

# BOOK CLUB KIT





# DEAR READER,

I write and read fiction in order to be whisked away to places new and familiar alongside characters who long for love, friendship, and adventure. I also love writing and reading books in which a favorite city is given a starring role. Unsurprisingly then, *As You Wish* is a love letter to one of my favorite cities, Seoul, and one of my favorite things, K-dramas. It's also a love letter to girlfriends and found family. And last but certainly not least, it is a love letter to wishes and the healing comfort of stubborn hope.

While searching for healing and comfort of my own during 2020 and the global pandemic, I discovered the world of K-pop and K-dramas, and it really did feel like coming home. I'm a huge fan of BTS and have so much love for K-pop in general, and K-dramas quickly became my comfort and escape, the same way books have always been. The beautiful clothes, comfy pajamas, delicious meals, cozy bedrooms, and wistful, pretty songs on the official soundtracks . . . K-dramas felt specifically made for me—everything I love, all in one place! They're filled with sweet moments of desire, funny banter between lovers and friends, bittersweet realistic family scenes, and, most often, a scrappy fight toward a happy ending. Because of this big love, in 2023 I traveled with my family to Seoul for two weeks in the spring to see the cherry blossoms, and got to sit in a whirling pink petal storm in Seoul Forest. I've also been studying and learning Korean for three years. Learning more about Korean culture every day is an important, special part of my life, and pouring that love into this book was such a treat.

In *As You Wish*, three young women move to Seoul to au pair for wealthy families, and one night, while vacationing on Jeju Island, they each make a full-moon-lit wish upon a stack of rocks. Lydia wishes to be more special, to turn heads like her famous K-drama actress, host mother; Jenny wishes to never fall in love again after flying across the world to escape the pain of heartbreak; Selene wishes to find the birth mother who abandoned her on a sidewalk in Seoul shortly after she was born. The girls become fast friends and spend their days with the children, their evenings in the kitchens with their host families, chatting and making Korean food, and their nights on starry balconies swapping stories, as well as on the vibrant, neon-drenched streets of Seoul. I have been lucky enough to make some of those same meals with my Korean



teachers/classmates at Korean school, and I have been lucky enough to walk those same streets in the same neighborhoods. My characters exist in that enchanted space between the “real” world and a magical one, as they feel and question the effects of their wishes, as they fall for their leading men, as they navigate their new lives so far from home. I wrote *As You Wish* for readers who love heartwarming, slice-of-life drama with a dash of magic thrown in, for readers who love stories bursting with romance and friendship in equal measure, and for readers who love playlists in their books and who are looking to curl up with a novel as cozy as a rainy window with their tea and blankets. *As You Wish* is full of so many of my favorite things and the same stubborn hope and whimsy I carry in my own heart. I am so excited to share it with you.

Happy reading, and I hope all of your wishes come true!

**XO,  
LEESA**



The Gangnam Style sculpture in Gangnam. Gangnam is the posh neighborhood where the girls and their host families live in the book, and the sculpture is there because of [“Gangnam Style” by PSY](#).



I’m in Seokchon Lake Park  
visiting the cherry blossoms.



# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

**1.** Throughout *As You Wish*, the question of whether the waterfall and its powers are truly magical is raised. Do you think Lydia, Jenny, and Selene's wishes came true with a bit of magic? Or do you think the women believing there might be magic helped them make their own wishes come true without supernatural assistance?

**2.** How does the theme of self-discovery manifest in each of the main characters' stories? How do you think the women meeting one another and becoming best friends affected their perceptions of themselves and their decisions for the future?

**3.** Relationships with friends, family, and romantic partners are at the core of *As You Wish*. Which character for each of the three protagonists—Lydia, Jenny, and Selene—outside of the girls' friend group do you think influenced their growth the most? Why?

**4.** In *As You Wish*, the characters travel to Seoul in search of different things. What parts of their journeys or aspects of the characters resonate with your own life?

**5.** In *As You Wish*, Lydia, Jenny, and Selene travel to South Korea to become au pairs. Have you ever thought about living and working in a foreign country? If you could choose a destination anywhere in

the world to au pair, where would you go and why?

**6.** What is the significance of the title *As You Wish* in relation to the story and its themes? How does it reflect the underlying messages of the narrative?

**7.** The author of *As You Wish* is a huge K-drama fan and wove hallmark moments from many series into the novel (like romantic slow-motion saves). Did you catch any of these references? If so, what dramas did they make you think of?

**8.** Imagine standing before the magical waterfall like the characters—what would you wish for, and what makes that wish meaningful to you?

**9.** Discuss the Korean concept of inyeon, meaning that a human connection was fated. How does it play into our three main characters' stories? Have you felt it in your own life?





# Leesa Cross-Smith's K-DRAMA STARTER KIT

**SWEET/ROMANTIC/CUTE:** *Something in the Rain, One Spring Night, Yumi's Cells, King the Land, Encounter, Soundtrack #1, Suspicious Partner, Our Beloved Summer, Strongest Deliveryman, She Was Pretty, Witch's Romance, My First First Love*



**HEALING:** *Rain or Shine/Just Between Lovers, Hometown Cha-Cha-Cha, Lovely Runner, It's Okay to Not Be Okay, My Liberation Notes, Doctor Slump, Welcome to Samdal-ri, If You Wish Upon Me, Melting Me Softly, Mad for Each Other, Because This Is My First Life, The Sound of Magic, I'll Go to You When the Weather Is Nice, A Piece of Your Mind, Little Forest (movie)*

**HILARIOUS:** *Business Proposal, Gaus Electronics, Welcome to Waikiki, Backstreet Rookie*

**SO GOOD, BUT PREPARE YOURSELF FOR LOTS AND LOTS OF CRYING (ALSO FILE UNDER "K-TRAUMA"):** *Snowdrop, The Red Sleeve*

**SO GOOD, BUT DARK/HEAVY:** *The Worst of Evil, Nevertheless, Burning (movie)*

**ABSOLUTE CLASSICS:** *Goblin/Guardian: The Lonely and Great God, Crash Landing on You, The K2, Fight for My Way, Itaewon Class, What's Wrong with Secretary Kim, Healer, True Beauty, Reply 1988*





K-pop fans, this playlist from *As You Wish* is for you,  
**CURATED BY LEESA CROSS-SMITH!**

## SELENE'S HYPE MIX

"Bounce" — JJ Project

"How You Like That" — BLACKPINK

"God's Menu" — Stray Kids

"Eve, Psyche & The Bluebeard's Wife" — LE SSERAFIM

"Super" — SEVENTEEN

"UGH!" — BTS

"Hope World" — j-hope

"Hype Boy" — NewJeans

"10 Minutes" — Lee Hyori

"IDOL" — BTS

"Crazy Form" — ATEEZ

"Bite Me" — ENHYPEN

"Run BTS" — BTS

"Hard Carry" — GOT7

"Daechwita" — Agust D

"Pretty Savage" — BLACKPINK

"I AM" — IVE

"GO CRAZY!" — 2PM

"SEXY NUKIM (feat. RM of BTS)" — Balming Tiger

"ETA" — NewJeans

Scan via Spotify for more music the  
characters from *As You Wish* would love:

