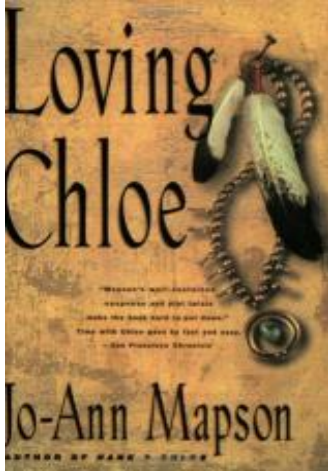


Loving Chloe

by JoAnn Mapson



About the Book

In **Loving Chloe**, JoAnn Mapson continues the story of two unlikely lovers that she began in **Hank & Chloe**. As the novel opens, Chloe arrives in her truck at Hank's Arizona cabin with her beloved dog beside her and her horse in tow. After a three-month separation, Hank learns that Chloe is pregnant with his child.

Hank and Chloe settle into tentative domesticity as Chloe resists Hank's attempts to subdue her restlessness. Against doctor's orders, Chloe secretly continues to ride a horse boarded at the reservation school where Hank finds a teaching job. When Junior Whitebear, the horse's owner and an acclaimed Navaho artist, returns to the reservation, he arrives in time to deliver Chloe's premature baby.

Junior did not return to the reservation looking to fall in love with Chloe. But while Chloe continues to love Hank, she can not deny her fierce attraction to Junior. As for Junior, he discovers not only his love for Chloe, but for her infant daughter and for his newly discovered son, one of Hank's devoted students.

At the same time that they learn what it means to be parents, Chloe, Hank, and Junior grapple with relationships over their own parents: Junior is haunted by memories of his deceased parents, Hank is forced to deal with the terminal illness of his mother, and Chloe must decide whether or not she wants to meet the mother who abandoned her as a toddler. Chloe must decide, too, how she will choose between the two men she loves.

Discussion Guide

1. Though Hank resents the control his father has exerted over his mother, he cannot help himself from trying to dictate Chloe's life. Though Chloe is willing to risk pain in her relationships with animals, she avoids the risks associated with opening her heart to people. How do issues of control and risk affect each of the characters in this novel? What balance exists between smothering safety and reckless risk? Between freedom and responsibility?
2. What is the relationship between the Native Americans of this story and larger American society? How do conflicts between these groups affect the relationships between the characters of the novel?
3. Chloe gives a pup--half-wolf, half-dog--to Junior. What does Junior, a half-breed himself, learn about taking care of his half-breed pet? How does the pup reflect the personal histories of both Chloe and Junior?
4. We learn that Junior has stopped creating jewelry. What is the cause of Junior's artistic block? What brings Junior back to his work? Do you think that this is an experience common to other artists?
5. The novel examines love between men and women, as well as the bonds between parent and child. Hank, Chloe, and Junior must transcend troubled relationships with their own parents if they are to embrace their new roles as parents. How does the past affect Hank, Chloe, and Junior? To what extent does one generation pattern relationships for the next?
6. The love triangle in Mapson's novel comes to what is in many ways an unconventional close--a shift in point-of-view, a leap in time, and an unorthodox resolution. How does the final chapter echo the rest of the novel? How does it resolve the conflicts of the story?

Author Bio

Jo-Ann Mapson, a third generation Californian, grew up in Fullerton as a middle child with four siblings. She dropped out of college to marry, but later finished a creative writing degree at California State University, Long Beach. Following her son's birth in 1978, Mapson worked an assortment of odd jobs-- teaching horseback riding, cleaning houses, typing resumes, and working retail. After earning a graduate degree from Vermont College's low residency program, she taught at Orange Coast College for six years before turning to full-time writing in 1996. Mapson is the author of the acclaimed novels **Shadow Ranch**, **Blue Rodeo**, **Hank & Chloe**, and **Loving Chloe**. "The land is as much a character as the people," Mapson has said. Whether writing about the stark beauty of a California canyon or the poverty of an Arizona reservation, Mapson's landscapes are imbued with life. Setting her fiction in the Southwest, Mapson writes about a region that she knows well; after growing up in California and living for a time in Arizona and New Mexico, Mapson lives today in Cosa Mesa, California. She attributes her focus on setting to the influence of Wallace Stegner.

Like many of her characters, Mapson has ridden horses since she was a child. She owns a 35-year-old Appaloosa and has said that she learned about writing from learning to jump her horse, Tonto. "I realized," she said, "that the same thing that had been wrong with my riding was the same thing that had been wrong with my writing. In riding there is a term called 'the moment of suspension,' when you're over the fence, just hanging in the air. I had to give myself up to it, let go, trust the motion. Once I got that right, everything fell into place."

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