

# Nero Book Club Notes

**TITLE:** She's Having Her Baby

**AUTHOR:** Lauren Sams

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**SUBJECT:** Fiction

## *Book description*

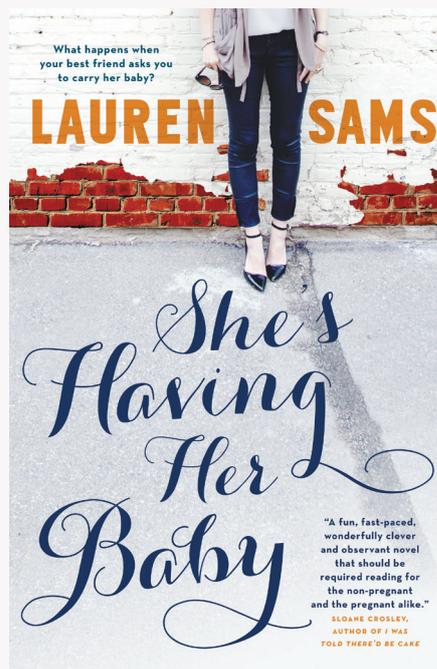
Georgie Henderson doesn't want to have kids, but her best friend, Nina Doherty, has wanted to have a baby for as long as she can remember. Sadly, Nina's uterus refuses to cooperate. One drunken evening, Nina asks Georgie for the ultimate favour: would she carry a baby for her? Georgie says yes – and spends the next nine months wondering why!

With intense bacon-and-egg roll cravings and distant memories of what her feet look like, Georgie tries to keep it all together in her dream job as the editor of Jolie magazine. Her love life's a mess – and sauvignon blanc's off the menu – leaving Georgie to deal with twists in her life she never expected.

## *A reader's introduction*

Georgie and Nina have been best friends since high school. Nina has always had Georgie's back. But after seven years of trying to get pregnant, Nina asks Georgie to do something for her — be the surrogate mother for the child she so desperately wants. Nina has always respected and believed Georgie when she has said she never wants to have children. Unable to imagine letting Nina down, Georgie says yes. Although she dreads being pregnant Georgie reckons everything will work out.

Things go pear-shaped when Georgie discovers she's already pregnant. She and the baby's father Jase have just broken up because he felt betrayed that she made a decision about the surrogacy without telling him. Nina is heartbroken by Georgie's



pregnancy and 'breaks up' with Georgie too. And work goes pear-shaped at the same time. Georgie's job, the one she's wanted as long as she can remember, as editor of a glossy magazine, is threatened by the digital age — and a 22-year-old who knows a hell of a lot more about it than Georgie.

Georgie takes refuge at her friend Ellie's house. Ellie is already a mother, and represents everything Georgie fears about becoming a mum — focused on her kid to the exclusion of everything else and at risk of losing her own identity. Georgie isn't sure how she feels about the pregnancy but she's damn sure she doesn't want to become a mum like Ellie, 'a shell of what I once was' (119).

There's a lot in *She's Having Her Baby* about becoming a mum, but there's also a lot about friendships between women, the importance of work, and how to define your identity when everything around you changes.

## *Praise for She's Having Her Baby*

"*She's Having Her Baby is a fun, fast-paced, wonderfully clever and observant novel that should be required reading for the non-pregnant and the pregnant alike.*" Sloane Crosley, author of *I Was Told There'd Be Cake* and *How Did You Get This Number*.

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“*She’s Having Her Baby is the perfect novel for women in our generation. It portrays besties, pregnancy and motherhood better than any book I’ve ever read.*” Summer Land, author of *Summerlandish*.

“*Fresh, funny and heart-warming, Sams’ novel is a testament to true love and friendship. I couldn’t put it down!*” Dilvan Yasa, author of *Good Enough* and *Things My Daughter Needs to Know*.

