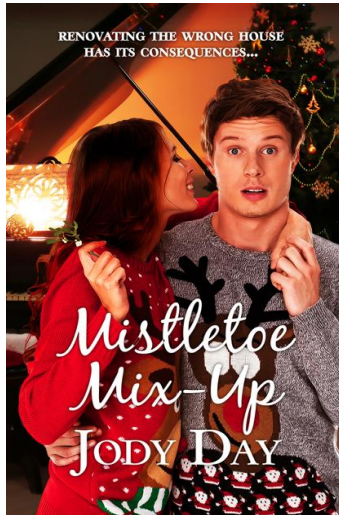


## Discussion Questions

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### **MISTLETOE MIX-UP**

Christmas Extravaganza 2018

Author: Jody Day

ISBN (e): 9781522301721

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### **About the Book**

Evan Edwards faces another lonely Christmas in the dorm, so when he chances upon a rain-soaked ad for holiday room and board in exchange for decorating, he wastes no time in driving to the empty home, dreaming of a cozy, if lonely, Christmas.

Across the street, Rise' Larkin is also home from school, and has some bad news for her Dad. As Evan and Rise's friendship deepens, and Christmas nears, Evan discovers he's been decorating the wrong house.

Will this mix-up ruin everything?

TITLE: Mistletoe Mix-Up  
Discussion:

Question 1: The lyrics of some old song remind me of Evan. “Oh what a lonely boy...” Loneliness during the holidays is a particularly hard time. Why wouldn’t Evan accept invitations to spend the holidays with his friends?

Answer 1: He felt like an intruder and a freeloader.

Question 2: What kind of Christmas did Evan long for?

Answer 2: He really wanted a home and family type Christmas. He recalled how much he loved Christmas with his mother before things got crazy.

Question 3: Why did Evan hide in his ability to play the piano?

Answer 3: He felt comfortable there. He was keenly aware, or so he thought, that people thought he was weird. As his skill increased, he felt that people only liked him when he played. He found his identity in his skill.

Question 4: The mix-up caused misunderstandings between Evan and Rise’. How did their inner struggles make things worse?

Answer 4: Evan’s self-esteem struggles made him think he didn’t have a chance with Rise’, and Rise’ was distrusting of men in general (except her father) because of what she went through with her ex-boyfriend.

Question 5: Carol and Fin’s family Bible brought back some unpleasant memories for Evan regarding church. What happened that turned him off from church?

Answer 5: His mother had an abusive boyfriend who attended church regularly, sang in the choir, yet lived with Evan and his Mom. The pastor of the church only cared that they were living together, and couldn’t seem to address their need for Chris

Question 6: Rise’ left an abusive relationship. Why did it take so long for her to recognize the signs that her boyfriend had an anger problem?

Answer 6: Denial is a common symptom of an abusive relationship. The victim typically returns seven times before getting out completely. Rise’ noticed the symptoms but did get out when her boyfriend’s anger turned physical.

Question 7: Evan’s mom shows up with a wild and crazy Texan, the new husband. Evan rejects his offer of work. Why?

Answer 7: His mom’s boyfriend dismissed Evan’s music dreams as “not a real job.” Evan was tired of his mother’s boyfriends. They never really helped her, and certainly never helped him.

Question 8: How does Evan's playing change after he opens his heart to God?

Answer 8: He begins to discern that his playing, if dedicated to God, could have a positive impact on other people. He sensed a mission outside of himself for the first time.

Question 9: When the mistake is discovered and Evan rushes to correct it, Rise and her church family come to his aid. Do you think this helped soften his heart toward God?

Answer 9 Evan begins to see Christ's love in action, a stark contrast to what he experienced as a child.

Question 10: Frances Cartier offers Evan a dream job and the possibility of continuing his education. He met Rise, and appears to be on good terms with his mother. Do you think that sometimes God orchestrates, or allows "mix-ups" to accomplish his goals for our lives?

Answer 10: Yes! God's Word tells us in Romans 8:28 (NIV) that "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose."

