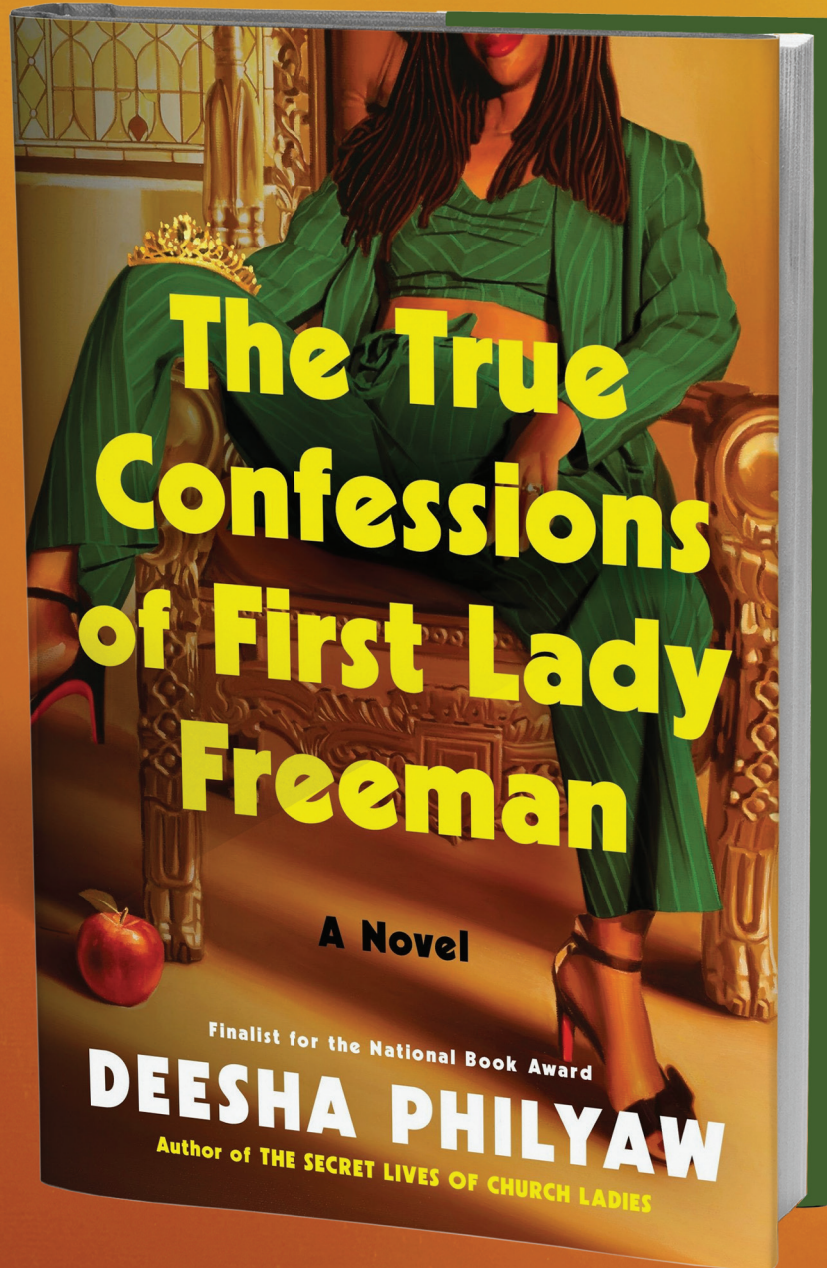
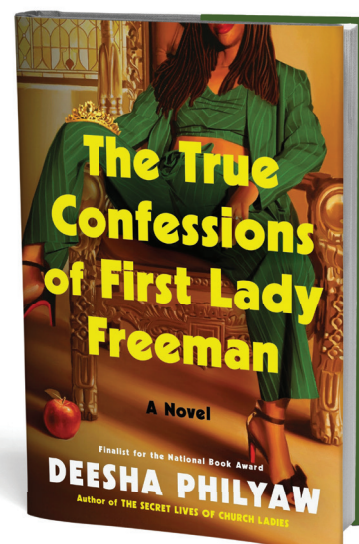


BOOK CLUB KIT



Includes: Discussion questions, Deesha's behind the book story, a playlist, a party game, and Deesha's suggested further reading.

