The Next Thing on My List

by Jill Smolinski



About the Book

?You?ll be hooked by this charming story. . . . Smolinski gives us a quick-witted heroine . . . with just the right amount of romance and a tad of suspense.?
--- *Richmond Times-Dispatch*

After a car accident in which her passenger, Marissa, dies, June Parker finds herself in possession of a list Marissa has written: ?20 Things to Do by My 25th Birthday.? The tasks range from inspiring (run a 5K) to daring (go braless) to near-impossible (change someone?s life).

To assuage her guilt, June races to achieve each goal herself before the deadline, learning more about her own life than she ever bargained for.

Discussion Guide

1. Marissa died soon after she lost 100 pounds. Was the timing of this significant to the story, and if so, in what way?

2. Why do you think the author had June complete someone else?s life list and not write it as a woman completing her own?

3. Which items on the list were most challenging to June? Which would you have the hardest time completing? Did any appeal to you?

4. Have you ever written a ?life list?? If so, what sort of items were on it, and have you completed any of them? If you haven?t, why not?

5. Life lists aim to help people live more dynamically by doing things. How does a life list fit in with your philosophy of what makes a person?s life important?

6. After the accident, June says that there are two types of horrible events: the type that make you grab life by the throat and never take it for granted, and the type that make you watch a lot of reality TV. Was her reaction realistic? How would you feel if a passenger died when you were driving?

7. What did you think about the relationship between June and Deedee? How would June?s experience have been different if she?d been given the type of ?little sister? she?d been expecting?

8. At Sebastian?s party, guests who learn about the list assume that Marissa must have been unhappy if she was fat. Were they being, as one woman put it, ?size-ist? or is it impossible to be overweight and happy in this society?

9. What characteristics attracted June to Troy? Do you think she would have been drawn to him if he weren?t a traffic reporter? If he weren?t Marissa?s brother?

10. Several of the items on the list were open to interpretation?do you think June acted on them in a way Marissa would have liked? What other ways might she have completed some of the tasks on the list?

11. If someone you loved died (or has died), what dream of his or hers would you most want to see fulfilled? What dream of yours do you fear might never happen if you died suddenly?

12. By the end of the book, June feels that she?s changed. What do you think had the biggest impact on her transformation?

Author Bio

Jill Smolinski is the author of the novels **The Next Thing on My List** and **Flip-Flopped**. Her work has appeared in major women?s magazines, as well as in an anthology of short stories, **American Girls About Town**. She lives in Los Angeles with her son.

Critical Praise

"Cheers for Jill Smolinski, who has transcended the chick lit category by giving us a heroine who really tries to make a difference in this world. What a concept! I loved this book- its humor and its humanity. You will, too."

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Publication Date: March 25, 2008
Paperback: 304 pages
Publisher: Broadway
ISBN-10: 0307351297
ISBN-13: 9780307351296