



# Family Affair

*Caprice Crane*

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## **Family Affair** Caprice Crane

When Layla Brennan married her high school sweetheart, Brett Foster, she finally got the big, loving family she'd always wanted: his. Now she's closer to Brett's parents than he is, partners with his sister in a successful pet-photography business, and confidant to his younger brother. She couldn't be more of a Foster if she'd been born one. There's just one problem: Brett wants a divorce. Stunned and heartbroken, Layla turns to the Fosters for comfort, only to realize that losing Brett means losing them as well. What else can she do but sue him for the most valuable thing he's got—namely, his family. Breaking up may be hard to do, but for Layla and Brett it's even harder to undo.

Fresh, funny, poignant, and brimming with insight into what makes modern families tick—and what can blow them apart—**Family Affair** proves that in love and war, everything's relative.

## **Family Affair Details**

Date : Published September 29th 2009 by Bantam (first published January 1st 2009)

ISBN : 9780553386233

Author : Caprice Crane

Format : Paperback 348 pages

Genre : Womens Fiction, Chick Lit, Fiction, Family, Adult Fiction, Humor, Contemporary

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## From Reader Review Family Affair for online ebook

### Nat Newton says

I liked Caprice Crane's other books, but I just didn't care for this one. It lacked the edge and wit of "Stupid and Contagious", and I just couldn't get into the plot. For one thing, I got bored reading about the husband's football career. Furthermore, this one just really FELT like it was written by a chick. Not that that's a bad thing, necessarily, but in her other books I enjoyed the way she involved more of a male perspective, especially in the "he-said/she-said" style of trading off chapters in "Stupid and Contagious", which I thought she actually pulled off pretty well.

When I say this book "felt like it was written by a chick", I mean that the author spent a lot of time building up the main female character as nearly infallible, and I felt like the author was trying way too hard to get the reader to *like* the character. (She threw in a few character flaws, to make it more believable, I suppose, but I never grew to enjoy the character or identify with her as a human being.)

Meanwhile her husband was just a big' ol unappreciative selfish dud, and not only that, the husband's friends were constantly talking about how "awesome" and "perfect" and "wonderful" his wife was and telling him she should appreciate it more because he was "really a lucky man". RIGHT. Even in fiction I can't believe that guys actually hang around in bars and talk like this.

The whole book just seemed contrived and self-indulgent from a woman's point of view, and although I like to indulge in pleasant fantasy just as much as the next woman, I just couldn't buy it. :/

If anyone wants this book, I will give it to you.

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### Jen O'Neill says

This book was worst than the author's last one that I read. I'm done! The first one had so much promise. Oh well.

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### Patricia Tennant says

Found husband truly lame and unbelievable.

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### Janene says

A First Reads Win! I already have a line of friends wanting to read. AFTER me! :)

Where to begin.....

Book started out with a bang. Loved how each chapter was told by a different member of the family. Liked everyone...especially the husband, Brett. He made me chuckle...and he's hot. It was pretty cheesy at some points, but I was expecting that. I looked forward to picking the book up & reading again....until I got to the half way point.....

Brett & Layla have been together for forever. First loves..marrying right out of college. They are now rapidly approaching 30...and all hell breaks loose.

We go from everyone under the sun..including Brett (and *especially* his brother Scott!)..thinking Layla is the greatest thing since Classic Coke...and all of a sudden he's telling her he wants a divorce. Yep....Layla leaves a football game early..which her husband Brett is assistant coach and the relationship spirals out of control. WHAT??!

At that point I'm thinking...ok, so up until last chapter...the couple were having their little tiffs...nothing major..we all do...and then wham...D.I.V.O.R.C.E. Really?? At that point, the book became unbelievable for me. I mean, I understand that the point of the whole story was for them to break up & Layla sue for custody of his family...the family she has grown to love as her own..and vise versa, but could we maybe not have read chapters leading up to the break-up, where he's talking about what a great ass she has, and how lovable she is...and then 'let's split'? It didn't work. There needed to be a lot more anger and frustration leading up to this for me to take them seriously. I was actually insulted at how easy they started down the road to divorce, especially when there just didn't seem to be that much wrong with them. Just wasn't believable.