The wife of a popular and powerful megachurch pastor upends her charmed “rags-to-Rolux” life when her secret past comes roaring into the spotlight—in this “*funny and juicy and sexy and delicious peek behind the pulpit*” (Samantha Irby) from the acclaimed and beloved author of *The Secret Lives of Church Ladies*.



From the moment Scharisse Freeman ditched her humble roots and married a megachurch pastor fifteen years her senior, she’s been labeled too brash and too “of the world” by church folks who grudgingly accepted her into their fold, and too holy by her estranged childhood bestie Petra. Schar doesn’t have many allies, but that hasn’t stopped her from building an enviable business empire spanning books to clothing to branded products, and living the comfortable life her husband’s power affords her.

On the eve of her 40th birthday, Schar gets the final bit of validation she’s always dreamt of: a coveted invitation to participate in the First Lady USA pageant. This is her chance to be accepted by the other pastors’ wives—First Ladies—who are “like Jesus’ disciples if they had been a group of mean girls.” Finally, blissfully, the ice between Schar and the other First Ladies begins to thaw.

But as the pageant nears, a sensational scandal breaks with Schar at its center, and her carefully curated life implodes. Schar faces down shame and terrible secrets from her childhood and is reminded that in the eyes of the church, optics can matter more than the truth.

Unflinchingly funny, frank, and splendidly unruly, *The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman* exults in the luscious, messy pleasure of finally feeling free.



Deesha Philyaw’s debut short story collection, *The Secret Lives of Church Ladies*, won the PEN/Faulkner Award for Fiction, the Story Prize, the LA Times Book Prize: The Art Seidenbaum Award for First Fiction and was a finalist for the National Book Award for Fiction. Deesha is a Kimbilio Fiction Fellow, a Baldwin for the Arts Fellow, a United States Artists Fellow, and co-host of two podcasts, *Ursa Short Fiction* (with Dawnie Walton) and *Reckon True Stories* (with Kiese Laymon). She is currently at work developing TV shows based on her short fiction.

QUESTIONS TO STIR THE POT

Get everyone's hot take on the scandals and redemptions in *The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman* with these conversation starters.

1. Do you agree with Schar's decision to keep what she learned from Jeddah a secret, after they met in Mercy?
2. Should Schar have agreed to do the contrition campaign?
3. Should Schar have told Gabrielle the whole truth from the very beginning?
4. Would you describe Schar as a good wife? A good mother?
5. What, if anything, was David justified in asking of Schar, after the scandal broke?
6. Consider a time in your life when shame informed your decision to do (or not do) something. If you could have a do-over, what would you do differently?
7. Did you ever have a moment where you were supposed to stick to the script and you didn't? Do you regret it?
8. Do you believe Schar was obligated to respect her late mother's wishes regarding the circumstances of Schar's birth and the cause of her mother's death?
9. Are you rooting for Schar and Marcus as a couple in the future? Why or why not?
10. If you could say anything to Jeddah, what would it be?
11. Daphne: Villain or victim? Why?
12. Sheila: Invite her for tea or avoid her like the plague? Why?
13. You can invite three characters from the novel to go on your dream vacation. Who would you invite and why? Who would you absolutely *not* invite and why?



