



It Happens Every Spring (Four Seasons Book 1)

By Catherine Palmer, Gary Chapman

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Meet the characters that live, work, dream, and love in the community of Deepwater Cove. Best-selling authors Gary Chapman and Catherine Palmer team up to show how four married couples, all in different stages in life, experience the joys and hardships of marriage as examined in Gary Chapman's *The Four Seasons of Marriage*. In book one, Steve and Brenda face a common problem among middle-age couples: empty nest syndrome. Steve works too much, and with their two children out of the house, Brenda feels lonely and unfulfilled. In order to save their marriage, the two must learn to reconnect. Readers are also introduced to many charming characters, like Cody, the mentally challenged homeless man that shows up on Steve and Brenda's porch; Pete, who owns the Rods 'N' Ends tackle shop; and Patsy Pringle, who owns the Just As I Am beauty parlor, where much of the action takes place.

The series is based on the marriage principles found in Gary Chapman's non-fiction book *The Four Seasons of Marriage*. Similar in tone and light-hearted, quirky humor as Jan Karon's Mitford series, Fannie Flagg's books or *Steel Magnolias*. Each book has a study guide that talks about the four seasons of marriage and the healing strategies depicted in that volume's story.

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It Happens Every Spring (Four Seasons Book 1) By Catherine Palmer, Gary Chapman Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Relational expert Chapman rewrites his core message in fiction, teaming with prolific Christian novelist Palmer in this first in a projected tetralogy highlighting the concepts taught in Chapman's *The Four Seasons of a Marriage*. The plot and characters evince Chapman's thesis that marriage is a journey back and forth through different "seasons," while the neighborhood of Deep Water Cove and little town of Tranquility, Mo., provide the settings. Five local women start a club ("TLC") to help one another through problems in their relationships and their community. In a squeaky-clean nod to *Desperate Housewives*, a charming handyman is steaming things up with Brenda Hansen. Meanwhile, romance is brewing for Patsy Pringle, who runs Just As I Am, a "faith-based beauty experience." Palmer's descriptions can go over the top; the obligatory "autumn" character "was a windblown shock of wheat, a ripe apple hanging heavy on the tree, a mourning dove that gathered her little ones close about her and cooed in the wind." A homeless, mentally handicapped man gives Palmer some engaging opportunities to flesh out the other characters as they respond to his plight. However, the novel's scenes too often conspire to illustrate a counseling point, and the included study guide reinforces the idea that this is self-help disguised as fiction. (Jan.)

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Review

Gary Chapman, author of the best-selling books *The Five Love Languages* and *The Four Seasons of Marriage*, brings his teaching and insight to a completely new audience with *It Happens Every Spring*, the first book in the new "Four Seasons" series.

In combining Chapman's practical knowledge with award-winning author Catherine Palmer's considerable writing abilities, Tyndale House Publishers may have found a winning team, if this first offering is any indication.

The fictional counterpart to Chapman's non-fiction book *The Four Seasons of Marriage*, *It Happens Every Spring* is set in Deepwater Cove, a small community on the Lake of the Ozarks. It tells the story of Steve and Brenda Hanson, a middle-aged couple who are drifting apart. Steve is consumed with his business, while Brenda is languishing from a lack of attention.

It Happens Every Spring is well-written and insightful. Many couples may just recognize themselves while reading the Hanson's story, hopefully in time to avoid some of the same mistakes. Recommended. Four stars!

-Craig Allen Hart -- *Christian Fiction Online*, February 21, 2007

Brenda Hansen is lost. The last of her three children have left home to go to college and she's facing the empty nest for the first time. She has looked forward to this time, puttering around and tending her husband, Steve. But Steve is totally engrossed in his real estate business and never at home. When he does come home, it's just to fall in bed exhausted. He never notices anything she does around the house, and doesn't seem to care.

Brenda decides to remodel the basement and hires handyman, Nick, to do the work. Nick is attentive and constantly complimenting her on her choices, her appearance, and he notices even the slightest little thing. Soon, Brenda is living for Nick's appearance at her house, and putting Steve's physical needs off. Will

Brenda come to her senses before its too late, or are Steve and Brenda headed for divorce court?

It Happens Every Spring is book one in the Four Seasons series. It is a wonderful story with real characters. I laughed out loud at times in the book and cried in other parts. Even the secondary characters are real. I loved the quirky hairdresser just as much as I loved Brenda and Steve.

In addition to being a great story, It Happens Every Spring also teaches a bit about Gary Chapman's the languages of love. I recognized my husband and me in this book and could see where some of the problems can happen. Discussion questions are included at the end of the book, making it excellent for small groups. A teaser from the next book in the series (coming summer 2007) is also included. This is a series for the keeper shelf. Don't miss It Happens Every Spring.

Reviewed by Laura. -- *A Romance Review - January 2007*

Time to Read!

Since I went back to college full-time and started a part-time job a couple months ago my reading time got shoved to the back burner. Not that I haven't been reading, I've just been reading textbooks, and lots of them. During this time my `advanced reader copy' books have still been coming in, and boy have they ever piled up!

When I saw "It Happens Every Spring" I wasn't quite sure what to make of it. It didn't look like a book I'd be very interested in, and I was hesitant to pull out that book during my very limited window of opportunity for reading. Once classes start back up in January, the piling up will begin again, and I didn't want to waste my chances.

