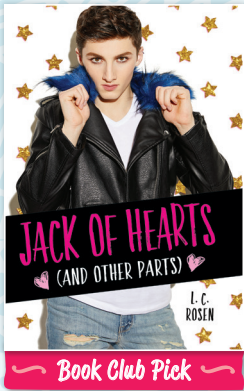


JACK OF HEARTS (AND OTHER PARTS)

by L. C. Rosen

“There aren’t enough words for how much I loved *Jack of Hearts*, but if I could sum it up in one word, it would be: necessary.”

—Dahlia Adler, author of *Under the Lights*



ABOUT THE BOOK:

Jack has a lot of sex—and he is not ashamed of it. While he is sometimes ostracized, and gossip constantly rages about his sex life, Jack always believes that it “could be worse.” But then, the worse unexpectedly strikes: when Jack starts writing a teen sex advice column for an online site, he begins to receive creepy and threatening love letters that attempt to force Jack to curb his sexuality and personality. Now it is up to Jack and his best friends to uncover the stalker—before their love becomes dangerous. Groundbreaking and page-turning, *Jack of Hearts (and other parts)* celebrates the freedom to be oneself, especially in the face of adversity.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. At the beginning of the book, Jack lives by the motto “could be worse” when it comes to homophobic instances (p. 97). Do you agree with him? Why or why not?
2. What symbolism might there be in the pink origami blackmail notes? Is there significance behind their color or their shape?
3. Jack says, “I’ve always wanted to live my life openly...but maybe there was such a thing as too openly” (p. 76). What do you think Jack means?
4. While Emily, Ava, and Kaitlyn’s bathroom conversations are clearly harmful to Jack, they never perceive themselves as being homophobic or toxic. Why?
5. Jeremy claims that he and Jack have a duty to be “respectable” and not “slutty” in order to combat stereotypes of gay men in the media (p. 136). Why does he think this, and why does Jack disagree with him? When it comes to minority representation in the media as a whole, who do you agree with more and why?
6. In the *Jack of Hearts* column, Jack is very open about what happens in his sex life, but there are rarely any sex scenes in the story: why? What might the author be trying to say about Jack’s narrative control?
7. Throughout the book, Jack is often angered by Jenna’s desires to punish Pinky publicly. Although Jenna does not intend to hurt Jack, are her actions misguided? Where do her attempts to help her friend cross a line Jack doesn’t want her to cross?
8. Eventually Jack begins to follow Pinky’s demands and isolate himself from his friends. Even though it causes him pain, what compels him to make this choice?
9. Why was Jack blackmailed? What do you think the motive was behind this “relationship”?
10. Which *Jack of Hearts* column was your favorite, and why? What insights might it have given you into relationships, sex education, and identity?
11. What makes a queer novel “queer”? In some books a character’s queerness does not affect what the book is ultimately about, while other books celebrate queerness for the sake of queerness. How does *Jack of Hearts* contribute to this conversation and continue to expand these definitions of queer narratives? What other books do you define as queer literature, and what do they do similarly or differently to *Jack of Hearts*?
12. At the end of the book, what does Jack learn about himself and the way toxic straight culture affects the LGBTQ community? How can you endure, cope, and fight against microaggressions and homophobia?