

A Love for Life

Penny Hancock

Before reading

1. Look at the cover. What can you see? What do you think this story is going to be about? How easy is it to adopt a child in your country?
2. Now read the blurb on the back cover. Do you know any other books or films with a story like this?
3. Look at the list of characters on page 4. Who do you think the main characters are? What do you think happens to them in the story?
4. If you have the cassette, listen to Chapter 1.

Check your reading

CHAPTER 1

1. Match the beginnings and endings of these sentences.

- 1 Fanella was going through a crisis
 - 2 Fanella found it painful
 - 3 Fanella and her partner Steven
 - 4 Steven had left Fanella
 - 5 Fanella didn't think she could adopt
- a for a younger woman.
b and needed to see her friend Teresa.
c because she wasn't in a steady relationship.
d had intended to adopt a child.
e talking to Timothy about being a mother.

CHAPTER 2

1. True or false?
 - a Some parents were supportive of Rod.
 - b Rod tried to treat all the children equally.
 - c Rod's colleagues thought he was an excellent teacher.
 - d Rod found his house slightly uncomfortable.
 - e Leah wanted to have children.
 - f Rod was jealous of Leah's job.

CHAPTER 3

1. Put the events in the right order.
 - a Rod told Fanella that he had written some children's stories.
 - b The children were fascinated by Fanella's talk.
 - c Fanella now knew that being single was not a barrier to adoption.
 - d Fanella realised that a relationship with Rod would be impossible.
 - e Fanella was impressed by Rod's good looks.

CHAPTER 4

1. Complete the summary.

Teresa realised Fanella was in love with but advised her to find someone and available. Fanella felt about the social worker's visit. She explained to the social worker that she wished to adopt an child so she could

continue Also, she had thought deeply about the that adopting a child would bring. Afterwards, Fanella thought the visit would have been easier if had been there. She now had to wait for the social worker's

CHAPTER 5

1. Match the beginnings and endings of these sentences.

- 1 Teresa invited Fanella
 - 2 Fanella thought Rod was right
 - 3 As soon as Fanella met Rod again,
 - 4 Fanella realised it was pointless
 - 5 Teresa was delighted that Fanella
 - 6 Fanella was going to visit a difficult child
- a to encourage less able children.
b had been approved for adoption.
c to see how they got on together.
d to see Timothy in the Christmas play.
e she felt the same feeling of excitement.
f being angry with Teresa.

CHAPTER 6

1. Who said what?

- a 'This is typical of Ellie's behaviour ... It wears me out!'
- b 'I like Norma, but her children can be annoying.'
- c 'Ellie ... I understand exactly how you feel.'
- d 'She's not an easy child, is she?'
- e 'I wouldn't expect her to be the most well-behaved child in the world.'

Fanella Norma Teresa Ellie

2. How well do you think Fanella will cope with Ellie?

CHAPTER 7

1. Look at the words in italics. Who is *he*, *she*, *her*, *him*?

- a Fanella wondered whether *he* was married or had a partner.
- b But *he* was deep in some kind of conversation – or was it an argument? – with another mother.
- c But if everything's made clear to her, *she's* very well-behaved.
- d Several of *her* colleagues commented on her good mood.
- e Fanella found herself pouring out all her troubles to *him*.

Ellie Mark Rod Fanella

2. What do you think might happen between Fanella and Mark?

CHAPTER 8

1. Complete the summary.

Mrs Grey, the, explained to Rod that Dan's mother had accused him of trying to her child. Although Mrs Grey did not the accusation, Rod had to be from school, and he knew that his would be damaged. The children were to see Rod leave school. At home, Leah didn't seem to be to see him and Rod was when she asked if he had harmed the boy.

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CHAPTER 9

1. True or false?
 - a Fanella wasn't looking forward to dinner with Mark.
 - b Fanella was surprised when Mark asked to see her again.
 - c Both Timothy and Ellie took a real dislike to the new teacher.
 - d Teresa was not fully convinced that Rod was innocent.
 - e Teresa was pleased that Fanella was still attracted to Rod.
 - f Fanella felt much better after talking to Teresa.

CHAPTER 10

1. Put the events in the right order.
 - a Rod talked to Leah about having a child.
 - b Fanella arranged to have lunch with Rod.
 - c Fanella found a large brown envelope on her desk.
 - d Fanella was impressed with Rod's stories.
 - e Rod didn't say anything about Leah's perfume.
 - f Rod worked on his children's stories.

