



Disclaimer

Renée Knight

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Finding a mysterious novel at her bedside plunges documentary filmmaker Catherine Ravenscroft into a living nightmare. Though ostensibly fiction, *The Perfect Stranger* recreates in vivid, unmistakable detail the terrible day Catherine became hostage to a dark secret, a secret that only one other person knew--and that person is dead.

Now that the past is catching up with her, Catherine's world is falling apart. Her only hope is to confront what really happened on that awful day even if the shocking truth might destroy her.

Disclaimer Details

Date : Published April 9th 2015 by Doubleday (first published 2015)

ISBN : 9780857522818

Author : Renée Knight

Format : Hardcover 304 pages

Genre : Thriller, Fiction, Mystery, Suspense, Mystery Thriller

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From Reader Review Disclaimer for online ebook

Kelli says

Disclaimer: Results not typical.

Do I even need to say it? Apparently 2015 is to be the year that most popular books will fail to leave me wowed. Perhaps I'm reading too many within the same genre. Maybe I'm expecting too much. I suppose the why of it doesn't matter. What it amounts to is that my normal existence as a reader happily reading and loving the bestsellers is now marked by moments of self-doubt and slight bewilderment.

This book, Disclaimer, was okay. The pacing was too slow for my taste but some of the characters were very well drawn, so that balanced it out. The protagonist was shrouded in mystery and her enemy was formidable, creepy and seemed to be unraveling before my eyes. I must admit that I did not see the end coming, which is a plus, however the very end was a little too implausible and without explanation. While it is receiving very high marks, I found Disclaimer to be forgettable. Maybe it's me?! 2.5 stars

Elyse says

I read this book.....

I 'thought' I wrote a review --- (isn't the first time the ghost buster ate them) -- but 'thanks' go to Maureen for the reminder today! :)

I can't remember what I rated it --(I 'think' I might have rated it 'less' than 4 stars --- 3.5 maybe?

Either way --there are tons of other reviews.

Michael says

A mother and her child on holidays in Spain. A young man in the same holiday resort, a terrible incident and misunderstanding that will tear two families apart.

Catherine Ravenscroft has a seemingly happy life. Married to Robert, with a young adult son and a successful film-maker, she is content with how things are going. But when Catherine discovers an unfamiliar book at her bedside entitled, *The Perfect Stranger* she is shocked by what is written. The book will force her to relive an unspeakable moment in her life from 20 years ago that she hoped would be forgotten forever. Catherine is desperate to find out not only how the book came into being in her house but also who wrote about something that supposedly only she and one other person who is now dead knew about.

On the other side of the coin, we have Stephen Brigstocke who has had his world destroyed after the death of his young son Johnathon and wife, Nancy. After going through her belongings he will come across a manuscript that detail's a secret from a women he has never met, Catherine. Worse will come when he finds

pictures taken by his son that will connect the two families and convince Stephen that his sons passing is because of this women. What will follow is a roller coaster ride of twists and turns as Catherine's life slowly implodes until the inevitable collision course when it is clear things are not as clear cut as they seem.

As a self confessed fan of psychological thrillers i can honestly say this one can bat with the best of them. Combining beautiful and emotional writing with an intriguing storyline that will keep you guessing makes for an absorbing read. Throw in engaging characters in Catherine and Stephen, that you can't help but be drawn to with the sadness of there pasts and the tragedy that is the present they now encounter makes for a truly hard hitting family drama that will leave you thinking well after you have read the final page.

Carol says

If you trust me at all, then trust me on this one. Take a chance and read it.

Disclaimer It took me awhile to get into this. I had almost given up, but then...

From the reviews I'm reading I liked Disclaimer more than some.

The Hook - The blurb - *"What if you realized the terrifying book you were reading was all about you?"* Come on now, isn't that enough to reel you in?

The Line – *"All I felt was soft filth, and it got into my skin and under my fingernails, and its stink invaded my nostrils, clinging to the hairs, soaking up into the tiny blood vessels and polluting my entire system.*

The Sinker – Catherine Ravenscroft soon realizes the book she finds by her beside is far more sinister than a light work of fiction. She's intrigued by this suspenseful story The Perfect Stranger until she realizes it's all about her. Where did it come from? Who wrote it? And why was it left for her? It threatens to expose a secret from her past, one she thought hidden for all time, the consequences which could topple her very existence.

