



White Rabbit, Red Wolf

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Described as *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* meets John le Carre, about a teen math prodigy with an extreme anxiety disorder who finds himself caught in a web of lies and conspiracies after an assassination attempt on his mother.

White Rabbit, Red Wolf Details

Date :

ISBN :

Author : Tom Pollock

Format :

Genre : Young Adult, Thriller, Contemporary, Mystery, Health, Mental Health

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From Reader Review White Rabbit, Red Wolf for online ebook

Trisha says

Wow, this sent me all over the place. Thrilling and unpredictable.

Not sure about that end, though.

Dani - Perspective of a Writer says

Check out more reviews @ Perspective of a Writer...

Peter is a teen math prodigy with an extreme anxiety disorder that manifests in intense panic attacks. When his scientist mother is nearly assassinated and his twin sister, Bel, goes on the run, he's forced to analyze the facts and figure out what's going on without the two pillars in his life. Running from the same organization that is hunting his sister and claims to be working with his mother, he joins forces with a girl who might be his enemy...

The short review...

I've read Tom Pollock before and found his writing style a bit heavy even if it suited the world he had created... Here I found that the intensity he brought to his previous work quite suited Peter's adrenaline filled journey to learn the truth! The thing is this is a super crazy ride... its a twist filled thriller that Peter doesn't always tell us straight on what is happening, he's unreliable like that so we really have to pay attention even as we read as FAST as humanly possible to get to the bloody end!

There is also this flipping back and forth between the recent past and the present that imparts everything we need to know in a way that was oh so compelling! No info dumps here!! I wasn't sure I wanted to be in the past or the present as they both were super good... It all comes together in a way that scares the heck out of you for these two siblings... While a part of what has been going on is pretty obvious, the rest really isn't... though you will find yourself nodding and going that makes total sense!

I can't really tell you much more! It's best to go into this without any more information as everything rolls out before you as Peter processes what is going on... And you'll want to get what you need as you follow in his wake. Needless to say I LOVED this book so much... if you want a thriller this is a super fun one!

Cover & Title grade -> C+

I don't get this cover AT ALL and probably wouldn't have even looked at the book except I was looking at the mental health tag and thinking I wonder why this story is a lie?! That title is one of the best ones I've come across and raised my grade from a solid F to a solid C.

Actually i found a different cover that focuses on Peter and Bel's relationship. I would have given that cover

a solid B+ as it better captures what the story is about... a conspiracy of epic proportions! I can see why they didn't use it as the title is too small though. Better to ditch the words, White Rabbit and Red Wolf and just keep the animal graphics. I would have also splattered the cover with blood as its certainly a book about murder and mayhem...

What else can I tell you about This Story in a Lie without ruining it for you?

-The Maths.

Oh. My. Maths! All the math talk in this book is sooooo good. The thing is that its not too complex while being terribly complex at the same time. It was expertly written so we really understand Peter's mind.

-His Sister!

GAAAAAAAHHHHHHHHHHH! Bel is super duper cool... She is a great sister, a female empowered super being... I can't say more but you will make grabee hands every time she is on the page because you don't want her to disappear!

-Ingrid.

I. LOVE. This. Girl. She has OCD and all sorts of history with Peter and from her youth. I wanted to give her a hug and help her find a regular life! And that end!! GAAAAAHHHHH!

-The mental health, of course!

There is sooooooooooooo much mental health in this book. From unsuspecting characters and ones that horrify you once you realize. I can't go into it but needlesstosay the opening scene will shock you and you'll wonder if you WANT to keep reading but let me reassure you now... YOU DO! (I do want to mention the EXTREME bullying that goes on.)

-The British flavor.

I am a total anglophile! I love to read books set in Britain and the spy aspect of this book is so much fun! The setting for the final battle is the BEST and I just loved the subtle British flavor the entire story was infused with...

As a Writer...

Dani... if you LOVED this so much why the heck did you give it 4 stars?! Huh you ninny?!

