

# Mock Apple Pie Book Club Questions

## Character and Conflict

1. **Erin's Connection to Bald Eagle Falls:** Erin returns to Bald Eagle Falls to claim her inheritance and finds it "like coming home," despite having a "somewhat nomadic existence" during her childhood. How does her history influence her current perspective on the town, especially given the underlying conflicts and secrets she knows exist there?
2. **The Central Conflict of the Clans:** The Dyson and Jackson clan feud serves as a major backdrop to the story. Discuss the personal stakes in this feud as represented by Vic, who was born into the Jackson family but is now partnered with Willie, who has claimed leadership of the Dysons. Why might Vic feel she is safe, even though her partner is now a prominent target?
3. **Preparedness and Danger:** Early in the book, Erin and Vic discuss carrying a gun. Erin refuses due to discomfort, while Vic carries a concealed weapon. How does this contrast reflect their different personal histories and experiences with violence in Bald Eagle Falls?
4. **Vic's Maturity and Role:** Despite being barely out of her teens, Vic is noted to have "wisdom beyond her years" as a result of being raised amidst clan politics and warfare. In what ways does Vic demonstrate this maturity when addressing Erin's anxieties about the impending "unrest" and "clan war"?
5. **Harold's Perspective:** Harold, a teenage employee, is introduced questioning the wisdom of making a pie without apples (mock apple pie) and later expressing doubt about the quiet state of the town. How does Harold's role as the young, inquisitive outsider allow the author to introduce background details about both the culinary elements and the town's history?

## Setting and Atmosphere

6. **The Illusion of Peace:** Erin notes that the quiet atmosphere of Main Street is unsettling, stating, "It's too quiet. I don't like it". How do the initial descriptions of charming storefronts and blooming flowers immediately contrast with the anticipation of "unrest" and potential "gunplay" stemming from the change in clan leadership?
7. **Town Secrets:** Officer Terry Piper suggests that Bald Eagle Falls has "never been the sleepy little town that it pretends to be," citing the awareness of former "secret tunnels that once ran between some of the buildings." What does this suggest about the challenge facing the characters when trying to solve mysteries within the community?

## Mystery and Symbolism

8. **The Burden of the Bakery:** Throughout the escalating chaos, Erin maintains that running Auntie Clem's Bakery is her "life's work" and believes the bakery will remain safe regardless of

the outcome of the clan war. Why is maintaining the routine and safety of the bakery so important to Erin amidst the uncertainty and danger?

9. **The Mock Apple Pie:** Erin explores making a mock apple pie—a dish where crushed Ritz crackers, spices, and lemon juice mimic the flavor and texture of cooked apples. Considering that Erin initially thought the Instagrammer was pulling out a gun, forcing her to realize that “looks could be deceiving”, how might the mock apple pie (a food that is not what it seems) serve as a metaphor for the hidden truths and secrets of Bald Eagle Falls?
10. **The First Disappearances:** Erin’s half-sister Charley and customer Mary Lou Cox both disappear without warning or explanation early in the book. Why are these disappearances particularly alarming to Erin?