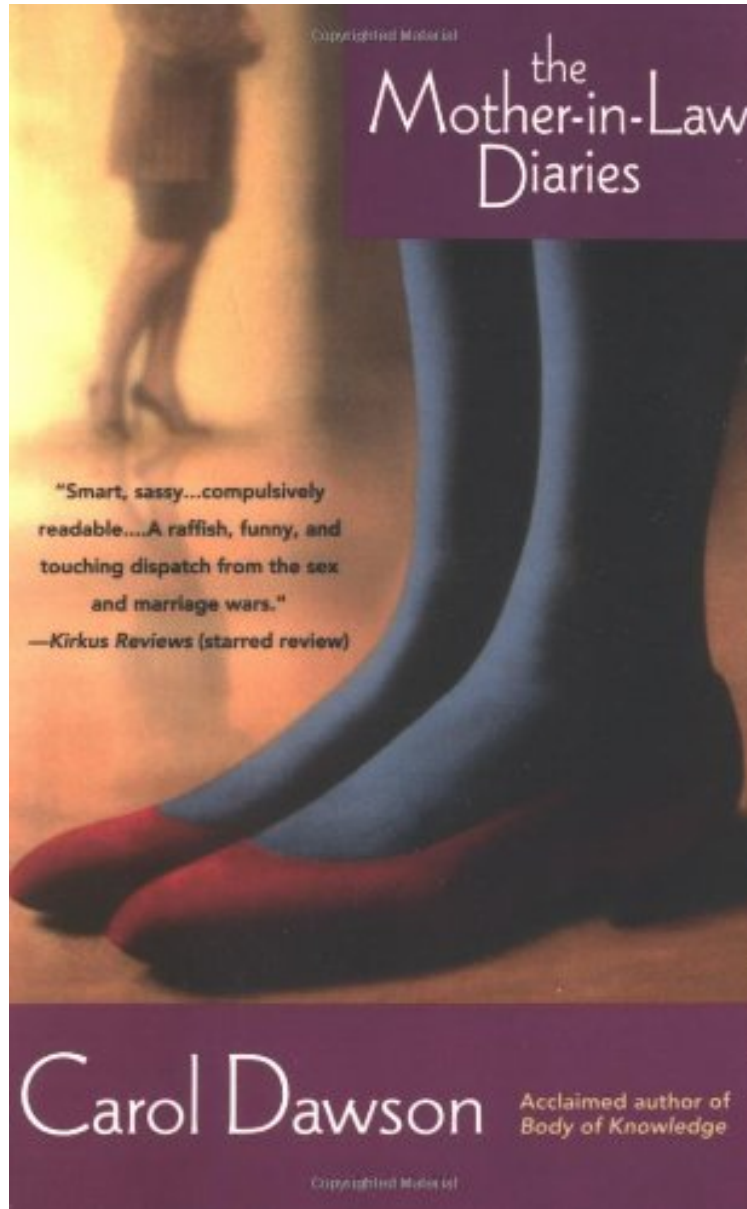


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## The Mother-in-Law Diaries

*Carol Dawson*

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#5695911 in Books 2000-03-01 2000-03-01 Original language: English PDF # 1 7.00 x .73 x 5.00l, .70 #File Name: 0671040855288 pages | File size: 30.Mb

**Carol Dawson : The Mother-in-Law Diaries** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Mother-in-Law Diaries:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A Womans' Marriage Adventures in the 70s and 80sBy MlizThe Mother-in-Law Diaries kept me reading!! I kept hoping Lulu would get smarter as the pages turned. She does become

smarter but it takes the whole book to learn that. I only give it four stars because it took so long to get the framework of the story. Young woman, sexual freedom (or slavery) of the 70's and 80's, physical and mental abuse, brave older women, slightly neglected children are all here in Lulu's narrative. It takes half the book to discover she's only writing in her journal and does not intend to let her son read it..ever. It is a good look into that era, but by no means the "norm" for those years for women. The book is well written, moves smoothly and there's no glaring lack of editing. I recommend giving it a try and seeing how Lulu turns out. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. I really didn't like the writing  
By Yahoo Lucy I am very glad I didn't have this mother-in-law. My mother in law wasn't perfect. She had a mean streak, but I forgave her for that. The nervous breakdown she caused only lasted about a week of crying.  
0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. great read  
By Narda Great book, really well written, tracing the influence of a number of mothers-in-law on the life of the story teller. Each one is very different, and the story is woven together as a letter to her son.

From Carol Dawson, "a master of the light, suspenseful touch" (Chicago Tribune), comes a bittersweet novel about the "other woman" in every marriage. . . . the Mother-in-Law Diaries Lulu Penfield has had more mothers-in-law than most people could have in three lifetimes. From the maven of household hints to the glacially polite New Zealander to a reputed witch who practices voodoo on an old Raggedy Ann doll, each one of her husbands' mothers has been a singularly memorable participant in Lulu's colorful marital misadventures. Now Lulu herself has become a mother-in-law. . . and as the torch is passed, Lulu cracks away at the ageless mystery of bonding with her own son's wife -- and makes some surprising discoveries as she goes. "Alternately hilarious and gut-wrenching" (The Austin Chronicle), the Mother-in-Law Diaries rings true for anyone who has ever said "I do" -- and who didn't realize that she was marrying not one person, but two.

