



My Husband the Stranger

Rebecca Done

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A tragic accident. A terrible injury. And in a moment, the man you fell in love with is transformed into a total stranger. How would you cope? What would you do? Would you be strong enough to stay? But what if you found out that it wasn't an accident at all...?

My Husband the Stranger Details

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Author : Rebecca Done

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From Reader Review My Husband the Stranger for online ebook

Rachel Gilbey says

3.5 Stars

It was the fascinating concept that drew me to My Husband the Stranger, and it was due to my interest in the idea of the book, that kept me reading to the end. However having finished the book, I just can't help but feeling flat. I'm not sure exactly what I was expecting from the story, but I feel as though it could have been more.

There were certain storyline elements that I could see coming a mile off, and although I was interested in the story, and it definitely was written in an engaging way, and I enjoyed the writing style, there was just something missing for me.

Graeme saw Molly first. Later that same evening Alex, his twin brother, leaves the bar with Molly, and it's the start of their relationship. Fastforward to now, and three years after a dreadful accident, Molly is still hoping that Alex will turn back into the man she fell in love with.

For three years ago there was a dreadful accident that caused Alex brain damage, and it has drastically changed his personality. He is now like a child in an adults body, with some of a childish mindset, but at other times incredibly angry, and other times can just about show the old Alex is still deep inside him.

And it is for that reason that Molly is determined to stand by her man, no matter what cost to herself and her own dreams potentially.

We get the story from two different perspectives, Molly in the here and now, stuck in a job she hates, caring for her husband, and trying to make the best of the situation, and then, we have chapters from Alex's point of view, which are the memories of how he and Molly got together and key moments in their relationship history.

The story at all times kept me wondering what would happen next, and ultimately what Molly would decide. Graeme wants to offer them as much support as he can, and it must be so weird for Molly to spend time with the twins, when one of them has changed so dramatically.

My Husband the Stranger certainly makes you think, how would you cope in Molly's situation. I'm not sure I'd be compassionate enough (to my non-existent) husband to cope with a major change in personality although I'd like to think that love would overpower everything.

Thought provoking and throws up intriguing questions, in a book that I enjoyed reading.

Thank you to Netgalley and Michael Joseph for this copy of the book which I reviewed voluntarily and honestly.

Maggie says

For Molly and Alex it was love at first sight. Within a year they were engaged and looking forward to a life together, renovating Alex's childhood home, maybe raising a family.

Their happiness is shattered when Alex has a near fatal accident whilst visiting Graeme, his twin. After he recovers from his coma he undergoes a complete personality change. But no matter how angry and irritating he is Molly clings to the thought that the man she loves is still there and struggles to present a happy face to the world. She truly believes the, "in sickness & in health" line of her marriage vows

I found this quite a hard book to read at times. It makes you confront thoughts at the back of your mind - would you have the strength to stick by your husband when he has become someone else entirely? You hope so, but you wonder....

Rebecca Done really makes you care about her characters. This is a book that ill prey on my mind for a long while. Thanks to Netgalley & the publisher for giving me the chance to read & review this very thought provoking book.

Suzanne says

Another audio read where I have to say, I do usually become quite distracted. Although, I do love to listen when I am on my work commute.

This was a little bit sinister, a little twisty. A slow burn, but nothing overly exciting. Molly and Alex are madly in love, but Alex's twin seems to hover around, whether in physical proximity, or not. Alex suffers a brain injury after an accident, and we see the tragic difference of the before and after. This difference is quite severe, and Molly is a saint in her loving care.

She is working very hard to pay the bills and care for her husband, which is increasingly difficult - her boss is terribly uncaring and her husband equally difficult and just so different, difficult and aggressive.

Very well written, Molly's support network were a loving bunch and her determination to do the right thing made for sensitive and empathetic writing. My first experience of this author, I will read her again if the occasion arises.

Karen Whittard says

Thank you to Netgalley, Penguin Uk Michael Joseph, and Rebecca Done for the opportunity to read this book for an honest review.

You can find my review on Goodreads from today under Karen Whittard and on Amazon on publication day under K.e.whittard.

Molly and Alex fell in love at first sight. They have their whole lives ahead of them. Together they set about renovating Alex's fathers home which they have inherited and are planning on starting a family. Everything

is rosy. Until the day Molly receives a historical phonecall from Alex's brother Greame. Saying Alex has had a terrible accident. Fallen down the stairs and smacked his head on wrought iron.

The accident changes Alex completely. He is no longer happy go lucky. He doesn't go to work or go out the house. His memory is gone and so is his sense of smell. He has turned into someone Molly doesn't recognise at all. But Molly has promised to love him in sickness and in health. But it's proving harder than Molly couldn't ever imagine.