The battles that Brett & Layla had over HIS family were weird. I mean, I was uncomfortable. (and I come from a really weird family!) They actually had visitations scheduled. Would this really happen in the adult world?? Would adults stand on the side of the freeway & scream at each other whose turn it was to spend with the family?? It was embarrassing. Really. I don't know what I was expecting??

The 2nd half of the book had me viewing Lovable Layla as a shrew, who I really didn't care much for anymore. She was losing it. Not for her lost marriage...no, but for competing with him for his family. I found myself skimming pages, where the first half I read every word. I wanted to get it over with.

Ending was very predictable...but if you like happy endings, depending on what would make you happy...I think you will be pleased.

I'm going to cut this short.

All-in-all.....the book was not terrible. Caprise Crane is a decent writer. I would just hope for something a tish more believable. Even if it's not a dramatic book. was expecting more humor from this book....not angst and discomfort. I don't think that was Crane's intent. I would not discourage anyone from reading it; I'm just not sure it's going to be everything you're expecting.

Three stars..for the first half.

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## **Erin says**

After I got this book, I kept thinking that the author's name sounded really familiar...then I realized that my

brother had once been in a band with her. That being said, I really wanted to love this book...and I didn't.

What I did like: the premise of the book was wonderful and sounded like it would make a great comedy. The author's writing style is really light and airy and works well with this genre. I usually hate books that switch viewpoints back and forth or have multiple viewpoints, but this one really worked.

What I didn't like: the male lead, Brett was completely stereotypical & seemed designed by a woman who is gay or really, really doesn't like men. Two- The obligatory gay sidekick....this is one that is in nearly every single women's fiction book nowadays and is obviously an overt attempt by the publishing industry to push the gay agenda. Although Trish herself was not stereotypical and would have been a fine character if every single book didn't have one.

What I hated: the obligatory interjection of left wing politics that adds nothing to the story...in this case, sympathy for the illegal alien workers hanging around Home Depot. This made me see red. Illegal aliens have to "beg for work" Ms Crane because they are here ILLEGALLY...they are stealing work and LOWERING WAGES for Americans, most often minorities who liberals are supposed to champion. Not to mention that if you've ever dealt with the illegal populace, you know they make plenty of money since they don't pay taxes and they have lots of welfare, section 8, food stamps, medicaid and other freebies heading their way for every anchor baby they pop out. Go to an illegal's home and you will see a bigger tv than most Americans own and they always have the latest \$400 cell phone...they are an electronic store's best customer. Of course, being the daughter of a famous TV star, you don't really encounter these people much, I imagine. :) This one paragraph made me want to fling the book across the room and leave it unfinished. Reading is supposed to be fun, not a forum for the left to constantly push its agendas.

That being said, the book was okay, nothing special...it deviated a little too far from a light hearted comedy and had too superficial of an ending. With some more time and a little rewriting, this could be a great book.

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## **Toni says**

### **Meh**

The characters are not likeable. They are whiney, selfish and annoying. By the end of the book, I can't tell if I'm glad to be free of them or just irritated that the ending was such a let down.

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## **Ashley says**

It's hard to believe that I'd give Caprice Crane and 3 on a novel of hers with Stupid and Contagious being one of my top 5 most favorite books EVER. maybe nothing will just compare to that one? I liked Family Affair but it just wasn't as good as her others. It was fairly easy to get into but it started becoming a bit too predictable for me as it went on. maybe I read too much chick-lit or maybe she just wasn't feeling it herself and had a deadline to meet. not a big disappointment.

Like her others, she makes this one where pretty much every girl can relate with when it comes to relationships. Crane has a good way of putting yourself right in the character's shoes.

one of my favorite things about Crane is her humor. that's definitely one aspect she'll never let her reader down on.

if you're considering making this one your first Caprice Crane book...DON'T. pick up Stupid and Contagious!!

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### **gille says**

Family Affair is the story of Layla and Brett and their imploding marriage. They have been together since high school, and Brett's family basically took Layla in after he mother died in the 10th grade. So when Brett unexpectedly wants a divorce, Layla is thrown for a loop. She won't only be losing him, but she might also lose the only family she has known for over a decade.