From Publishers Weekly Candid, irreverent, funny and poignant, Dawson's fourth novel (after *Dancing with the Minotaur*) takes a fresh look at marriage and other social customs through the eyes of an engaging heroine. "Serial marriage is a kind of path, a continual fumbling toward love and commitment [and] honorable intimacy," concludes protagonist Lulu Penfield at the end of her "diaries," basically a long letter to her son, Treatie, who has just announced he is married. Lulu's attempt to instruct her son on the grave responsibilities of matrimony results in a soul-searching recital of her own four trips to the altar, the shortcomings of the men she wed and her relationships with their mothers. Her account, spanning from the 1970s to the present, becomes a trip through the sexual revolution as experienced by a woman from a middle-class Texas family whose traditional expectations are at odds with real life. Lulu is feisty, restless and questing. Ais an appealing narrator who readily admits her propensity to make the same romantic mistake each time. Mark Brune is her Dallas high-school sweetheart and lasting love; she marries grad student Ted Vonick on the rebound and lives in Austin. Subsequent marriages follow: to a biologist in Palo Alto, Calif.; to an artist with whom she lives in London and his native New Zealand; and to a Berkeley journalist and reluctant stepfather to Lulu's three boys. Poor Lulu tries to make each marriage work, but her intelligence and sharp eye for the foibles of her husbands and their mothers (each of whom is a real piece of work) does not grant her self-knowledge. It takes Lulu half a lifetime to understand important truths about human nature and to appreciate at least one of her former mothers-in-law for the "magnitude of her heart." When Lulu finally achieves insight about her sad marital record, it is to ruefully admit that she has been "acting out the paradigm for an entire culture." Meanwhile, the reader has bonded with an endearingly fallible heroine and traveled with her on a distinctive but also universal quest for happiness. Author tour. Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist A tangled, and often dark, musing in the voice of Lulu, whose eldest son, Treatie, at 21, has just married. In contemplating the act that made her a mother-in-law, Lulu traces the women who have had the most effect on her life: the mothers of the men she has loved and/or married. Lulu's ties to those women, and what she learns from and is given by them, are what raises this novel above the done-me-wrong school of multiple marriages. There's Treatie's father Ted's mother, whose household hints mask a sweet, solid love for Lulu and for her grandson. And there's Declan's mother the witch, whose voodoo doll is an old Raggedy Ann. Throughout, Lulu addresses herself to her son and limns the circle of sensuality that holds what is bad for us. Finally, we meet Lulu alone, a successful writer, and see her demons slain (mostly). Sex may be at the core of what makes us human, Lulu seems to say, but it is the mother-child dyad that makes us real. Grace Anne A. DeCandido "The Bloomsbury ""The Mother-in-Law Diaries" is a visionary work....Dawson...lends foresight and imagination to a novel a is also superbly written....Her characters are offbeat and entertaining. Her insights are memorable, her writing pithy. In a story that spans close to 20 years, there doesn't seem to be an ounce of wasted wit." Houston Chronicle "Dawson's writing could not be more entertaining." Library Journal "Lulu's mothers-in-law [are] each brilliantly portrayed...." The Oxford American "As real and unpredictably satisfying as marriage itself. Nan Goldberg Lulu's hilarious odyssey through the '60s and '70s mimics the rhythm of a yo-yo....Author Dawson's a real find." Publishers Weekly (starred review) Candid, irreverent, funny, and poignant....A fresh look at marriage...through the eyes of an engaging heroine." American-Statesman, "TX Dawson has a genuine talent for original (and often comedic) descriptions of people and events, for lush, evocative images of places....Dawson's characters are lovingly

flawed...."American-Statesman, " TX Dawson has a genuine talent for original (and often comedic) descriptions of people and events, for lush, evocative images of places....Dawson's characters are lovingly flawed...."The Bloomsbury ""The Mother-in-Law Diaries" is a visionary work....Dawson...lends foresight and imagination to a novel a is also superbly written....Her characters are offbeat and entertaining. Her insights are memorable, her writing pithy. In a story that spans close to 20 years, there doesn't seem to be an ounce of wasted wit."Houston Chronicle" Dawson's writing could not be more entertaining.Nan Goldberg Lulu's hilarious odyssey through the '60s and '70s mimics the rhythm of a yo-yo....Author Dawson's a real find."Library Journal" Lulu's mothers-in-law [are] each brilliantly portrayed...."Publishers Weekly" (starred review) Candid, irreverent, funny, and poignant....A fresh look at marriage...through the eyes of an engaging heroine."The Oxford American" As real and unpredictably satisfying as marriage itself.