ReadingGroupGuides
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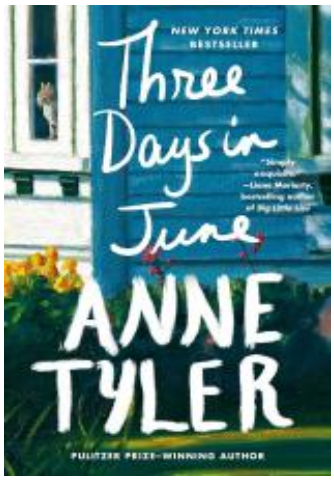
Three Days in June

by Anne Tyler



About the Book

A new Anne Tyler novel destined to be an instant classic: a socially awkward mother of the bride navigates the days before and after her daughter's wedding.

Gail Baines is having a bad day. To start, she loses her job --- or quits, depending on whom you ask. Tomorrow her daughter, Debbie, is getting married, and she hasn?t even been invited to the spa day organized by the mother of the groom. Then, Gail?s ex-husband, Max, arrives unannounced on her doorstep, carrying a cat, without a place to stay and without even a suit.

But the true crisis lands when Debbie shares with her parents a secret she has just learned about her husband to be. It will not only throw the wedding into question but also stir up Gail and Max?s past.

Told with deep sensitivity and a tart sense of humor, full of the joys and heartbreaks of love and marriage and family life, THREE DAYS IN JUNE is a triumph and gives us the perennially bestselling, Pulitzer Prize?winning writer at the height of her powers.

Discussion Guide

1. THREE DAYS IN JUNE opens with a question for you, the reader: ?People don?t tap their watches anymore; have you noticed?? How does Gail?s voice continue to engage you throughout the novel? How does she explore the question of timekeeping as she describes the aspects of her life that are fleeting and the aspects that endure?

2. To what extent is Gail?s identity defined by her job? Have her roles as mother, daughter and wife provided her with the same level of confidence as the work she performed for Marilee Burton?

3. What were your first impressions of Max? On their wedding day, were Max and Gail a good fit? How did your perceptions of their marriage shift as the details unfolded?

4. Did you believe Kenneth?s story about Carla?

5. Is Debbie?s generation stronger or more vulnerable than Gail?s? How have the expectations for adulthood and womanhood changed since your mother?s generation? In what ways does Gail?s relationship with her own mother, Joyce, come full circle? What did Gail teach Debbie (by example, or not) about becoming a fulfilled woman?

6. Debbie goes to great lengths to make sure that Max wears an acceptable suit. Sophie uses an index card to keep the toast makers in order. How did you react to the novel?s carefully drawn portrayals of public appearance and the rituals associated with weddings? Ultimately, is a perfect wedding a predictor of a happy marriage?

7. Gail tells us, ?Sometimes when I find out what?s on other people?s minds I honestly wonder if we all live on totally separate planets? (p. 104), using her rebuffing of Jared as an example. Is she honest with herself, and with us, as she reflects on the turning points of her life? Is she more perceptive than she admits?

8. Do Max, Gail and Debbie have a stronger family than Rupert, Sophie, Kenneth and Elizabeth? How will Debbie fare with in-laws who are so different from her parents?

9. When Gail was dating Max, he thought she?d hung the moon. Why did he think that? Was it more a statement about him, or about her? What is the source of her perpetual self-doubt?

10. Over those three days in June (One: Day of Beauty, Two: D-Day, and Three: The Day After), what does Gail lose, gain or regain?

11. Gail introduces us to Andrew Mason on page 145. Is he a problem, or is he a symptom of a problem?

12. Both Gail and the cat (whom she temporarily names Celine) are going through a time of transition. What else do they have in common?

13. How does THREE DAYS IN JUNE add a new dimension to the portrayals of love and marriage in previous books by Anne Tyler that you have read?

Author Bio

Anne Tyler was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota, in 1941 and grew up in Raleigh, North Carolina. She is the author of more than 20 novels. Her 20th novel, A SPOOL OF BLUE THREAD, was shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize in 2015. Her 11th novel, BREATHING LESSONS, was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in 1989. She is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters. She lives in Baltimore, Maryland.

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