Renée Knight plotted this psychological tale with precision. A satisfying read with questions we all struggle to answer. How well do we know our spouses? How strong is love? How well do we know our children? Would we lie for them? Do we see them as others do? Do we put them first, even before our spouses? What do we see but deny? Do we want to know the truth? Who do we trust?

Disclaimer is about two marriages, two families, two boys, two sons. It is thought provoking. It's a book within a book, its pages filled with revenge, betrayal, love, guilt, bravery, sadness, and brimming with human emotion. I thought I would scream if someone compared it to Gone Girl but they already have. Be warned this is no copycat. Knight earns the excitement that her debut deserves.

Jennifer Masterson says

Disclaimer is a great debut novel! Not only is it a psychological thriller, but it is a thought provoking story about two families told from different points of view with really great character development! This story shows how the main character, Catherine, has a past that comes back to haunt her and destroy the life that she knows. I wavered between 4 and 5 Stars throughout. The very beginning, being a 4 because it took me a little while to get into the story, but once I caught on it became very good and had some twists that I didn't see coming that put it in the 5 range. The ending was a 4 for me. I will definitely be reading Renee Knights next book. Thank you to GR Friend Carol! If it wasn't for her review I probably would not have purchased this novel.

Oh, it took me a week to read this book because I had a lot going on. It would have been much better if I had more time to dedicate to it. This book reads fast and would make a great beach read, rainy weekend or long flight read.

Liz Barnsley says

I loved this atmospheric, beautifully written novel, a real page turner and an intriguing and often twisty plot with some terrifically well drawn characters.

2015 is turning into another great year for books, most especially debuts and this one is definitely going to be somewhere near the top of the favourites list come the end of the year – I was totally absorbed into the story and loved the emotion of it as much as the mystery element. A tale of two halves as we follow along with Catherine, who mysteriously finds a book by her bedside, a seemingly fictional tale but one that hits very close to home. Opposite her is Stephen, a grieving husband who has his own story to tell. As things ebb and flow you are never sure who you should be sympathising with – and there are many secrets to be revealed.

I am a fan of a good psychological thriller and this hit that mark as well, plus there is a great family drama to be had here with some emotional and intense themes that drive the narrative in a most fascinating way – I was utterly engaged with both Catherine and Stephen, their lives and their personal relationships and as it becomes obvious that not everything is clear cut, it is addictive stuff for sure.

Definitely highly recommended – a fuller review will appear upon release.

Happy Reading Folks!

Diane S ? says

3.5 Psychological twisty. Fast paced, the revelations keep coming and even when I was sold on one theory, another presented itself. A very good suspense filled story, one where it takes a while to like any of these characters, not too sure if I ever did but it didn't seem to matter. A few graphic sex scenes. Didn't see the ending coming, total surprise which I have to admit I appreciated.

Izzy says

DNFed @ 54%

The story is centered around a mysterious book the main character — Catherine (I'd forgotten her name) — finds in her home. Even though she doesn't remember buying it, she's just moved to a new place and figures it was probably something that'd gotten lost in the midst of her things before. She starts reading it, and horrified she discovers that the story is actually about a secret she thought would never see the light of day; a secret only she and someone dead for the past 20 years knew about.

It's a very interesting premise, I'll give it that. But it falls short right at the first few pages. We have two perspectives, Catherine and a man, Stephen Brigstocke, a weird obsessive little man whose wife died a few years ago. At first it's not obvious how the two of them would be linked, but as Stephen's perspective advances — it began two years before Catherine's — the connections are made clear. I didn't click with the writing style right off the bat; Catherine's chapters were okay but Stephen's, told in first person, were pretty terrible. The writing was choppy and the metaphors were peculiar, to say the least:

My hand, slippery yet firm, ejaculating the words as they flowed from Nancy into me.

Ejaculating... the... words? Okay... that's not gross at all.

And then there's the central conflict of the story, which is the secret hidden away in the pages of the mystery book and that is, supposedly, earth-shattering and utterly terrible.

I found it stupid.