The story is told chapter by chapter through Layla, Brett, Trish, and Scott's perspectives, with a letter from Ginny to her sister thrown in every so often. I liked this method of story-telling, but I have to admit that I was sometimes confused as to who I was reading. I don't know why, but I occasionally had to stop and think about it, or look back at the chapter heading. That was a little annoying, but very overlook-able.

As usual with Caprice Crane, I greatly enjoyed this book. I plowed through it while on vacation and couldn't finish it fast enough. I wanted to see what would happen, what would be the outcomes of the various conflicts, etc. I love Crane's dialogues, they are fantastic and highly believable. Very witty, but not over-the-top-this-would-never-happen-in-real-life witty, which is fabulous. I could identify with the characters, feel their struggles, and sympathize with their pains and their happinesses. I didn't want them to end!

This book had way fewer music references, which was sad for me, but I suppose you can't build a career on music references and have to do something different on occasion. I'm a little sad that I have only one Crane novel remaining, I don't know if I should save it or read it! It's making me crazy a little!!! I really want to read it but then they are gone forever.. or at least until a new novel is published!

Anyway, I loved this book, and I continue to highly recommend Caprice Crane to anyone who likes books, music, fun, love, or pretty much anything else under the sun! Go get her books today!!!!

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### **Romancereviewer says**

Crane writes about Layla and Brett, who have been dating since high school and married just out of college. It is now about 6-7 years later.

Layla, who was abandoned by her father and lost her mother to cancer in high school, is loved by all. She was taken in by Brett's family after her mother died and gets along better with his family than he does. His friends adore her.

Brett, a college football coach, is jealous that his wife puts his family ahead of him. He is also beginning to question whether they married too soon. He wonders what else may be out there.

When he asks for a separation, Layla is stunned. She doesn't want to lose his family and wants to keep custody of his family.

Brett looks like a jerk when he shows up to family events with another woman when Layla is there. Things

soon get silly and bitter. Layla turns obnoxious and Brett, already obnoxious, sets forth on a mission to get rid of her. (not by murder)

There are a few predictable moments and then all is well. This story is not realistic. If my soon-to-be-ex-husband pulled some of the stunts Brett did, I would not want him back.

Crane has a passion for music and makes a lot of references to songs in the beginning of the book.

She does something unique. Instead of having traditional chapters, she splits the book by focusing on the perspectives of each character, instead of writing from only one perspective. This way, you get an idea of each character's thoughts.

She authentically addresses the decline of a marriage, when couples take each other for granted and fall into a tedious pattern.

I am not providing a rating because chicklit is not my favorite genre, and therefore, my opinion would be biased. Some chicklit is good but others, like this one, is too frivolous for my taste.

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## **Erin says**

I was a huge fan of Crane's first novel *Stupid and Contagious* so I was looking forward to this book and perhaps had too high expectations. Not being married myself I had a little trouble connecting to Layla and Brett. Crane does a good job of making you understand their frustrations with the marriage, but their marital issues seemed to go from "he/she drives me crazy and annoys the hell out of me, but really I love her/him" to "I want a divorce" in about two pages without any real explanation as to their motivations. I found myself irritated with Layla from the get-go. She's too perfect (which every other character reminds you constantly), a bit bland, and a bit too nice for my liking (what can I say I like my characters with a little bit of snark). Brett, on the other hand, is an overgrown man-child who whines about his perfect life and is fairly selfish. I initially couldn't really side with either of them, but I think this was Crane's intent. We come into this marriage already frustrated with each person and don't really warm to the characters until later.

There's a nice twist halfway through that you see coming, but I was surprised how it changed the entire course of the book for me and how I viewed both characters. I sympathized more with Brett and Layla and it thankfully gave them a reason to grow up and stop acting like spoiled children. I was a little disappointed that things wrapped up a little too neatly in the end, but I understood the motivations of Brett and Layla so it worked for me.

As with *Stupid and Contagious*, I enjoyed the split point of view chapters, but I felt like the POV chapters from the other family members and friends were jarring and unnecessary. Crane's dialogue can get a little too heavy with exposition sometimes, but she captures the complicated dynamic that is sibling relationships well. I found myself wishing for more scenes between Trish and Brett who seemed to have the most interesting relationship out of any one else.

