



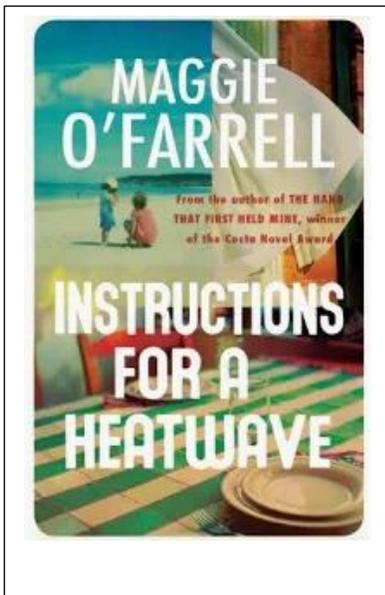
Prison Reading Groups
25 years
1999-2024

Book Talk

Instructions for a Heatwave

By Maggie O'Farrell

Number of pages: 350



Set in London during the 1976 summer heatwave, the book follows different members of the Riordan family after husband and father Robert Riordan goes missing.

Grown children Michael Francis, Monica and Aoife travel home to support their hypochondriac mother, Gretta. As they investigate their father's disappearance, complex family relationships which span generations are revealed.

We recommend this book if you enjoyed *Hamnet* or *The Marriage Portrait* by Maggie O'Farrell, *Brooklyn* by Colm Toibin, or *Small Things Like These* by Claire Keegan.

Discussion Questions:

1. Which character did you think was the most sympathetic? Why?
2. What do you think about Gretta's decision to keep information from her children?
3. Do you think Aoife would have the same challenges if she was a child now, or would she get more help?
4. What do you think happens after the book ends?
5. Do you think extreme weather can make people behave differently?
6. Do you think anyone in the book is a good parent?

Thank you to our volunteer Erin for choosing this title and creating the resource.