So stupid, in fact, that I simply refused to believe that was it — I could not believe that Catherine, who is theoretically a very strong, independent woman, a documentary filmmaker that goes after the big guys, would let her world fall apart because of something silly that could've been solved with a five minute conversation with her husband. So I got pretty annoyed and DNFed it, but I decided to skim to the end to see if there wasn't something I was missing.

There was. And the twist made me even angrier. If you're curious as to what it is and doesn't want to read the book: (view spoiler)

So yeah, I'm glad I didn't waste my time finishing this book. Terrible writing, terrible plot, terrible choices. You can read it for yourself if you'd like, because some people gave this really great reviews and maybe it just wasn't meant for my taste, but I wouldn't give it the time of the day.

Andrew Smith says

I've mentioned several times before that I'm not normally keen on stories set in 'Blighty' - just too close to home. The settings remind me of work and the prevailing weather is normally dismal too. Two things that hit the wrong note for me from the get go. So the London setting of this debut novel from a former film documentary maker had ground to make up from the start.

However, it did kick off in interesting fashion with Catherine Ravenscroft (also a film documentary maker) finding a book beside her bed only to find it to be the story of a part of her own life she's desperate to forget!

From this point the story is told, partly in flashback, both her her point of view and that of retired schoolteacher Stephen Brigstocke, who is introduced as a rather creepy character and whose relevance to the central narrative becomes apparent as we get deeper into the tale.

In truth it is a well told story with several good twists and a decent cast of characters. It held my attention to a gripping denouement ... and then unfortunately continued for a prolonged and unnecessary 'cleanup'. I'm not quite sure what came over the author at the end as all the last section does is to dilute what was already a satisfying mystery. The ending didn't quite spoil the book for me but is most definitely a case of less would have been more.

Mark Rubinstein says

Catherine, a successful film-maker, is intrigued when she mysteriously receives a book entitled *The Perfect Stranger*. But as she reads the novel, she's horrified to read about a specific day in her *own* life--one that occurred 20 years earlier--which she's tried valiantly to forget. How could anyone know what happened that day? The only other person who truly knows is long dead. She's desperate to learn the identity of the author, and what he or she wants.

Intertwined with Catherine's narrative, is that of Stephen Brigstocke, a grieving widower, who has never met Catherine, but has discovered among his late wife's belongings, a manuscript detailing Catherine's most closely guarded secret, one she's hidden from her husband and son. This novel skillfully weaves alternating narratives (from past and present) and shows how one's horrific past can catch up and derail one's entire life.

Mark Rubinstein

Emma says

Another psychological thriller that's good enough, but not great.

I liked the unsettling premise of picking up a book in which your darkest secret is laid bare. For those of us who read a lot, it is exactly the kind of 'what if' that hits closest to home. I spend a lot of time wishing I was in certain books, but on reflection, am pretty happy i'm not, especially in the starring role. My turbulent past can stay there, thank you very much.

Beyond that, Knight does well with the trials and misunderstandings of family interaction, the relationships between people that are determined more by what is not known, or acknowledged, about others, than what is. It worked well in the denouement and was the basis for a relatively satisfying surprise.

However, the novel had a light touch, and I was left unmoved. I felt no connection to any of the characters and little real interest in what happened to them. The book only took a few hours to read and as an easy distraction, it was fine. It won't be a story that I remember for long.

Catherine says

The hype surrounding this book's release has been insane, and the subsequent rave reviews seem to be everywhere, which makes me wonder - am I the only person in the world who was totally underwhelmed by this book? There have been lots of comparisons made to *Gone Girl* (and equally lots of people claiming that it's nothing like *Gone Girl*). I fall firmly into the former camp - this book IS like *Gone Girl* in the sense that I had absolutely no interest or sympathy for the characters whatsoever.

I've left it a few days between finishing the book and writing the review just in case my views change, but nope, after closing the book it left my mind totally, which personally I don't feel is the sign of a great story.

The premise is excellent - who could fail to be intrigued by the idea of opening a book and the story being all about you? However, the premise was let down by a keep-you-in-the-dark plot and a series of shallow, weak and generally unlikeable characters. Ok, I admit, I don't like 'keep-you-in-the-dark' plots because I am generally rubbish at guessing what's going on. I'm the sort of person who needs movie plots explaining to me *as I'm watching them*. So this meant that I spent about half the book wondering what the hell was going on. This wasn't helped by the fact that the writing style was pretty clunky and the dialogue poor.