SCHAR'S ORIGIN STORY

By Deesha Philyaw

In 2006, I began working on the novel that would become *The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman*. For the next 17 years, the book's title was 'Good Girl Anonymous.' The main character was a newly divorced First Lady (a.k.a. former pastor's wife) trying to navigate co-parenting with her ex and the dating scene. Basically, she was me at that time, minus the church stuff; I wasn't married to a pastor, but I was recently divorced, co-parenting, and trying to figure out dating. Like my character, I'd married at 22 and divorced in my early 30s, so dating was brand new, confusing, and disappointing. The book was going to be about that: this woman starting a new, bolder chapter in her life, personally and professionally. Like me, she was a budding writer. I shared an early chapter of the novel with a friend who said, "This is good. But I really want to see inside her marriage." And just like that: a central conflict and stakes for the character—and the book overall—were born. I pushed the opening of the novel back a few years, such that she was still married. Married and miserable, like I would've been if I were her. The book was set during the first blogging era. Remember mommy blogs? I had one.

Between 2006 and 2017, I wrote the beginning and ending chapters of 'Good Girl Anonymous.' Then I stalled, creatively, because I was busy raising my kids and making a living. My literary agent, Danielle Chioti, did two things that changed the trajectory of my novel, my career, and my life. First, she encouraged me to write a



collection of short stories. While struggling with the novel, I had written a few short stories that Danielle had read. She had seen a through-line in them and encouraged me to build a collection of these “church lady stories,” as she called them. Building the collection felt a lot more doable than finishing my novel. In 2019, after turning in the manuscript for *The Secret Lives of Church Ladies*, I turned my attention back to my novel.

The other thing Danielle did was give me lots of advice and notes on ‘Good Girl Anonymous’ over the years, the most important of which was that it lacked stakes. My main character had gotten the cushy, respectable life she’d always dreamed of, but she was deeply dissatisfied with this dream life and with her marriage. She had gotten everything she wanted, but if I was going to have a compelling novel, she had to want something else. In order for the loss of her marriage and comfortable life to matter, she had to care about losing those things; she had to like her life and be happy in her marriage before it all went to hell. I would’ve been miserable in my character’s shoes, so this was the turning point: she could no longer be my proxy. She had to like and want things I didn’t like or want. Her values and concerns had to differ from mine. Allowing my character to become her own person was the key to unlocking this novel.

Suddenly, I knew how to make it work. I was excited to lean into my main character (now named Scharisse) as her fabulous self, and not as me. I also decided to make the novel satirical. Schar was happy with her marriage and with her life as a First Lady, so I gave her a really juicy scandal to blow it all up.

7 RABBIT HOLES

Deesha Philyaw Fell Down to Write *The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman*

Turns out writing a “funny and juicy and sexy and delicious peek behind the pulpit” (thanks, Samantha Irby) takes some seriously unglamorous homework. Here’s what author Deesha Philyaw researched to bring First Lady Scharisse Freeman’s world to life—sequins, scripture, and all.

1. BEAUTY PAGEANTS

Consider it prep for the church-lady mean-girls Olympics.

2. THE HIV/AIDS EPIDEMIC OF THE 1980S

The novel threads narrative from the height of the crisis through the Obama era, and that history runs underneath Schar’s own secrets.

3. MID-LUXURY BRANDS

A “rags-to-Rollex” story needs the right props. Getting Schar’s Tiffany-bracelets-in-a-biometric-safe lifestyle right meant knowing exactly which labels signal “made it” without tipping into old money.

4. HONOLULU

A change of scenery for a woman used to being watched—new setting, same scrutiny.

5. MOMS MABLEY

Understanding Mabley’s legacy of subversive humor helps explain why Schar reaches for her, of all people, when it’s time to say the quiet part out loud.

6. THE POST-EMANCIPATION/RECONSTRUCTION SOUTH

Schar’s family history—and the Black church’s complicated inheritance—stretches back further than one scandal.

7. SKYDIVING (AND FISH GUTTING)

Philyaw read up on the logistics of jumping out of a plane and she actually got elbow-deep in fish guts, because Schar’s road to “finally feeling free” isn’t a straight line.

BONUS: THE BIBLE ITSELF

Philyaw didn’t just rely on memory (though plenty came from there)—she dug into multiple translations and the conflicting interpretations scholars have argued over for centuries, especially Proverbs 31.

