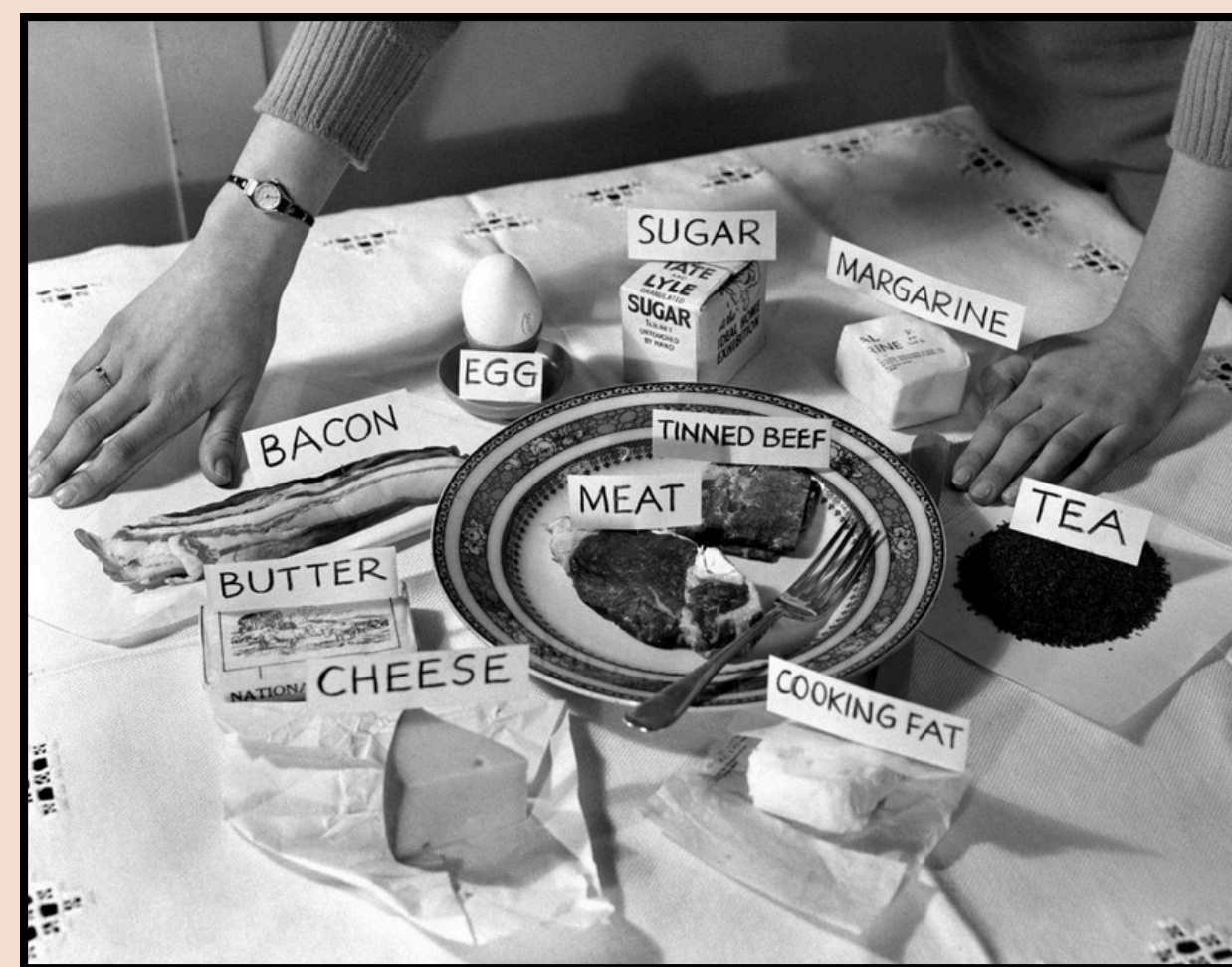


Welcome to Book & Bake

January 11, 2025



Ingredients (Characters)