“*Such an enjoyable read it ought to come with a free pool lounge and frozen margarita. Fans of Jojo Moyes, Lauren Weisberger and Zoë Foster Blake will adore Sams’ novel. Like chick-lit, only smarter, cooler and LOLzier.*” Meg Mason, author of *Say It Again in a Nice Voice*

“*I was hooked within the first few pages! Lauren Sams explores the topical, sensitive issue of surrogacy in a fresh, smart and entertaining way, proving why she’s one to watch. It’s heartfelt and sassy, and a guaranteed conversation-starter*” Gabrielle Tozer, author of *The Intern* and *Faking It*

“*Honest and sassy, She’s Having Her Baby deals with the joys, heartbreaks and messiness of fertility, babies and friendship. You’ll want to remember the one-liners and wish the main characters were your friends.*” Kasey Edwards, author of *Thirty-Something and Over It* and *Daily Life* columnist.

## About the author

Lauren Sams began her career at *Cosmopolitan* before moving to *Girlfriend* as Deputy Editor. She’s now back at *Cosmo* as Associate Editor. She writes for *Elle*, *Marie Claire* and *Sunday Style*, and her work regularly appears on [dailylife.com.au](http://dailylife.com.au). She lives in Sydney with her husband, daughter and two dogs.

## Questions for discussion

1. With Georgie deciding to go ahead and have the baby she has never wanted, does this novel put the case that, deep down, all women want to have kids? Do you think that every woman wants to have kids, even if they say they don’t?

2. What do you think about surrogacy? Could you do it for someone? What do you think motivates people to become surrogates?

3. Why do you think Georgie agrees to have Nina’s baby? Does she think her decision through well enough? Or is it the kind of decision you can’t be rational about?

4. Ellie describes Georgie and Nina as ‘closer than best friends’ (page 109). Is Georgie and Nina’s relationship unusually close for a female friendship? Is it an equal friendship?

5. Is Ellie a good friend to Georgie? Can she be excused for not coming to Nina’s birthday parties? Whose side do you take in the argument between Ellie and Georgie on pages 251 to 260? Have you had any friendships change when one of you had a baby and the other didn’t? How did the friendship change?

6. Is the character of Ellie realistic? Or is she a parody like the baby book that she gets Georgie to read? What about the other mums in the playground? Are they exaggerated or true to life?

7. Do you think Georgie will become like Ellie when she has her baby? Will Nina become like Ellie? Does one parent need to be like Ellie?

8. If you are a mum, how has your mothering turned out differently to what you’d expected or planned? Are there things you swore you’d never do that you NOW find yourself doing? Have the changes been superficial or central to your identity? If you aren’t a mum but plan to be one eventually, how do you think you’ll change?

9. We’ve all heard the cliché that mothering is the hardest job in the world. Is it?

10. Georgie is worried about her identity if she has a baby: ‘Who would I be if I had a baby?’ (page 151), she wonders. Work is important to her, and when she leaves *Jolie* she says something similar: ‘I didn’t know who I was if I wasn’t at work. I didn’t make any sense without something to do’ (page 205). Do you think work will be as important to her after she has the baby? Did your attitude to work change after you had kids, or do you think it will? How do you balance your work and home life?

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11. Georgie is passionate about *Jolie*, seeing printed magazines as better than websites. What do you think about glossy magazines? Do you agree with Georgie, or with people who think they are 'silly and unimportant, that all they do is advertise lipsticks' (page 165)? Has your reading moved to the online space?

12. How do you think Nina's mum dying has affected her? And how has it affected Georgie? What about Georgie's relationship with her own mum? Georgie doesn't want to end up like her mum when she becomes a mother (page 154), but does she come to appreciate her in the end?

13. Are women better at friendship than men, as Georgie's old classmate Adam thinks?

14. The mother who accosts Georgie in the supermarket queue says that pregnancy is all about 'realising that everything you've done up to that point has been worthless' (page 2). Do you agree?

15. 'Why did married people always assume that once you were coupled up your life suddenly looked like a Julie Andrews movie?' (page 7). Have you encountered this attitude? Have you been guilty of this attitude? Can Georgie be happy and single? Or are you still holding out hope for a romance with Colin?

16. How do you think Georgie and Nina will go looking after Georgie's baby together?

17. Did you expect a fairytale ending for Georgie and Jase? If you were Georgie, would you have refused Jase's offer of marriage? Would you say the book has a fairytale ending anyway?