

READING GROUP GUIDE

The Boy I Loved Before by Jenny Colgan

St. Martin's Press

ISBN: 0-312-33198-3 (paperback)

Introduction to *The Boy I Loved Before*

While attending her best friend Tashy's wedding, Flora Scurrison realizes that this monotonous, nine-to-five, cookie-cutter life is exactly what's in store for her. While it might be okay for Tashy, it's certainly not what she envisioned for herself when she was sixteen. So when her boyfriend proposes to her during the reception, Flora makes a wish to go back and do it all over again. The next morning she wakes up to find that she has been given the ultimate second chance--she's sixteen again. As Flora navigates school, first loves--new and old--and discovers what it really means to make adult choices, will she stay in her new body or try and find her way home?

Praise for *The Boy I Loved Before*

"*The Boy I Loved Before* is a triumph. It's witty and hilarious and so clever, with a compulsive story that kept me flicking the pages over madly, right to the end. I loved it."

- Sophie Kinsella, author of *Can You Keep a Secret* and *Confessions of a Shopaholic*

Reading Group Guide Questions

1. If you were given the chance to go back to your teenage years, would you take it? And if so, would you go back as yourself, or as someone else?
2. Flora tells Tashy: "If I had to do it all again with what I know now I wouldn't make such a hash of it." If you went back in time to your youth, would you make the same choices for yourself, or different ones? Are there any experiences you would choose to go through again? Why?

3. The first person who realizes Flora is really a thirty-two-year-old in a sixteen-year-old's body is Tashy. Why do you think the author chose Tashy?
4. Flora says, "there's a reason we never forget our first loves." What do you think the reason is? Do you hold on to that memory?
5. How do you think your life would be different if you had married your first love?
6. Flora calls Olly "a good, decent kind man" who loves her. So why do you think she starts to panic at the thought of him proposing at Tashy's wedding? Do you think Flora's doubts are about Olly, or about something else?
7. The thought of saving her parents' marriage the second time around makes Flora ambivalent about going back to her old life. What do you think she would have done if her father hadn't decided to stay on his own?

About the Author

Jenny Colgan was born in Scotland. She worked in the National Health Service, moonlighting as a stand-up comic and cartoonist until her first novel, *Amanda's Wedding*, was published in 2000. She lives in London with her husband. This is her fifth novel.