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Portfolio: All about home

In her new book, *House of Havoc*, columnist Marni Jameson offers advice on how to turn a havoc-filled home into a heavenly haven without losing your savings or your sanity.

While Jameson admits that no one can have the picture-perfect house while juggling a marriage, a job, and a family, she insists that's no excuse for letting clutter consume your life. She has compiled her numerous tips and tools of the trade for amateur designers and old pros alike.

House of Havoc (Da Capo Lifelong Books, \$16.95) comes complete with advice from professionals, including interior decorators, family therapists, and home entrepreneur experts, but Jameson herself is a winning guide. Even if you wince at the phrase *lighting fixture*, if the words *decorative door knobs* make your blood run cold, and if *faux finish* sounds like a lackluster ending, Jameson will walk you through the decorating process with good humor and solid advice.

For her, the key is to simplify: Clear out your papers, your clothes, and all your extra junk, and you're well on your way to a heavenly home - or at least an organized one.

Filled with dozens of brief chapters that touch on design, repair, and day-to-day upkeep, *House of Havoc* is more an index than a memoir; think of it as the go-to guide for everything from glue guns to going green.

Her book isn't about living a Better Homes & Gardens fantasy; it's about meeting your spouse, your kids, and your dogs (or, as Jameson succinctly puts it, *them*) halfway. It's about coming to realize that the perfect home isn't just a beautiful one. It's one where your family is happy to be, even without the hand-crafted Italian drapes. Of course, some throw pillows and a vintage dresser couldn't hurt.

- Emily Tartanella

Marni Jameson's column, "At Home With Marni Jameson," occasionally appears in The Inquirer. She is a regular contributor to the Los Angeles Times, Woman's Day, and Family Circle.

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