This book follows the events after Alex's accident. It also has some parts where it visits the couple in the past also which gives a great insight into what Alex was like before the accident.

I gave this three stars as I found this book hard to read. It didn't grab me like I thought and hoped it would do when I read the bio. I do hope that there was a happy ever after in store for these two. Even after the big reveal. Throughout the book you feel for both sides and I think that's the way it should be.

Happy reading everyone

Bookread2day says

A must buy-must read. The whole book is absolutely an excellent page turner. When you get married it is in sickness and in health. When Alex Fraser falls down some stairs he is left in a coma. Once he comes out of his coma he is left brain damaged. Molly is now living with a husband that she doesn't know any more. He has become like a stranger. Alex becomes violent due to not understanding certain things. When Alex's dad died he left the cottage to Alex but not his twin brother Graeme. As Alex can't work, Molly is now the only one working bringing in the money to do up the cottage. Graeme is always there to help Molly and his twin brother Alex. How did Alex fall down the stairs? A shocking truth is about to be unravelled.

MeggieBree says

3.5 stars.

My Husband the Stranger was just ok for me. It was an interesting account of how a woman is coping after her husband suffers a traumatic brain injury in a late-night accident, but it was a little too...something...for me. The account of their past love was just too flowery for me, and the reactions of the people involved in all of the action just seemed a little off.

All in all, it was a decent book that kept me reading until the end, and I would definitely recommend it to people who like love stories, but it's not one that I would read again. Maybe I'm just a bit jaded on the whole "true love" theme.

Thank you to NetGalley and Penguin for giving me the opportunity to read this ARC :)

Laura says

Book reviews and more at www.snazzybooks.com

Well, I sped through this book - with many tears! *My Husband The Stranger* is a contemporary novel that isn't a romance as such, it isn't a completely feel-good read but it also has elements of happiness and positivism, too. It's a mixture of many emotions and feelings, and I really enjoyed it!

The writing is great, with the author managing to completely suck me in. The novel is set in two main time periods - one, in the present day, told from Rebecca's point of view and detailing life after Alex's accident which has left him literally a changed man, and one told from Alex's point of view chronicling the time leading up to the accident. Both are equally interesting to read about, and are great at giving the reader a bit of insight into what both Molly and Alex's lives were like before the accident as well as after it.

Alex himself was a tricky character - sometimes I hated him for how he treats Molly, but then I had to remember that he'd suffered horrendous injuries and just wasn't the same man Molly fell in love with, through no fault of his own. Molly was really likeable and not too perfect - she was great to read about. I really felt for her as she tried to deal with everything and remain loyal and loving to her husband.

I can't even imagine how I'd deal with the same situation - it doesn't bear thinking about. But that's exactly what this novel makes you do: think about it. About their situation, their life, their friends and family, their failed hopes and dreams - and how you'd feel in this situation. Would I be as patient and amazing as Molly was, despite having her moments of frustration or anger (which, when reading *My Husband the Stranger*, you can forgive her for). That's what made me sad at times during this book; I was left feeling moved and generally rather impressed.

The story doesn't move at a mile a minute - sometimes there isn't that much that seems to be happening, but it feels like it reflects their actual lives and it's full of Molly's anguish and hopes. Some parts were quite hard to read, and one part (which I can't say without spoiling the story) to do with Alex's brother felt a little unbelievable, but I felt really satisfied at the end that I'd read an entertaining and interesting novel.

I also really enjoyed *This Secret We're Keeping* [read my review here] and would definitely recommend that book as well as *My Husband The Stranger* - both very different, but great, reads!

Many thanks to Penguin and Netgalley for providing a copy of this novel on which I chose to write an honest and unbiased review.

Gazala says

This book is a leaf out of the life of Alex and his wife Molly, and how their life is altered for good after an accident. The book swings between the past and the present and throws light on how Alex is, and how he used to be. Molly is stuck in a job she hates as the bills pile up and her husband isn't capable of holding down a job. Alex's twin brother Graeme is the bad boy amongst the two and is the last person Alex spends his time with before the accident. He steps in to help Molly periodically as her husband no longer is the man she was in love with. When he starts flirting with his ex, she is torn between staying and leaving.

The book touches upon the agony of how their life changes and how one's choice impacts their lives. The

book is also laced with very predictable secrets and it tries very hard to garner your sympathy... but it is so very ordinary in its approach that I felt bored to death by its almost soobish approach. Have you ever met someone who is going through some bad stuff , but they go on about it so much, you excuse yourself at a sight if them ? this book gives you those vibes... and the end , let's just not go there! For it's as ordinary as they come...