Being fair, I decided I needed to go ahead and read this book in the order I had gotten it, and then I noticed that it was co-authored by Gary Chapman. That name stuck in my mind for some reason, so I scanned my bookshelf and noticed that I had another of his books-"The Five Love Languages." Since I really liked that book, I decided that it might not be such a bad book after all.

It Happens Every Spring The Four Seasons: Book 1 by Gary Chapman and Catherine Palmer

Brief Synopsis Brenda and Steve Hansen have had a great marriage and a great life. Their kids are grown now, and that youngest has finally gone off to college. Brenda thought that this would be the best time of her life, time when she finally gets to do what SHE wants to do. She thought this would be the time for her and her husband to really spend some time together, to be a couple rather than being a parent.

As time goes by, however, Brenda is left feeling alone and lonely when her husband starts working more and more and she feels his love and presence less and less. It's like her marriage is dying a slow and painful death. Finally, she starts to think that she's ready for it, that if Steve was no longer in her life it would actually be a good thing.

Things in Brenda's life get turned upside down when a strange man appears at her door during a power outage. Frightened at first, Brenda realizes that Cody isn't a danger, he's `simple' but needy and he fills the need to `mother' in her life. Of course, his presence only causes problems between Brenda and Steve-at first.

Brenda starts walking down a slippery slope when she has a handyman refinish her basement to make it a crafter's dream space. She starts to connect with the handyman, feeling the relationship from him that used to be felt from her husband. When everything comes to a head what will become of Steve and Brenda? Will there even be a `Steve and Brenda'?

I really was surprised at how much I enjoyed "It Happens Every Spring." Almost from the moment I opened it up I was drawn into the cast of characters and the idyllic setting of Tranquility, Missouri. Growing up, and still living in, a small and close-knit community myself I could really identify with the interconnectedness of the community and the way everyone looked out for everyone else.

As much as I enjoyed the overall story, what eventually won out for my favorite aspect of "It Happens Every Spring" was the relationship between Steve and Brenda. I don't know a single married couple who hasn't gone through a time in their marriage where it feels like winter. There's no life left, no hope and everything looks bleak. Both Brenda and Steve had their faults, and both of them contributed to the devastation of their marriage. At the same time, both of them viewed the other as being the primary source of the problems. What married person doesn't think the other is to blame? It just felt so real, almost like I could have lived it myself.

As thought-provoking as "It Happens Every Spring" can be, it also has it's lighter, more entertaining moments as well. It's an excellent story and there are some parts of this story that will warm your heart- especially the child-like Cody. You won't be able to help falling for him.

Conclusion

I simply loved "It Happens Every Spring." Despite its serious theme, it had its lighter moments as well and balanced out to make an excellent story. The writing is top-notch, easily keeping up with the excellence of the plot itself.

I would recommend "It Happens Every Spring" for every Christian married woman, and even for those women not yet married. Even though it's a piece of fiction, there's a lot to be learned from it about the realities of marriage.

Reviewed by CindyJean -- *Epinions* - Dec 22, 2006

About the Author

Catherine Palmer lives in Missouri with her husband, Tim, and sons Geoffrey and Andrei. She is a graduate of Southwest Baptist University and holds a master's degree in English from Baylor University. Her first book was published in 1988. She has published nearly forty novels. Catherine has won numerous awards for her writing, including the Christy Award, the highest honor in Christian fiction. Total sales of her novels number nearly two million copies.

Dr. Gary Chapman is the director of Marriage and Family Life Consultants, Inc.; an internationally known speaker; and the host of A Love Language Minute, a syndicated radio program heard on more than 100 stations across North America. He and his wife, Karolyn, live in North Carolina.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Sarita Springer:

As people who live in the modest era should be up-date about what going on or information even knowledge to make all of them keep up with the era that is certainly always change and advance. Some of you maybe may update themselves by studying books. It is a good choice for you personally but the problems coming to anyone is you don't know which one you should start with. This It Happens Every Spring (Four Seasons

Book 1) is our recommendation to help you keep up with the world. Why, because this book serves what you want and need in this era.

Patrick Adkins:

Do you one of people who can't read enjoyable if the sentence chained from the straightway, hold on guys that aren't like that. This It Happens Every Spring (Four Seasons Book 1) book is readable simply by you who hate those perfect word style. You will find the facts here are arrange for enjoyable studying experience without leaving possibly decrease the knowledge that want to offer to you. The writer connected with It Happens Every Spring (Four Seasons Book 1) content conveys the idea easily to understand by many people. The printed and e-book are not different in the information but it just different available as it. So , do you nevertheless thinking It Happens Every Spring (Four Seasons Book 1) is not loveable to be your top listing reading book?

Anna Hart:

This book untitled It Happens Every Spring (Four Seasons Book 1) to be one of several books in which best seller in this year, honestly, that is because when you read this guide you can get a lot of benefit on it. You will easily to buy this particular book in the book retail outlet or you can order it through online. The publisher with this book sells the e-book too. It makes you more easily to read this book, because you can read this book in your Smart phone. So there is no reason for you to past this reserve from your list.

Corey Cook:

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