for several hours.

Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Grease cookie sheets or line pans with parchment paper. Divide dough into thirds. Work one part at a time and refrigerate the rest. Roll a heaping teaspoon of dough into a ball and place on baking sheet. Flatten into a 2-inch circle with the bottom of a glass dipped in granulated sugar.

Bake 8 to 10 minutes or until lightly golden at the edges (careful not to overbake). Let stand on baking sheet for 2-3 minutes before removing. Makes 7 dozen rich and crisp old-fashioned lemon cookies.

Icing Directions:

Combine sugar and lemon juice to make a stiff paste. Set bowl over a pan of hot water to warm icing to spreading consistency. Keep the pot over low heat while frosting the cookies as the paste will stiffen as it cools.

Special thanks to Katie Rawls and her Aunt Issy for sharing this treasured family recipe.

**Recipes from all of Tamera's novels are available
at www.TameraAlexander.com**

Tamera's Complete Book List--

Fountain Creek Chronicles series

Rekindled, Fountain Creek Chronicles, Book 1 (ISBN 0-7642-0108-5)

Revealed, Fountain Creek Chronicles, Book 2 (ISBN 0-7642-0109-3)

Remembered, Fountain Creek Chronicles, Book 3 (ISBN 0-7642-0110-7)

Timber Ridge Reflections series

From a Distance, Timber Ridge Reflections, Book 1 (ISBN 978-0-7642-0389-3)

Beyond This Moment, Timber Ridge Reflections, Book 2 (ISBN 978-0-7642-0390-9)

Within My Heart, Timber Ridge Reflections, Book 3 (ISBN 0-7642-0391-6)

Stand-alone novel (not part of a series)

The Inheritance, *Women of Faith Fiction* (ISBN 978-1-59554-632-6)

Belmont Mansion novels (3 book stand-alone novels)*

A Lasting Impression, a Belmont Mansion novel, Book 1 (ISBN 978-0764206221)

A Beauty So Rare, a Belmont Mansion novel, Book 2 (ISBN 978-0764206238)

A Note Yet Unsung, a Belmont Mansion novel, Book 3 (February 2017) (ISBN 978-0764206245)

Belle Meade Plantation novels (3 book standalone novels)*

To Whisper Her Name, a Belle Meade Plantation novel 1 (ISBN 978-0310291060)

To Win Her Favor, a Belle Meade Plantation novel 2 (ISBN 978-0310291077)

To Wager Her Heart, a Belle Meade Plantation novel 3 (Fall 2017)

*To Mend a Dream***, a Belle Meade Plantation novella (ISBN B00PWOGZVM)

* I've written these two three-book Southern series (**the Belmont Mansion novels and the Belle Meade Plantation novels**) to be read individually OR together (your choice!), because the families in the mansions knew one another. So seeing that their lives connected in the 1800s, it only makes sense that they should connect *again* on the page of these novels.

**"To Mend a Dream" is available by itself as an ebook, or in print form in the Southern novella collection entitled *Among the Fair Magnolias* (ISBN 978-1401690731).