Overall , yet another unimpressive book that I wouldn't really recommend.

Cathy says

After several years together, Molly's husband, Alex, has a terrible fall resulting in severe brain injury that leaves him psychologically changed from the man she married, effectively a "stranger". The book contrasts their life beforehand with the daily struggle to maintain their relationship after Alex's injury.

I felt the author couldn't quite make up her mind whether the novel was intended to be an insightful account of the impact of serious brain injury on a relationship, an "against the odds" romance or a psychological thriller. In the end, for me, it didn't really satisfy completely in any of these respects. The strongest element was definitely the description of the day-to-day toll on a relationship of caring for a partner who has been changed physically and psychologically by brain injury. The author did a good job of conveying Molly's conflicted feelings – sympathy and love for her husband but also rage, regret and frustration at the position she finds herself in – and the mental and physical burden of caring for a person with limited hope of full recovery. There are some touching moments that seem grounded in the reality of living with someone whose symptoms can change from day to day, hour to hour: "Just when I think I have totally lost him, for a few precious moments I always find him again." I found the sections detailing Alex and Molly's relationship before his accident a little cheesy; everything was a bit too perfect – Alex himself, their wedding, their life together before his accident. However I appreciate the author was probably trying to build up a picture of what Molly has lost to explain why she wants to stick with Alex and hold on to the hope of an eventual recovery. I found the mystery introduced towards the end of the book rather underwhelming and the reveal a little predictable. To my mind the author came perilously close to "good twin/evil twin" cliché in the characterisation of Alex and his brother, Graeme.

This was an enjoyable read with an interesting premise but I didn't find it completely successful.

I received an advance review copy courtesy of NetGalley and publishers, Penguin, in return for an honest review,

Janet says

A beautifully written story of love even in the face of adversity.

Alex meets Molly by chance in a London club, he knows in that instant that she is the one for him, that he'd do anything to keep her safe, will love her forever no matter what happens.

Each chapter from a different character, past and present, this is love overcoming adversity.....For better, for worse. In sickness and in health...

A dreadful accident puts those vows to the test, can you love someone who no longer remembers those vows and the promises you made to each other..

I really enjoyed this, a feelgood story that warmed my heart. I'm not big on mushy lovey dovey books but this had substance and as I read it I felt as though I was urging them onwards hoping for their future.

Miriam Smith says

"My Husband the Stranger" written by Rebecca Done is an emotional and at times a heartbreakin read. Although not my normal genre this family drama encased in a love story grips you from the first page and doesn't let go. There is a twist to the tale at the end but don't be fooled into thinking this is a psychological thriller as it isn't. It's a slow burning love story that is hit by tragedy and how the affected characters deal with the sudden changes.

I'm not sure I'd have had the patience Molly showed and I truly admired her dedication to looking after her husband even when times got so bad. Told through Alex's past and Molly's present day voices I very much enjoyed hearing their true emotions and I particularly liked hearing Alex's story from before the accident. I imagine the basis to this novel could easily read as someone's real life story and sadly probably does, considering the many brain and memory conditions diagnosed today. The author has covered the subject delicately and with genuine empathy.

Although quite slow, I enjoyed reading this over a lazy weekend and it fit the bill perfectly. Gentle, uncomplicated and very realistic, this may not be to everyone's liking (especially if they are expecting a thriller) but it's a solid enough read that readers of women's fiction should enjoy.

With thanks to Rachel Hall for my copy of the book.

3.5 stars rounded up to 4.

Roman Clodia says

I enjoyed Done's first book (This Secret We're Keeping) about a forbidden love affair between a schoolgirl and her maths teacher: this one explores the emotional aftermath of an accident that leaves husband Alex brain-damaged and a stranger to his young wife, Molly. The story is told in a fragmented narrative: Molly today, Alex in the past - an increasingly clichéd structure in contemporary fiction - but does give us insight into the strong relationship they had before this devastating accident which seems to have deeply affected Alex's sense of identity.

Done writes emotional chemistry very well and picks intriguing subjects putting her protagonists into difficult situations, treating them with empathy and a level of thoughtfulness. However, both books have a slightly melodramatic tendency: here there's a touch too much going on in the background (view spoiler) that veers towards, though finally shies away from, some kind of melodramatic revelation.

While the book starts very strongly, it starts to feel overlong just past the halfway mark, and that's because nothing is really happening: more pace is needed, a more gradual re-emergence of Alex's feelings and personality which seems almost miraculous towards the end.