TURN IT UP!

Meet First Lady Scharisse Freeman

Southern Girl – Frankie Beverly & Maze

Vision of Love – Mariah Carey

For the Love of You – The Isley Brothers

She Bad – Cardi B

Hot Girl – Megan Thee Stallion

Crowned and Celebrated

Golden – Jill Scott

All I Do Is Win – DJ Khaled

Kiss Me On My Neck – Erykah Badu

On & On – Erykah Badu

OMG – Sampa the Great

Final For – Sampa the Great

Spilling the Tea

Secrets – Bobby Womack

Truth Is – Fantasia

Rude Boy – Rihanna

Jolene – Dolly Parton

Booty – Erykah Badu

The Jump Off – Lil Kim

Operation Win Them Over – Honolulu 2.0

False Allegations – Lil Baby ft. Lil Durk

I Wish I Wasn't – Heather Headley

I Owe You Nothing – Seinabo Sey

Bag Lady – Erykah Badu

Free and Finding Self

Free – Deniece Williams

Feeling Good – Nina Simone

Brand New Me – Alicia Keys

Thank You (Falettinme Be Mice Elf Agin)

– Sly & The Family Stone

Church Girl – Beyoncé

Love Will Never Do (Without You) – Janet Jackson

The Reckoning

Forever – Sa-Roc

A Change Is Gonna Come – Sam Cooke

Theme from Mahogany – Diana Ross

Bag Lady – Erykah Badu

Big Yellow Taxi – Joni Mitchell

Energy – Sampa the Great

Tender Love – Meshell Ndegeocello

Moving On

Just Fine – Mary J. Blige

I Didn't Know My Own Strength – Whitney Houston

Back to Life (However Do You Want Me) – Soul II Soul

Lovin' You – Janet Kay

Both Sides – Joni Mitchell

DOWNLOAD THE PLAYLIST!



SCHAR'S SHELF

Deesha Philyaw's Further Reading List

This is for you, dear reader: Perhaps you're still reflecting on the questions this book raises, or just craving more stories about women refusing to shrink themselves for anybody's pulpit. To keep you satisfied, Deesha Philyaw shares the books, essays, and poems that keep her company—on faith, freedom, family, and everything messier than a Sunday sermon lets on.

Fiction

The Secret Lives of Church Ladies by Deesha Philyaw

The Seven Daughters of Dupree
by Nikesha Elise Williams

Peach Pit: Sixteen Stories of Unsavory Women edited
by Molly Llewellyn and Kristel Buckley (features a story
by Deesha Philyaw)

When the Harvest Comes by Denne Michele Norris

The Prophets by Robert Jones, Jr.

The Great Wherever by Shannon Sanders

The Sellout by Paul Beatty

Colored Television by Danzy Senna

A Very Special Episode by Camille Acker

Nobody's Magic by Destiny O. Birdsong

When It Gets Cold in the South by Exodus Oktavia
Brownlow (forthcoming January 2027)

Revival Season by Monica West

Dominion by Addie E. Citchens

Sula by Toni Morrison

These Girls Out Here by Dawnie Walton
(forthcoming June 2027)

Nonfiction

Grief Thoughts: Brief Anecdotes About Profound Loss
by Issa M. Mas

Shoutin' in the Fire: An American Epistle
by Danté Stewart

Punch Me Up to the Gods by Brian Broome

The Heartbreak Years by Minda Honey

Red Lip Theology by Candice Marie Benbow

The Day God Saw Me as Black
by D. Danyelle Thomas

*From Infinite World: The Sound of the Hammond
Organ and the Tragedy of AIDS in the Black Church*
by Ashon Thomas Crawley (forthcoming December 2026)

Consent in the Presence of Force by Emily A. Owens

Patriarchy Blues by Frederick Joseph

Good, God: A Creation Story by Kiese Laymon
(forthcoming April 2027)