Well as a reader I raced through the book. In fact, I rarely read more than 25% in one sitting as you don't catch many nuances when you read a book faster than that. So when I'm reading a book quite swiftly and still find myself not buying WHY something is happening that is a bit of a stumbling block.

One particular section of the book I found to be out of sync for a bullied person who is as severely bullied as Peter. When a person is bullied there are some things that just don't fly. EVER. While the anxiety mental health was quite spot on with Peter, he didn't come across as a person who had experienced what he had in the book. Anxiety should have amped up those feelings as well making it even more unlikely for him to do what he did. If you haven't been bullied before then you probably wouldn't think much about this section, but from someone with experience it just didn't ring true.

Also I'm not really a fan of an open ending... I don't mind allowing the reader to assume for themselves based upon what was shown, but I do have a problem when as a reader I'm finding events explained vaguely

enough that I can't settle as a reader on what happened. As a writer it's important to portray things clearly enough that a reader is satisfied with their understanding of the end while at the same time allowing them to make their own conclusions.

The Story is a Lie is quite superb! A fun thriller plot, infused with mental health through out and an unreliable protagonist that makes you want to root for him to succeed! Peter is a math prodigy, an observant analyst and the brother who loves and adores his sister... Come root for him too.

? ???? Authenticity
? ???? Writing Style
? ???? Plot & Pacing
? ???? World Building

Thanks to Edelweiss and the publisher for providing me with a copy in exchange for an honest review. It has not influenced my opinions.

You can find this review and many others on my book blog @ Perspective of a Writer. See my special perspective at the bottom of my reviews under the typewriter...

Matthew says

I'm not sure I can say anything without ruining this book for you other than I thought it was incredible. Please, go and read it!!!

Bridget says

The title says it all. Loop upon loop, lie upon lie, it isn't the narrator who is unreliable in this story, it is everyone around him. Just when you think you have it sorted there is another twist and you are duped again.

Pete is the shy maths nerd to his twin sisters confident angry, rebelliousness. These two are as different as siblings could possibly be yet there is a strong bond, they have been bought together by their love of their mother, a frightfully important scientist who is doing secret work. Dad is never spoken of and is mysteriously absent. Pete is friendless and isolated but not unhappy as he has security and love at home, this helps when he is bullied and picked on at school.

As more of Pete's problems are revealed to us, his paranoia and his obsession with counting and managing his life by dealing with it using numbers, you begin to realise that all cannot be what it seems. Things come to a head at a large function where his Mum is to be awarded the highest award in the country for science by the Prime Minister. All hell breaks loose, there is violence and suddenly Bel is missing and Mum has been stabbed. At this point you realise this is a thriller. The pace is wild and the action is kick arse. In the extreme.

this is one of those books where you have to suspend your disbelief and just go along for the ride. It is full on! I was guessing all the way to the end, Bel is such a cool character, totally kick arse and nasty and at the

same time so loving to her brother. I loved being in Pete's headspace, the wheels turning while he tried to figure out what was going on, who he could trust, who was good and who was evil.

This is movie ready and I have cast the characters already in my mind. It isn't for the faint hearted and there is violence and gore all over the place. Tom Pollock does a brilliant job of keeping you guessing. A really cool and interesting concept and I enjoyed every second.

Thanks to NetGalley for giving me access.

- ?? DANY ??- (danyreads) says

. : ?? — 4 ★

READ THIS REVIEW ON MY BLOG!!!

<https://bit.ly/2umzAhU>

ARC provided from the publisher via Edelweiss+ in exchange for an honest review (thank you Soho Teen and Random House!!)

before picking this one up, keep in mind that the title of this book isn't a lie, in spite of it being called This Story is a Lie. this book is unprovable. proving it true also proves it false. so it must be true, right? is it true that this story is a lie? is proving that this story is a lie true, also proving it false, since the lie is true, even when a lie is false by the very nature of its meaning?

hmm. yup. if anything is true, is that this book is an anxiety attack waiting to happen. in a good way, though!!

"I'm a world-champion paranoid."

