

BOOK CLUB QUESTIONS FOR BELLA CIGNA

SETTING

While St. Theresa's School is fictional, its location in Balduina, is not. Situated northwest of central Rome, it's a quick tram ride to Vatican City.

VERDI OR PUCCINI?

Would you side with Sarah or Eduardo? Not sure? Sarah recommends you listen to *Nessun dorma*, while Eduardo recommends *La donna è mobile*.

GELATO

Here are some popular gelato flavors. Which would you try?

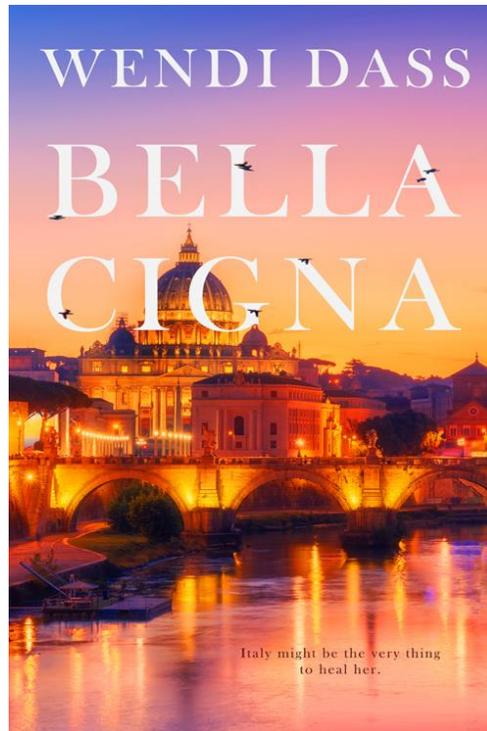
Stracciatella (Anna's fave)

Pistachio (Sarah's pic)

Tiramisu

Zabaglione

Panna Cotta



1. The story starts off with Sarah booking an appointment with a fertility clinic to help her conceive. But when she comes home, her husband Phillip says he's leaving and wants a divorce. Let's talk about how everything fell apart for Sarah right at the beginning.

2. Her friend Meredith tells Sarah about an international teaching job in Rome. What would you have done if you were Sarah? Would you have moved to Rome or would you have stayed in DC?

3. Even though she's trying to get as far away from her current situation, Sarah didn't specifically choose Rome. However, it really became the right city for her in so many ways. Let's discuss this.

4. It's quite the fish out of water scenario when Sarah first arrives to her new surroundings. Have you gone somewhere that is completely out of your element?

5. Anna is an intelligent mathematician and also likes to go out and party. Sarah remarks that despite their age difference, their roles are somewhat reversed. Anna serves a bit as a mentor while Sarah is the student. Let's talk about their friendship. Do you think Sarah would have made it through Rome and the school without Anna?

6. We quickly meet Sarah's new love interest: Eduardo Rossini, the father of Sarah's student Lucia. What was your first impression of Eduardo?

7. Another important relationship is with Sister Maria, who is strict but caring. She almost serves as a fairy godmother type figure to Sarah. How did she help provide guidance to Sarah?

AUTHOR INSPIRATION

When she was younger, Wendi had the opportunity to live and work in Rome for a summer. She lived, in fact, in a small hostel in Balduina that was a former convent.

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If you'd like Wendi to visit your book club via Zoom or Skype, please contact her at wdassauthor@gmail.com.

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8. Let's talk about how Rome and working at the school helped reignite Sarah's love for art. Have you ever been inspired by a piece of art and/or music?

9. Sarah and Eduardo are clearly interested in each other but there's a lot of miscommunication and missed opportunities early on in their relationship. What did you think about their slow-burn romance?

10. Even when she's not with Eduardo, Sarah develops a special bond with his daughter Lucia. What did you think about their relationship?



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11. Just when everything is starting to go right between Sarah and Eduardo, Leonardo de Luca, Lucia's stepfather, attacks and attempts to assault Sarah. Traumatized, Sarah leaves Rome and goes back home to the U.S. How do you think this scene impacted the story?

12. Let's talk about her eventual decision to build up the courage to return to Rome. Would you have made the same choice and what did you think of Sarah's rationale?

13. Why do you think it took Sarah so long to tell Eduardo about her struggles to conceive? What did you think about his reaction?

14. While in Oxford with Anna, Sarah finds out she is, in fact, pregnant. Once she returns to Rome, she is surprised by Eduardo telling her he wants to be with her forever. She then surprises him with the news that she's pregnant. Let's discuss this happy ending.

15. This story is about second chances. Sarah gets another chance at a teaching job, and more importantly, at romance. In many ways, changing the trajectory of her own story, allowed her to finally live the life that she always wanted. Let's talk about the concept of second chances. Was there a time you have gotten a second chance that turned out for the better?