

I Do: A Wedding Planner Tells Tales

Lynda Barness

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A wedding planner shares disasters and quick fixes from throughout her career with a charming sense of humor.

In a quick, easy-to-read account of her own experiences, charming mishaps, and quick-thinking saves, Lynda Barness provides a series of anecdotes about her role as a wedding planner. *I Do* touches on everything from caterers and florists to in-laws and even wedding crashers, as Barness draws on her years of experience to offer bite-size stories of her work.

Barness opens *I Do* with a quick account of how she became a wedding planner who would eventually have her weddings featured in magazines like *Martha Stewart Weddings*. After helping plan her daughter's wedding, she took a course at Temple University on a whim and soon built her business through word of mouth. From there, Barness goes on to describe, in a series of chapters, the various struggles and close calls she has had during innumerable weddings, all presented with a sense of humor and levity.

Barness is the hero of her own story, and almost all of the tales center around either the bad behavior of guests, families, or wedding professionals, or around Barness's own quick fixes. She offers a balance of both positive and negative stories, as when she juxtaposes a reverend whose terrific one-liners put everyone at ease during the wedding ceremony with a priest who was so concerned with timeliness that he wanted to get the ceremony started even before all the guests arrived. Some of the stories are quite short, as in one two-sentence bit when Barness describes how a family convinced a young boy to be the flower boy by renaming the position the "Flower Jedi."

The stories range from amusing to surprising, though never scandalous. Some seem to lack drama, as in the case of a bagpiper who called to say he was stuck in traffic but ended up showing up on time anyway, or a couple who canceled a wedding tent but luckily didn't have to deal with any rain. Still, the organization of the book makes it easy to digest, and Barness's stories are clear and enjoyable. She even offers some quick tips interspersed throughout the book; for instance, the spongy material on a hanger with a mesh covering can be rubbed on clothing to remove deodorant stains.

The breezy style and quick anecdotes create an entertaining, quick read, and Barness seems to be a consummate professional and master of her trade.

STEPHANIE BUCKLIN (July 8, 2015)

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