Anthologies, and more

New Stories from the South 2026
edited by Robin Miura (forthcoming October 2026)

Black Women Writers at Work in the 21st Century
edited by Khadijah Queen (forthcoming February
2027)

*That's How They Get You: An Unruly Anthology of
Black American Humor* edited by Damon Young

An Anthology of Rural Stories by Writers of Color,
2025 edited by Deesha Philyaw

Poetry

Hemming the Water by Yona Harvey

Chrome Valley by Mahogany L. Browne

The Book of Alice by Diamond Forde

Gumbo Ya Ya by Aurielle Marie

Negotiations by Destiny O. Birdsong



WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?

A Book Club Trivia Showdown

A book club trivia game inspired by *The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman* by Deesha Philyaw. Scharisse Freeman built an empire on optics, sequins, and a Bible verse for every occasion. Her First Ladies, her frenemies, and her family all have receipts—and opinions. Can your book club tell a Schar-ism from a David-ism from a straight-up Scripture drop? It's time to find out.

What's in this printable

- 52 quote cards
- Full instructions & scoring rules
- A moderator answer key, in case a card ever gets separated
- Sized to print on 8.5" x 11" paper or cardstock and cut with scissors or a paper cutter

For personal book club use—not for resale or commercial distribution.

How to play

1. PREP THE CARDS

Print the card pages double-sided (starting after these instructions) on 8.5" x 11" paper or cardstock, making sure that each quote card has the correct character name on the back! Cut along the light grey corner marks to separate the cards

2. DIVIDE INTO TEAMS

Split the book club into two teams (Team 1 and Team 2 work fine, or get creative: Team Scharisse vs. Team Sheila). Choose one person to be the Moderator.

3. SHUFFLE & READ

The Moderator shuffles the deck, keeping the cards obscured from the players. The Moderator reads the first quote aloud, waits for a response from either team, and then once that quote has been resolved (in any of the ways that follow), the moderator repeats with the next quote card.

4. SHOUT IT OUT

Whichever team shouts the correct character's name first gets the point. The Moderator reveals the character's name on the back, and sets that card in the discard pile. No answer within 10 seconds? Nobody scores—put the quote at the bottom of the stack and move on.

5. KEEP SCORE

First team to 10 points wins bragging rights (and, we'd argue, a Proverbs 31 crown of their own). For a shorter game, play to 5, or simply go through the whole deck once and see who has more points at the end.

House rules & variations

STEAL RULE

If a team answers wrong, the other team gets 5 seconds to steal the point with the correct answer.

CONTEXT BONUS

Award a bonus point to any team that can also name the scene or moment the quote is from, for a deeper cut into the book.

SOLO / SMALL GROUP MODE

No moderator? Deal the deck out answer-side down and take turns reading a quote to the group before flipping it over.

A NOTE ON LANGUAGE

A few of Schar and her circle's best lines contain adult language. If you're playing with a mixed crowd, feel free to read them as printed or substitute your own church-appropriate euphemism—Aunt Marie would probably approve either way.



*Inhale being a helpmeet,
exhale. David got me
fucked up.*

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



*I would never give them
the satisfaction.*

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



*The Proverbs 31 woman
was not a sub.*

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



*'Behold, I come quickly.'
(Revelation 22:12)*

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



*It's cute you think I need
your forgiveness.*

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



*I keep telling you, all
that matters is that we
know the truth.*

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



*I'm not asking you any-
more. I'm telling you what
needs to happen.*

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



*Why don't you leave the
theology to me?*

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



*The church is like a house
of cards.*

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



I fight my own battles.