This Story is a Lie follows Peter Blankman, a teen who suffers from a very extreme anxiety disorder and relies heavily on his prodigious mathematical abilities to get by on a daily basis. during an award ceremony held in his mom's honor, since she's a very influential scientist, Peter suddenly is surrounded by bewilderment, deceit and muddled truths after his mom is the victim of an assassination attempt and his sister goes missing. on the run and hunted by a strange group of people he's never met before but who claim to work with his mother, Peter has no choice but to try to figure out what's happening while facing his worst enemy: his own anxiety and fear.

there is no way for me to say too much about this book and its plot without absolutely spoiling everything, but just know that this book unwinds to be so much more than its premise at first glance. it is a mathematician's fever dream and a philosopher's wet dream packed into a 336 page mystery/thriller YA book. you are teased not only by the most unreliable narrator there's ever been, but also by a series of twists that just keep on coming at every turn of the page. there are points in the book where you think you have it all figured out, and then Tom Pollock hits you with another twist out of nowhere. there's also a very strange element to this book that just doesn't allow you to discern between truth and lie. there comes a point in the story where Peter's memories jumble with his anxiety and fear and generally his ethical and moral traits and everything becomes this very organized chaos, which, i don't know about everybody else, but i just found it enthralling. the way this book unravels into every little crevice and detail that's been given to you from the

very first page is just brilliant.

math is also a huge part of this book but i don't think it was tedious at all. you're never lost. on the contrary, i think it made this book and its reading experience that much richer, because the way Peter uses math to roam meticulously through his every day life is something that i've never encountered in any YA book i've read before, much less when it's paired up with Peter's anxiety and panic attacks in the way that it is in this book. it's such a different and strange approach to mental illness, but as an own-voices book, i really like that Tom Pollock chose to meander into it this way. it also makes me wonder if Tom is just a math genius himself, and if he's not, how much research went into the book and into Peter's character. either way, it just makes this book that much better.

it also doesn't hurt that This Story is a Lie was HILARIOUS. despite Peter's anxiety ridden life, he's also still a genius. he's snarky and witty and sarcastic and i just kept highlighting different quotes as i read because everything that comes out of his mouth is either mind-blowingly intelligent or just plain hysterical. i loved Peter, i really did !!

this book is not what you think it is. it's also everything that you might expect it to be, but in an entirely different way you might predict. i don't really know how else to say it, but it's definitely a book that feels much more exciting than it seems at first glance.

Figgy says

Full review to come, but for now...

So there were good things and bad things here... For the most part it's interesting and approaches anxiety and OCD issues from an Own Voices standpoint, and there's a fair bit of action and mystery and so on.

I predicted certain twists and revelations right from the start, but there was still one that I didn't see coming until it hit right near the end.

I found the style really interesting, with every other chapter being a "recursion" or a memory that contributed to making Pete who he is today.

Certain spoilery things bugged me, though I think overall it was a reasonably interesting and quick read.

Pre-Read

That opening scene.
Duuuuuuuuude.

I can see this one being triggering for some people, but when they talk about his severe panic attacks in the blurb, they mean *severe* severe.

I'm contemplating setting my other books aside in favour of this one right now...

Karen Barber says

Touted as the new Curious Incident this is a very different book, and I think if you go into it expecting a lovable main character trying to make sense of the world around him you may be disappointed.

Peter is a mathematical genius. He uses maths to manage his extreme anxiety, and is convinced that maths has the answer to everything. Being that bit older than Haddon's protagonist, he's also got a slightly different take on the world.

From the moment we first meet Pete crouched in his kitchen having eaten a salt cellar in an attempt to stem his overwhelming anxiety, it's clear that this is going to be an unsettling read. I truly wasn't expecting it to be as dark as it was.

It was fascinating to get under the skin of Pete, but the actual story was more focused on the thriller element and it had to be this way in order for the plot to work.

When Pete's mother is stabbed as she goes to receive an award for her work, his sister is missing and he quickly learns that no one around him was who they claimed to be. We're plunged into a nightmare world of spies, scientific manipulation and some gruesome deaths.