LitSnit Verdict: B-

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## **Erin Sipes says**

Family Affair by Caprice Crane is not necessarily a nailbiter that leaves you guessing till the end nor will you be shaking your head in the wonderance of how similiar your life is to that of the characters. You will however cry when they cry, laugh when they laugh, blush with embarrassment when their bad behavior rears its ugly head and hope against all hope that the picture perfect couple can keep it together.

Within the first few chapters of Family Affair I was rolling my eyes as the writer lays out a perfect little couple with perfect jobs, perfect friends, and even perfect disfunctions. I mean seriously a girl abandoned by her father, there's a list of issues that can keep a story going for years. Then the mother of said girl passes away before the girl is even an adult; it doesn't get much sadder than that does it? Then to add insult to injury the sad girl is attractive, has the attractive boyfriend and is adored by all. She is pretty much raised by her boyfriend's family and as everyone assumes they fall right into a perfect little marriage. Despite every bad thing that's happened to her Layla is one of those women most other women love to hate but never admit it.

Enter Brett, the beautiful football coach and husband extraordinaire. You'd think I wouldn't like him. Honestly I think Crane wants us not to like him, but I do. He's the only one who seems to want to take a moment, step back from his life and ask, "What just happened here?" He seems to be the only one who sees that just because you do the things you're 'supposed' to do in the order you're supposed to do it doesn't make it right and sometimes a greater, deeper, more appreciative love comes out of being able to say, "Are we sure about this?" Lets face it familiarity breeds contempt and resentment in most cases and even if you're perfect you're not exempt. When Brett starts to rethink the choices he let create his life...all hell breaks loss.

I really hate saying I enjoyed this book but I did. I even read it within a couple of days which is always a good sign. I like that it is told from so many different points of view. Crane does a great job I think of creating a family dynamic that while filled with 'perfect' people also has some offbeat characters that bring them back down to earth. I didn't really get the point of both Brett and Layla's friends except they perpetuated the perfect little couple persona. Still this is a great story that goes beyond a defunct marriage. I highly recommend it!

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## **Moon Love says**

This book was amazing! Caprice Crane just gets better and better! This the third book of hers I've read, and I just can not get enough.

Layla and Brett are married but have been with each other for half of their lifetimes. Both are about to turn 30 and their relationship isn't the same as it once was. Brett's a very successful college football coach and Layla is a pet photographer. Layla's a virtual orphan and Brett's family considers her their own.

While things have not been so great, when they finally sit down to talk about things, Layla thinks Brett wants to have a baby, while Brett decided he wants to divorce Layla. Talk about mis-communication! Layla is devastated and decides the only thing she wants from Brett is his family. And so starts a war of one up man ship.



This book was a joy to read. It made me laugh and tear up and I just loved it. Caprice Crane has yet to write a book I haven't loved and I am really looking forward to her upcoming release "With a Little Luck."

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## Jess says

I was lucky enough to win a copy of Caprice Crane's new book, *Family Affair: A Novel* from a Goodreads contest. After reading the promising description and the endorsements from Booklist, Jen Lancaster, and Publisher's Weekly, among others, I was really looking forward to reading this book.

The premise of *Family Affair: A Novel* involves Brett and Layla Foster, who met when they were in high school and married about five minutes after graduating from college, in Brett's words. As they grew up together, Layla adopted his family and they adopted her, as she has no family of her own. The story stems from there, asking what happens when a couple who have been together since high school begin to grow up – can they grow up together or will they grow apart? When Brett asks for a divorce, Layla files for custody – of his family.

As much as I wanted to like this book, I was ultimately disappointed. It had no direction – often times, it seemed actions were performed by Brett and Layla simply for the shock value – i.e. Brett bringing a date to a Layla-begun tradition just to irk Layla, Layla chasing Brett and his family down and filing kidnapping charges to the police officers standing nearby, and so on. Toward the end, something happens to a major family character (though there are hints of it earlier on in the book) and it becomes predictable what will bring Layla and Brett back together. Even the custody argument begins to lose luster halfway through the book and is given a sort of last kiss of life toward the end when it has become redundant.