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



*Woman, is there anything
you can't do?*

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



*Never too late to do the
right thing.*

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman

SCHARISSE
FREEMAN

ANSWER - Q3

SCHARISSE
FREEMAN

ANSWER - Q2

SCHARISSE
FREEMAN

ANSWER - Q1

REV. DAVID
FREEMAN

ANSWER - Q6

SCHARISSE
FREEMAN

ANSWER - Q5

SCHARISSE
FREEMAN

ANSWER - Q4

REV. DAVID
FREEMAN

ANSWER - Q9

REV. DAVID
FREEMAN

ANSWER - Q8

REV. DAVID
FREEMAN

ANSWER - Q7

MARCUS

ANSWER - Q12

MARCUS

ANSWER - Q11

REV. DAVID
FREEMAN

ANSWER - Q10



On David's handling of the scandal: "Bitch made."

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



That dude got the subtlety of Deion Sanders in an Easter suit.

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



Sometimes, you find good things waiting for you, once you get on the other side of a bad thing.

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



Reassuring Aunt Marie: "You don't have to come to my school and fight anybody."

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



On her bully: "Alex runs the other way when he sees me coming now."

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



Stop trying to be funny.

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



A good pastor doesn't lie.

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



Your armor is supposed to come from God.

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



Those gloves are not part of the ensemble.

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



*No one can serve two masters...
(Matthew 6:24)*

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



*For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.
(Ephesians 5:50)*

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



Well, look what the cat drug in.

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman

MARCUS

ANSWER - Q15

MARCUS

ANSWER - Q14

MARCUS

ANSWER - Q13

GABRIELLE

ANSWER - Q18

GABRIELLE

ANSWER - Q17

GABRIELLE

ANSWER - Q16

SISTER SHEILA

ANSWER - Q21

GABRIELLE

ANSWER - Q20

SISTER SHEILA

ANSWER - Q19

SISTER SHEILA

ANSWER - Q24

SISTER SHEILA

ANSWER - Q23

SISTER SHEILA

ANSWER - Q22



*What is meant for me will
always be for me.*

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



And who the fuck is you?

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



*Who can stop the sun from
shining?*

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



*Netta's soft ass would
want me to forgive you. So
I guess I forgive you.*

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



Well, you look a mess.

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



Let the dead rest.

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



*You're a damn fool if you
still underestimating what
these people are willing to
do to protect their own.*

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



Fuck Sheila.

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



*Actually, you only told him
half of the truth.*

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



*Why do you treat
marriage like it's inevita-
ble? Like death? Or taxes?
Or HPV?*

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



*The only thing they hate
more than a gay man is a
free woman.*

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



*He really quoted
Bell Biv DeVoe.*

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman

SISTER SHEILA

ANSWER - Q27

AUNT MARIE

ANSWER - Q26

AUNT MARIE

ANSWER - Q26

AUNT MARIE

ANSWER - Q30

AUNT MARIE

ANSWER - Q29

AUNT MARIE

ANSWER - Q28

PETRA

ANSWER - Q33

PETRA

ANSWER - Q32

AUNT MARIE

ANSWER - Q31

PETRA

ANSWER - Q36

PETRA

ANSWER - Q35

PETRA

ANSWER - Q34



*Ain't nobody but
snake-handlers preaching
about AIDS in 2011.*

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



Oh, my bad, half sister.

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



*We both got tread marks
on our backs.*

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



*And certainly no man
of God would have a
homosexual disease.*

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



*So just play your role,
okay?*

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



*Just because he's dead,
you don't have to look like
you got one foot in the
grave behind him!*

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



Oral and anal don't count.

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



I don't like CeCe Winans.

