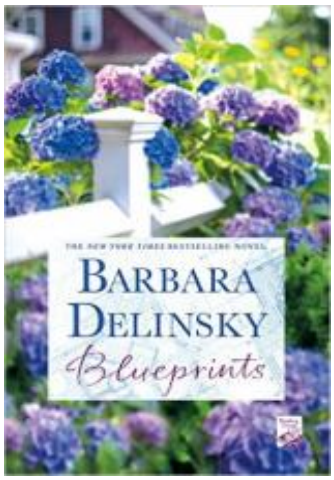
ReadingGroupGuides
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Blueprints

by Barbara Delinsky



About the Book

Returning to her beloved New England, the *New York Times* bestselling author of SWEET SALT AIR explores the limits of love and asks *what happens when the right man comes along at the wrong time*?

Caroline and Jamie McAfee are close. Not only do they enjoy their relationship as mother and daughter, they're in business together as the team that fronts the popular home renovation show ?Gut It!? All is well with these two strong women, but when the network tells Caroline that Jamie is to replace her as host, Caroline feels betrayed by her daughter and old in the eyes of the world.
Jamie is unsettled by the cast change and devastated by her mother's anger, but she has little time to brood when a tragic accident leaves her two-year-old half-brother in her care. Accustomed to a life of order and precision, Jamie suddenly finds herself out of her depth, grappling with a toddler who misses his parents and a fiancé who doesn't want the child.

Amid such devastation, Caroline and Jamie find themselves revising the blueprints they've built their lives around. With loyalties shifting and decisions looming, mother and daughter need each other; but the rift between them is proving difficult to mend. As the women try to remake themselves and rebuild their relationship with each other, they discover that strength and even passion can come from the unlikeliest places. For Caroline, it's an old friend, whose efforts to seduce her awaken desires that have been dormant for so long that she feels foreign to herself. For Jamie, it's a staggering new attraction that allows her to breathe again --- and breathe deeply --- for the first time in forever.

A riveting novel from a master storyteller, BLUEPRINTS reminds us that sometimes love appears when we least expect it, and when we need it most.

Discussion Guide

1. In their work on ?Gut It!? Caroline and Jamie MacAfee reinvigorate old homes, giving new life to tradition. What

does this say about their respective outlooks? How does this theme develop throughout the book? As carpenter and architect, Caroline and Jamie have succeeded in what could be considered traditionally male jobs. Has this success in any way colored their personal relationships?

2. ?I do commitment better than anyone I know,? Jamie says. And yet, she?s reluctant to commit to Brad. Why do you think that is?

3. The slogan of MacAfee homes is ?Family Builds.? Do you think it appropriate?

4. Jamie favors tailored clothing and the sophisticated neutrals of a young architect, while her mother is known for wearing jeans and tanks in bright colors. How do these outward choices reflect each woman?s personality?

5. Despite being 29 and financially independent, Jamie is introduced as a ?little girl? driven by a need to please her parents. Do you think that?s true? If so, how do you think it changes throughout the book?

6. Caroline tells Dean that ?sex is overrated,? and rebuffs his advances. Do you really think she believes this? If not, why does she turn him down?

7. How does the book address the issue of women?s sexuality at different ages?

8. Jamie, the ?enumerator of the family,? has a habit of organizing her thoughts in a pattern of A), B) and C). Why do you think she does this?

9. Caroline accuses Jamie of undermining her and says that ?confrontation is what happens when you are less than honest and you get caught.? What do you think she means here? Do you agree?

10. ?Motherhood is a lifelong commitment.? When Jamie assumes the role of Taddy?s mother, her role with Caroline ultimately changes. Why do you think that is?

11. Caroline says that her job on Gut It! is her identity and asks, ?If that?s gone, where am I?? Do you think she?d have those same fears if she were 36 and not 56?

12. Caroline says that Jamie was ?born with an instinct for knowing how things work, and knowing what to do when they fall apart.? Do you think this is true of both mother and daughter?

Author Bio

Barbara Delinsky is the author of more than 20 *New York Times* bestselling books, including BEFORE AND AGAIN, THE SCENT OF JASMINE and LOVE SONGS. She has been published in 28 languages worldwide. A lifelong New Englander, Delinsky earned a B.A. in psychology at Tufts University and an M.A. in sociology at Boston College. She lives in Massachusetts with her husband, more books than she'll ever be able to read, two tennis racquets, and enough electronic devices to keep in close touch with her children and their families.

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