



Rise, How a House Built a Family

by Cara Brookins

Book Club Discussion Questions

1. What drew you to this book? And did you get what you'd hoped out of it?
2. How did building the blueprint for their home out of twigs inspire the family's home-building journey?
3. The author talks about how her stubborn streak led her stay in bad relationships for far too long. She writes, "I'm stubborn enough to want to see things all the way through, and I believe hard work can fix things when they're broken." But it's this same trait that enabled her to completely rebuild her life. Do you have any personal traits that have brought you both success and failure?
4. In chapter four, the author writes about growing up feeling powerless. "The most important lessons I learned in school were how to be powerless, how to take a punch, and how to hate in silence." How did these early experiences influence her life's journey?
5. One inspirational force for the author was an imaginary woman named Caroline, who embodied strength and independence, qualities the author aspired to have. How was this symbolic figure useful in her personal evolution? Why did Caroline become an angry force at the end? And what role did Benjamin play?
6. As Adam became increasingly dangerous, how was buying a firearm for protection an important turning point for the author?

7. In describing the positive changes she sees in her children, Cara notes the importance of “tackling our problems and sweating them out... Ancient rites of passage always centered on action. A child had to do something physical, like face a demon in a dark forest, before becoming a man or woman.” Do you agree or disagree that challenging physical action can lead to personal growth?

8. When the house is nearly complete, Cara tells her son Drew, “We don’t hide things anymore? Understand? We deal with them together.” How did building the house lead to this drastic change in their family dynamic?

9. Discuss the meaning of the title *Rise*. What does it symbolize?

10. Do you think the author’s decision to build her own home was an act of courage or of madness? Do you have any big dreams that seem too crazy to pursue?