

THE BODECIA BOOK CLUB REVIEW

The Family Tree by Barbara Delinsky

Harpercollins Publishers £6.99 ISBN 9780007245123

Dana Clarke has it all – a husband, Hugh, whom she adores, a beautiful home and a baby on the way. But, when her daughter, Lizzie, is born, what should be the happiest day of her life turns out to be the moment that her world falls apart.

As a family is divided by bitter mistrust, all their beliefs in each other, in their family background, are challenged. Will the birth of their first child destroy their marriage or can they overcome the repercussions of a secret told years ago?

Family Tree delves into issues of trust, honesty, privilege and identity. It debates the way we define ourselves and explores the duplicity of political correctness and personal prejudice.

This book is set in modern day New England in America. An area favoured by the likes of the Kennedy's and white upper class America. Hugh's family notice the African American traits in Lizzie's appearance and totally shun the baby and Hugh begins, to Dana's dismay, to worry that people will think Dana has had an affair. A DNA test was never on the cards for Dana who was a loving loyal wife to Hugh but undergoes one for the sake of their marriage, which proved that Hugh was in fact the Father. Hugh's family had been well documented for his noble roots in American history that can be dated back to the Mayflower, so Dana looks to her past and to track down the Father she never knew and try to find Lizzie's roots.

There are many other threads running through the book, such as Dana's painful reunion with her Father, Ellie Jo's secret regarding her husband's other marriage, Crystal's paternity case with the Senator and the intricate lives of those who visit Dana's Grandmother, Ellie Jo's knitting shop. The one common thread is the protection and love for their children, which ultimately brings healing to the parties involved.

It also turns out that Barbara Delinsky is quite the dedicated knitter, having learned to knit soon after her Mother died when she was 8 years old Barbara can identify with Dana with a loss of their Mothers. Barbara says that one of the few memories she had with her Mother was of holding a hank of yarn (wool!) between her hands whilst her Mother wound it into a ball. I think a lot of us have that recollection with Mothers and Grand parents and this is perhaps something that is not being passed down to future generations to learn.

With all books that the Bodecia Book Club read and now review, we will give those marks out of ten. We gave The Family Tree **7.5 / 10**, which currently stands as third on our books reading list.

We found the book enjoyable although predictable in parts it ended leaving us wanting to know more about what the future held for the family. The group got annoyed with the Amercianisms – Onesies are BABY GROWS!!

Other books read by the group (I am not too sure how they do it I struggle reading the book club book!!) this month have included Cross Stitch by Diana Gabaldon, Arrow Books Ltd; The Book of Secrets by Cecilia Ahern, Hapercollins Publishers; Exit Music by Ian Rankin , Orion Public Co and Boudica by Mike Ripley, Severn House Publishers Ltd - all are worth a read.

The group at this month's book club was pleased to welcome the ET's photographer who thought we looked a bit like a choir! We also ate like Queen's as Emmeline, the hostess for the evening fed, us home-made Mississippi Mud Pie, Brownies, and Key Lime Pie!! Why do we always remember the desserts! We also talked about whether it would be acceptable for Eyore to be a Nativity donkey?? Would make the dressing up a lot easier!

Don't forget the first rule of Book Club!