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



*I will never forgive
you for this.*

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



*She. Fucking. Ruins.
Everything!*

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



*I can't believe these
women don't fuck
with you.*

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



*I wanted to see if I'm
strong enough to bear my
own weight.*

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman

REV. JEDDAH
LANCASTER III

ANSWER - Q39

REV. JEDDAH
LANCASTER III

ANSWER - Q38

REV. JEDDAH
LANCASTER III

ANSWER - Q37

DAPHNE

ANSWER - Q42

REV. JEDDAH
LANCASTER III

ANSWER - Q41

REV. JEDDAH
LANCASTER III

ANSWER - Q40

DAPHNE

ANSWER - Q45

DAPHNE

ANSWER - Q44

DAPHNE

ANSWER - Q43

JENNIFER

ANSWER - Q48

JENNIFER

ANSWER - Q47

DAPHNE

ANSWER - Q46



*Coconut water tastes like
it's already been in some-
one else's mouth.*

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



*I don't show them.
They're not really into me
or what I do.*

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



*Still entertaining men's
foolishness, I see.*

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



*You know, there's a lot
of living you can do
without a man.*

WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman



WHO SAID THAT, CHURCH?
The True Confessions of First Lady Freeman

KAROLYN

ANSWER - Q51

SARAI

ANSWER - Q50

JENNIFER

ANSWER - Q49

KAROLYN

ANSWER - Q52

MODERATOR ANSWER KEY

Full quote list by character— handy if a card ever loses its match.

SCHARISSE FREEMAN

1. "Inhale being a helpmeet, exhale David got me fucked up."
2. "I would never give them the satisfaction."
3. "The Proverbs 31 woman was not a sub."
4. "'Behold, I come quickly.'" (Revelation 22:12)
5. "It's cute you think I need your forgiveness."

REV. DAVID FREEMAN

6. "I keep telling you, all that matters is that we know the truth."
7. "I'm not asking you anymore. I'm telling you what needs to happen."
8. "Why don't you leave the theology to me?"
9. "The church is like a house of cards."
10. "I fight my own battles."

MARCUS

11. "Woman, is there anything you can't do?"
12. "Never too late to do the right thing."
13. On David's handling of the scandal: "Bitch made."
14. "That dude got the subtlety of Deion Sanders in an Easter suit."
15. "Sometimes, you find good things waiting for you, once you get on the other side of a bad thing."

GABRIELLE

16. Reassuring Aunt Marie: "You don't have to come to my school and fight anybody."
17. On her bully: "Alex runs the other way when he sees me coming now."
18. "Stop trying to be funny."
19. "A good pastor doesn't lie."
20. "Your armor is supposed to come from God."

SISTER SHEILA

21. "Those gloves are not part of the ensemble."
22. "No one can serve two masters..." (Matthew 6:24)
23. "For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God." (Ephesians 5:50)
24. "Well, look what the cat drug in."
25. "What is meant for me will always be for me."

AUNT MARIE

26. "And who the fuck is you?"
27. "Who can stop the sun from shining?"
28. "Netta's soft ass would want me to forgive you. So I guess I forgive you."
29. "Well, you look a mess."
30. "Let the dead rest."
31. "You're a damn fool if you still underestimating what these people are willing to do to protect their own."

PETRA

32. "Fuck Sheila."
33. "Actually, you only told him half of the truth."
34. "Why do you treat marriage like it's inevitable? Like death? Or taxes? Or HPV?"
35. "The only thing they hate more than a gay man is a free woman."
36. "He really quoted Bell Biv DeVoe."

REV. JEDDAH LANCASTER III

37. "Ain't nobody but snake-handlers preaching about AIDS in 2011."
38. "Oh, my bad, half sister."
39. "We both got tread marks on our backs."
40. "And certainly no man of God would have a homosexual disease."
41. "So just play your role, okay?"

DAPHNE

42. "Just because he's dead, you don't have to look like you got one foot in the grave behind him!"
43. "Oral and anal don't count."
44. "I don't like CeCe Winans."
45. "I will never forgive you for this."
46. "She. Fucking. Ruins. Everything!"

JENNIFER

47. "I can't believe these women don't fuck with you."
48. "I wanted to see if I'm strong enough to bear my own weight."
49. "Coconut water tastes like it's already been in someone else's mouth."

SARAI

50. "I don't show them. They're not really into me or what I do."

KAROLYN

51. "Still entertaining men's foolishness, I see."
52. "You know, there's a lot of living you can do without a man."