



READING GUIDE

February, 2026

Dinner With The Schnabels

Toni Jordan

In short

A heartwarming, deliciously funny and romantic listen.

Synopsis

Things haven't gone well for Simon Larsen lately. He adores his wife Tansy and his children, but since his business failed and he lost the family home, he can't seem to get off the couch.

His larger-than-life in-laws, the Schnabels - Tansy's mother, sister, and brother - won't get off his case. To keep everyone happy, Simon needs to do one little job: he has a week to landscape a friend's backyard for an important Schnabel family event. But as the week progresses, Simon is derailed by the arrival of an unexpected house guest. Then he discovers Tansy is harbouring a secret. As his world spins out of control, who can he really count on when the chips are down?



Discussion points

1. There is a near-constant stream of communication between the characters (phone calls, texts, notes), and yet, everyone remains ignorant of each other's experiences. Why is miscommunication used here as a plot device? What does this convey about family life?
2. *Dinner With The Schnabels* explores how families cope with adversity, particularly the impact of financial hardship on marital issues and mental health. Did the Schnabels' response to these issues present themselves as authentic? Did their experiences resonate with you?
3. Do you think that Simon grows throughout the story? Or is he just as clueless at the end as he was at the beginning?
4. Do you think the novel offers a realistic snapshot of contemporary family life? Why or why not?

Next you should listen to

Prettier If She Smiled More by Toni Jordan

The Wakes by Dianne Yarwood

The Grapevine by Kate Kemp