I often felt that the humor in the book could have been more developed. All the gags and shock moments were a bit quick to the punch line, leaving little time for the characters really to flesh themselves out as opposed to just being good stand-ins for a joke. For me, the more ridiculous moments felt better suited to a visual stage than a literal, almost as though it would have been easier to watch these interactions and laugh rather than read them. I actually spent more time tearing up for the characters than I did laughing at them, though admittedly, there was one incident involving a Mudball and a supermarket run that made me giggle.

I would have liked to see the humor become a little more focused, as well as the plot line, rather than "Well...how can I make these characters even more ridiculous and over the top than they already are?" On a similar note, while Crane's effort to differentiate the character's voices is admirable, they didn't always feel authentic to me. I didn't feel Brett was all that masculine in voice; I felt more like he was a depiction of what women want men to do when a break up is involved, as he constantly kept thinking about Layla and how wonderful she was. I can understand that Crane would want to create a sense of regret to lead to the inevitable conclusion, but it felt heavy-handed to me.

There are several side lines that are humorous without having any relation to Layla and Brett's relationship: Layla's pet photography business encounters a number of ridiculous moments, but again, the humor wasn't as well developed as I would have liked. I was hoping for more surprises outside of the silly arguments and exchanges, but they never came.

Perhaps the most compelling moment comes when the entire family, biological and not, come together when it is uncovered that a family member is ill. It was in those moments that you begin to see Layla and Brett for who they really are, and not the disgruntled spouses trying to one-up one another as they do throughout the

book. Brett begins to sound more like the Brett he's been described as, and not what the author wants him to embody. I almost wonder if having the family crisis come earlier would have made a difference in my disappointment with the book.

All in all, Family Affair: A Novel was a quick and easy read, but it's not one that I'll be picking up again any time soon.

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## **Fyrephoenix says**

What a boring rambling mess. It just kept going on and on and on...just bleh. Two stars were given for good editing.

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## **Valarauco says**

### **Cover**

Ein ziemlich nichtssagendes und auch nicht besonders schönes Cover. Das ist bestimmt kein Grund dieses Buch zu kaufen. Es passt auch nicht unbedingt zur Geschichte ...

### **Meine Meinung**

Brett Forster will sich von Layla scheiden lassen. So weit so gut, doch eigentlich gibt es dafür keinen Grund, außer das er der Meinung ist, sie würde ihm zu wenig Aufmerksamkeit widmen und wäre mehr seine Schwester, als seine Ehefrau. Letzteres kann ich ja sogar noch irgendwie nachvollziehen. Jetzt ist es allerdings so, dass Layla keine Familie hat. Ihre Mutter ist gestorben und ihr Vater verschwunden, deshalb hat sie Bretts Familie praktisch adoptiert.

Nachdem das mit der Scheidung raus ist, beginnt ein Kleinkrieg darum, wer jetzt die Familie bekommt und bei aller Liebe zu lustigen Frauenromanen, aber das ist der größte Schwachsinn, den ich in letzter Zeit gelesen habe. Layla will tatsächlich gerichtlich bestimmen, das Bretts Familie ihr "gehört". Die Beiden kämpfen darum, als wäre es ein Kind. Das fand ich so dermaßen unpassend und schwachsinnig. Es hat ja niemand von ihr verlangt, das sie nie wieder etwas mit der Familie unternimmt, aber etwas weniger würde ihr wirklich nicht schaden.

Statt ein Machtwort zu sprechen, spielt die Familie das ganze einfach nur mit. Diesen Umstand habe ich bis jetzt noch nicht wirklich verdaut. Das alles ist so unsäglich unrealistisch. Ich hätte das Buch einfach weglegen sollen, aber ich fand den Klapptext gelungen und der war es auch, der ich dazu gebracht hat, dieses Buch zu kaufen. Mittlerweile bereue ich es nur noch, da ich mich in keine der Figuren hinein versetzen konnte. Sie waren mir beinahe alle furchtbar unsympathisch und auch der Schreibstil der Autorin hat mir überhaupt nicht zugesagt. Die Idee, immer wieder die Sichtweise zu wechseln fand ich klasse, aber leider sehr schlecht umgesetzt.

Alles in allem war dieses Buch für mich ein totaler Reinfluss und ich bin wirklich enttäuscht, das es mir so gar nicht gefallen hat. Daher vergebe ich ein Monster von insgesamt fünf möglichen.