I don't want to reveal too much more. Suffice to say, nothing was quite as it seemed and every time I thought we were getting somewhere there was another detail given that turned things on their head. This would have been 5 stars, but for the sense of everything feeling rather rushed by the end and being left rather uncertain about a few key details. Still one I'd heartily recommend.

Kelly says

If you asked me to tell you what *White Rabbit Red Wolf* was about, I would really struggle because it is honestly one of the most complex books I've ever read. What I could tell you is that this book is all about family, love, mental health, betrayal and so much more. This book is absolutely gripping and I couldn't bear to put it down for long. The intrigue is there right from the beginning and every time I thought I knew what would happen next there would be a huge plot twist thrown down in front of me and I'd have to take a different route to the ending. There were so many moments in this story where I actually gasped out loud and I was left reeling by the end of this book. It truly is a masterpiece and I applaud Tom Pollock. If you are an American reader this book is titled *This Story is a Lie* – I'm telling you this so you don't miss out on a fantastic read. My mind is still blown!

Ellie (faerieontheshelf) says

hello what was this book :o

RTC to come!

I received a copy in exchange for an honest review

This review is also available on my blog

Rebecca says

After reading reviews promising me that the less I knew about this book, the better it would be, I was of course expecting some surprises. So, naturally I spent most of the book thinking there was no way I would be tricked. I had it all figured out. Except I didn't, and Tom Pollock made me look a fool. This is a thriller on the surface, with mental health at its heart, and an entirely unreliable narrator you can't help but relate to.

There is something utterly compelling about reading from the point of view of a character you cannot trust. Who in fact spends a great deal of time explaining how, logically, it's particularly difficult to say if something is true or not. And Peter is nothing short of a mathematical genius, but who on the surface is very observant - an excellent appeal again for most readers trying to figure stuff out. Having seen this book compared to *The Curious Incident* I kind of expected his genius, obsession with numbers and panic attacks to take centre stage, but actually they don't. And the subtlety of that fact is actually what made it so successful for me. Peter struggles with uncontrollable terror, but he doesn't allow it to define him, in fact we see a number of his coping mechanisms without it seeming too much of a focus; in this way, the serious issues tackled within this book are never trivialised but also do not dominate the book so much so that the rest of the story becomes irrelevant. It is the perfect balance.

The story revolves around an attempted assassination on Peter's mother, a scientist, and the probable abduction of his twin sister Bel. With the help of his best friend Ingrid (who has OCD herself), Peter must try to piece together the puzzle they have left behind. But Peter has the necessary skills to figure this out, if he can control his terror.

There is literally nothing more I can say about this book without destroying it for potential readers, other than that the reviews really are true - you will be surprised. Even once you've convinced yourself you haven't been.

An impressive, cleverly conceived book and an author who tackles mental health superbly.

ARC provided from the publishers in exchange for an honest review.

Lizzie (Littlehux) Huxley-Jones says

It is rare that I read a book so far ahead of publication nowadays. I try to read things as they come out, so they get promotion around their launch into the world. But sometimes, some books creep into my head. After hearing Tom Pollock read an excerpt of the first chapter at the Walker YA preview event, I couldn't hold back and I pried open my copy on the train home that night.

This book. THIS BOOK.

Sometimes I read a book that makes me feel so many emotions that I end up tweeting the author my feelings, with specific page references. I definitely sent Tom at least two of those, though I won't repeat them because I want you to experience the plot hitting you like a truck.

This is a twisty-turny thriller, heavily peppered with unreliable revelations that send the plot -- and your brain -- spiralling. This is not a straight forward novel, and it is all the more exciting and brilliant for it.

Peter Blankman is often afraid, balancing his severe anxiety with logic and his love of maths, wherever possible. At an awards ceremony celebrating his scientist mother's work, everything goes to hell; his mother is stabbed, his twin sister Bel has disappeared, and he is taken in with a shadowy organisation telling him to trust them. Together with his only friend Ingrid, he must use his logic and analytical skills to save everyone... or at the very least find out what on earth is going on.