So an interesting subject and some thoughtful writing, definitely at the more emotionally-sensitive end of the commercial fiction spectrum. This is a topic which a more mature and nuanced writer like Susan Hill, say, would have treated in a more subtle, expansive and probably devastating way. All the same 3.5 stars: good if

you want something which is easy-reading but with some narrative 'grab'.

Thanks to the publisher for an ARC via NetGalley

Deanna says

My reviews can also be seen at: <https://deesradreadsandreviews.wordpress.com>...

When I read the description for this book it hit close to home. My ex-husband was in a severe car accident while we were first dating in 1995 and suffered a head injury. This changed everything for him and although he was nothing like Alex there were some similarities. Especially right after the accident. His head was still swollen to about twice the size and he wasn't acting like himself. He would get angry very quickly and had trouble with his memory. I remember thinking (I was 19) what if he stays like this? It was scary. We were told that once the swelling went down he should get back to normal. For the most part it did. That's not to say there wasn't lasting effects. Anyhow, this is a book review and not my life story so I'll leave it at that.

I was very intrigued and excited to get reading.

In one moment EVERYTHING can change....

What you would do if your husband became another person overnight?

Molly and Alex seem like the perfect couple. Very in love, busy planning their future together. But after a terrible fall her husband sustains a severe head injury. This injury changes him into someone Molly has a hard time recognizing.

Told from Molly's perspective in the present and Alex's perspective prior to his accident. I like how it was written. It added insight into their early relationship and helped us get to know Alex - before.

Possibly very minor spoilers

For the next few years, Molly struggles to keep things together. Alex is distant, gets very angry, and has problems with his memory. On top of taking care of Alex. Molly is trying to hold on to a job she hates but desperately needs. She's exhausted all of the time. Every morning she wakes up hoping it will be the day that Alex turns back into the man she fell madly in love with.

But everything may not be exactly what it seems....

This book was well-written and I was intrigued to see where it was going to go. I was pretty sure I had everything figured out and although I was partially correct, there were a few things I didn't see coming.

It was quite emotional at times. I really felt for everyone involved. But I could relate to Molly as this person was not the man she married. But glimpses of the man she once knew kept her hopeful. The guilt at her feelings and at the same time wanting to care for him. This definitely relates to the vow "in sickness and in health".

We may think we know what we would do in the same position, but like anything else until it happens to you....you just don't know.

I enjoyed this novel. I will definitely be looking for more of Rebecca Done.

Thank you NetGalley, Rebecca Done, and Penguin UK Michael Joseph, for providing an advanced readers copy of this book for me to read in exchange for my honest review.

Maxine (Booklover Catlady) says

Not an easy read, nor an upbeat read. This one wrung out the emotions. It's a novel that tackles the complexities of loving a totally changed person after a brain injury, something that can impact moods, behaviour, personality and patience.

Alex and Molly start off being that couple you want to be part of. Disaster strikes and their lives are changed forever when Alex suffers an acquired brain injury in an awful moment. Imagine the man you loved is locked up inside and everything he does and says is different to before. Like you got a new husband.

Alex's twin brother Graeme stays as close as possible to Molly and Alex, his offers of help received with mixed feelings. The clever plot takes us across two timelines - the days leading up to the accident and now. The author starts to weave in some questions and before long you know everything may not be as it seems.

Molly's emotional journey is quite heart-breaking and powerful. It's not easy for her now. She cares for Alex like a carer, his needs never far from her mind but what about her?

Once the twists and turns start to rear their head the book engaged me much more. It's a bit of a slow-burner this one. I wasn't bored but do with some twists had popped up a bit earlier. The characters are complex and you will form your own feelings toward them quickly. Be prepared for some surprises as you read.

I found this an enjoyable read. It's got depth and an interesting plot line that explores human relationships. 4 stars from me for this.

I received an ARC of this novel from the publisher via NetGalley. All review opinions are entirely my own and totally unbiased.

Paula White says

I enjoyed how this book showed you Alex's POV before the accident and how he and Molly met. Alex was changed after his accident - he looked the same but he suffered a brain injury so 'he' wasn't the same. We get to see how Molly copes with knowing that the man she fell in love with is gone and in his place is someone different and she still loves him. There were ups and downs - lots of different options but love won through in the end. It ended as happily as it could as there is not a miraculous cure and it would have been totally unrealistic for Alex to wake up and be his old self again someday. It's a hard read in places because you think 'what would I do' and there isn't a right or wrong way to deal with something like this and it is so incredibly hard for everyone involved - how do you mourn for the person that was when they are still here?

I received this book for free from NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.