CHAPTER 11

1. Match the beginnings and endings of these sentences.
 - 1 Rod was relieved to talk to Fanella
 - 2 Rod thanked Fanella
 - 3 The more Fanella saw Rod
 - 4 Mark offered to come round
 - 5 Fanella decided to focus her attention on Mark
 - a the stronger her feelings for him became.
 - b and cook dinner for Fanella and Ellie.
 - c and treat Rod only as a business client.
 - d about the accusation of child abuse.
 - e for having confidence in him.

CHAPTER 12

1. Look at the words in italics. Who is *she*, *you*, *him*?
 - a *She* made him feel alive again ...
 - b Lately *she* seemed to have lost some of her respect for him ...
 - c 'What can I say? ... I didn't expect *you* home just then.'
 - d 'I just like *him*. And his children are grown-up ...'
 - e 'Are *you* going to leave me?'

Leah Fanella Mr Simpson Rod

CHAPTER 13

1. Complete the summary.

Mark was preparing dinner at Fanella's house. Ellie said she didn't like fishcakes, so Fanella told her to say so After an with Mark, Fanella sent Ellie to her room. Ellie her plate on the floor. Mark said that Ellie needed, and told Fanella to her. Later, while Mark was Fanella, Ellie came downstairs; she had been Fanella encouraged Ellie to be to Mark, but Mark seemed to be to communicate with a child.

CHAPTER 14

1. True or false?
 - a Fanella didn't recognise Rod's voice on the phone.
 - b Fanella noticed a change in Rod.
 - c Fanella was glad to hear Rod's marriage was in trouble.
 - d Fanella had always been a strong, self-confident woman.
 - e At first, Fanella resisted when Rod kissed her.
 - f Fanella advised Rod not to let other people's opinions affect him.

CHAPTER 15

1. Who said what?
 - a 'You must realise what he's doing! Are you completely blind?'
 - b 'You don't mean to tell me you think he's guilty?'
 - c 'That is no way to welcome a friend of your mother's.'
 - d 'You are not my real mother and I hate that man.'
 - e 'I hope you're not letting that child's opinion affect you.'
 - f 'I'm not ready for this kind of relationship.'

Fanella Ellie Mark Teresa

2. Who do you think was in the car parked down the street?

CHAPTER 16

1. Match the beginnings and endings of these sentences.
 - 1 Rod was surprised when Leah
 - 2 Rod said he and Leah needed time to talk
 - 3 Rod was grateful to know that
 - 4 Despite Leah's change in attitude,
 - 5 Rod drove to Fanella's street.
 - a Leah had confidence in him.
 - b put her arms around him and kissed him.
 - c but was disappointed to see her with another man.
 - d before taking any important decisions.
 - e Rod was still thinking about Fanella.

CHAPTER 17

1. Put the events in the right order.
 - a Ellie secretly invited Rod to the party.
 - b Rod told Fanella that he was in love with her.
 - c Fanella's adoption of Ellie was now legalised.
 - d Fanella told Rod that she was no longer seeing Mark.
 - e Fanella agreed to have a party to celebrate the adoption.
 - f Rod was found innocent and he was at work again.

CHAPTER 18

1. Would Rod have minded not having his own child?
2. How does Teresa feel about Fanella and Rod now?

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After reading

1. Which character did you identify with most? Why?
2. Do you think *A Love for Life* is a good title? Why or why not? Make up an alternative title.
3. Leah and Fanella are two very different women. Make a list of their differences.
4. Rod loves working with children. Would you like to work with children?
5. Have you read in the newspapers about problems in adoption cases? What happened?
6. Fanella tells Rod that she hasn't said anything yet to Ellie about the new baby (page 111). Write the conversation when Fanella gives Ellie the good news.
7. What do you think happens after the end of the story? Write an extra chapter about what happens to the main characters.
8. Imagine you are Mrs Bedrock, Dan's mother. Write a formal letter of apology to Mrs Grey, the headteacher.
9. Make up your own activities for other students to do. e.g. Write some True / False questions.
10. Here is the blurb from another book at this level.

Trumpet Voluntary

A musician disappears leaving only a strange e-mail message behind her. Her husband, in a desperate search to find her, revisits their shared past and has to face up to some unpleasant realities before trying to rebuild his life. His journey of discovery takes us across the world to Rio and deep into the human heart.

Do you want to read *Trumpet Voluntary*?