Several times in this book I thought I had everything figured out, but I couldn't have been more wrong. Pollock dangles tidbits and clues, only to flip the plot completely on its head.

I am a huge fan of how Pollock bluntly confronts mental health, tackling it head on and plainly showing the realities of living with a glitchy brain. The novel basically opens right into the middle of a panic attack, showing the reader the reality of anxiety and eating disorders. If you want a taster of his writing on mental health, this piece about his experiences with anxiety and bulimia is incredibly insightful.

I'm absolutely blown away by this brilliantly witty adventure through science, maths and the mind. Mark your calendars for 7th June and clear your weekend; prepare for an adventure you never expected.

What to read next:

Because You'll Never Meet Me by Leah Thomas

Turtles All the Way Down by John Green

Replica by Lauren Oliver

A small note, this novel requires content notes for anxiety attacks, eating disorders, obsessive compulsive disorder, compulsive hand washing and self harm.

Thank you kindly to Walker Books and ED PR for sharing the copy with me in advance.

Ankita Singh says

This story is a lie. My advice to you: Do not ignore the title.

This book was absolutely wow. I mean, granted, YA is my favourite genre, but still this book, being a YA thriller still read more like a YA psychological thriller. And it was wow. Did I already say that? I'm sorry.

As you can see, this book has been a shock. I loved loved loved it. It had action, it had adventure, it was exciting, scary, intense—as in, nail-bitingly intense—all at the same time.

The characters were superbly created, with with a million flaws and many good qualities too.

All in all, it was a thriller, mind-boggling read, and I'd definitely recommend you to read it!

Kelly says

The truth is, sometimes you begin a book and you're super into it, but the further in you get, the less into it you are and you realize not that it's a bad book -- I totally know the reader who'll love this -- but rather, it's not the right fit for you. So you let it go, make note of what worked well, and know that it'll be an utterly engrossing page-turner for readers who are itching for a fast-paced adventure full of twists, turns, lies, betrayals, and a great main character who struggles with mental illness.

C.G. Drews says

This was very good and also I DO NOT UNDERSTAND. Talk about a mind splattering twist?! Seriously I don't even know how to review this because I loved it a *lot* but I am so hella confused as to what even was going on. And why. And omg maths. Lmao I sometimes count my books but that's about it and this was like "THE SQUARE ROOT OF 9489 IS = " ... it is my *eyeballs bleeding*. That's the answer.

So I did go in with slightly messed up expectations.

Possibly because I don't read blurbs. My bad, sir, my bad. I thought it was a contemporary about a math boy with anxiety (or autism?)....but it's **more like a psychological thriller with so many plot twists and spies and scientists and experiments.** Which was cool! It's not a genre I reach for but I loved so much about this.

It's also super well written with a narrator you just totally adore.

Peter is like an Anxious Wreck On Two Legs™. He has a panic disorder (eh he wasn't autistic) and serious issues and he's also SUPER awkward, gangly, a genius nerd and basically gets himself beat up all the time. He has a badass sister who'll protect him at all costs + a genius scientist mother. And like WOW he was such a dork. But I loved him immediately! **His voice is self-deprecating and also nerdy and fun** so literally the entire book was just a pleasure to read.

You reeeeally want to go in knowing as little as possible about the plot! It makes it WAY wilder. But it's mind fuckery ok. And it lost me...a lot. I'm not particularly blaming the book?? I just got lost in the super-mathy sections, and then I'm still not sure what everyone's motivations were. And they were screwing with Peter's head SO MUCH. So I get that! We end the book not entirely sure what's real vs what's not (The tag line is: "THIS STORY IS A LIE" after all. _/_ But I'm genuinely confused right now lmao. And super keyed up and like I have combusted into an exclamation point!

I loved this but also what the fuck just happened! Would recommend for anyone who wants their mind twisted, loves sibling stories, wants to thrillers that also have deeply adorkable characters with mental illnesses, and is here to go on the actual wildest ride ever.

Bookread2day says

A brilliant author with an excellent imagination.