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| ■ Audrey Landon | ■ Zelda Dupont |
| ■ Lady Gwendline Strictland | ■ Eileen Quince |
| ■ Nell Brown | ■ Paolo Morelli |
| ■ Sir Reginald Strictland | ■ Ambrose |
| ■ Jim Denton | |

Interesting Nuggets to Note

- Regulated food rationing in England ran from 1940 - 1954
- The author's grandmother, Eileen, the real-life namesake of Mrs. Eileen Quince
- Food rationing did not happen all at once. In 1940 the first items rationed were bacon, butter, and sugar.
- The public parks that were converted to gardens were referred to as "victory gardens".



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The Contestants

- **Audrey** - honest, hard working romantic; married for love; grief stricken widow, privileged upbringing; central protagonist; seen as “scruffy” by other characters; sister to Gwendline
- **Gwendline** - ambitious and calculating, one of the primary antagonists (beginning), craves love and affection, feels rejected by her mother who considered her a bad seed, resents Audrey and disagrees with her life choices, married for status to Sir Reginald Strickland who is abusive to her
- **Nell** - 19 year old kitchen aide to Mrs. Quince and uses her to be a buffer between herself and the world, stammers when she speaks, does not question her place in social order, forms a relationship with Paolo, an Italian POW who helps her see herself in a different light
- **Zelda** - professional chef from London, pregnant with Jim Denton’s child, challenging childhood, arrogant regarding the competition, insistent on her career path over motherhood, resides with Audrey (thanks to Gwendline)

Acid; for balance

- Sir Reginald Strickland
- Lady Gwendline Strickland
- Jim Denton

Herbs; to round out flavor

- Paolo
- Mrs. Quince
- Ambrose

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Let's Discuss!

- Each contestant developed in their own way as the novel progressed. As more information was revealed, how did your attitude shift (if at all) toward the ladies....particularly Gwendline and Zelda?
- Who is *your* “Mrs. Quince” and how did this person impact your life?
- Early in your reading, for whom were you rooting to win the contest? Did you change teams the further you progressed in the novel? Why or why not?
- What did you learn about Ambrose while reading pages 72 - 74? (He is invited to Gwendline’s for a “reception” only to be the only guest...)
- There are many recipes in the book....what role do these recipes play in the novel? * And.....
- What role do certain family recipes play in your life? What flavors/recipes take you back to your childhood?
- How do Gwendline’s and Zelda’s personal choices highlight the novel’s exploration of balancing ambition and maintaining genuine relationships?
- The idea of family is explored in the novel, as family can be fluid between blood relations and chosen connections. Which relationship(s) resonated most with you?

Welcome to Book & Bake

Where did the author get these recipes?

According to Jennifer Ryan, most of the recipes in the book come from the Ministry of Food

*These are the recipes in the book. Most of them represent a moment of significance or, a turning point, for the characters. What stands out to you?

The Recipes

Audrey's Homity Pie (15)
Lord Woolton Pie (28)
Fenley Factory Curried Salt Cod (42)
Zelda's Croquilles St. Jacques (65)
Audrey's Sweet Pickle Chutney (84)
Nell's Seard Hare with Elderberry Wine Sauce (98)
Audrey's Mushroom Soup (134)
Lady Gwendline's Sardine Rolls (146)
Audrey's Fruit Scones - P. 176
Zelda's Raised Spam and Game Pie (200)
Ministry of Food Sheep's Head Roll (213)
Gwendline's Eggless Chocolate Sponge Cake (223)
Paolo's Chicken Cacciatore (236)
Chef James Whale Steak and Mushroom Pie (243)
Nell's Summer Pudding (289)
Audrey's Cornish Pasties (305)
Mrs. Quince's Wartime Special Occasion Cake (342)
Audey's Eggless Apple and Honey Cake (361)
Zelda's Croqembouche ((369)