It took some time before I felt interested enough in the story to actually *want* to read it rather than feel obliged to because I needed to do a NetGalley review. In fact, I was probably three-quarters of the way through before started enjoying it. But even then I kept getting thrown out of the story by awkwardly worded passages or odd dialogue.

Overall, I was seriously disappointed by this book. The storyline was good, but the delivery poor. I never lost myself in this book, which is a shame.

I was provided with a free e-copy of this book via NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.

Blair says

I'm learning to be less bothered about hype. I've said over and over again that most of the hyped and praised and 'hotly anticipated' books I've read this year have been thoroughly mediocre, and yet only recently has it occurred to me that *of course* they are: it's mediocre books that sell the most. Hype still gets to me, I easily get caught up in the must-read-this-first excitement, but I no longer expect it to actually mean a truly great book.

Disclaimer is a classic case in point - a much-talked-about debut suspense novel that sparked a bidding war and is already set to be translated into 20+ languages; you know the drill. In alternate chapters, it tells the stories of forty-something film producer Catherine and retired teacher Stephen Brigstocke, starting with Catherine's discovery of a book - apparently left on her bedside table - which, she finds, is about a part of her life she's managed to keep secret for twenty years. Convinced the author's revenge tactic will tear her family apart, Catherine becomes obsessed with finding out who has written it, and why. But what is this oh-so-terrible secret? And how are Catherine and Stephen, who becomes more and more of a sinister figure as the plot progresses, linked?

As happens so often with these novels, the 'secret', when it's revealed, appears at first to be mundane and

really pretty ordinary compared to the desperate paranoia and fear that's come before it. But there is a twist, and that was something I hadn't expected (on the whole, this isn't really a twisty book, at least not in that manufactured multiple-cliffhanger way). Unfortunately, (view spoiler).

The biggest fault with *Disclaimer* is just that it isn't particularly well-written. There are advantages to the plain language (especially the fact that it doesn't go into detail about unnecessary things - no lengthy descriptions of what people had for dinner or dropping of middle-class brand names), but overall it's a bit flat, and the punctuation is awful, although that's something I am assuming (but can't be sure) will be amended in the published version.

However, the *story* really is extremely compelling. After the halfway mark, it becomes pretty much unputdownable. There is an unexpected elegance to the plot that makes it work better than many similar books I've read. The character of Stephen, in particular, is realised and developed very well. Catherine remains rather distant, but I suppose this is intentional, to keep the reader guessing about whether she's supposed to be sympathetic or not.

There was something I found curiously nostalgic about this book. I'm not sure if that was because it reminded me of something specific, or because it reminded me generally of a type of book I used to read when I was younger. When I was in my teens I went through a crime phase and read loads of Agatha Christie, then moved on to stuff like Minette Walters and Barbara Vine - this brought memories of those books back to me, even though I can hardly remember any of the titles of those I read. *Disclaimer* will no doubt be marketed as a psychological thriller, but it doesn't have a lot of the typical characteristics of that genre as it's now understood. It is more of a suspenseful mystery, and if you take away the references to modern technology, the story could just as easily be set 50 or 60 years ago as in the present day.

Does *Disclaimer* justify its hype? In terms of the audience it's meant to attract, the answer is probably yes. It's gripping, tightly plotted and emotive, the type of story that will have people on the edge of their seats/staying up all night/recommending it to everyone at work, etc. Still, there's something a bit empty and soulless about it, and I doubt it will prove to be very memorable.

Ester says

[the gratuitous sexual assault. I've had enough with rape as a plot device. It is a cheap and lazy gimmick and the author does nothing to salvage it and can't, in a book where the characterization is so paper thin. If I could have one wish, it would be to have all authors read this article:
<http://io9.com/something-to-think-abo....> (hide spoiler)]

David Reviews says

Disclaimer doesn't disappoint. It's very cleverly written and will grip you, then surprise with unexpected twists. I was lost in this excellent thriller and couldn't put it down.

Catherine and Stephen have a good life and stable marriage, but all that is about to change. Their son Nicholas has recently moved out and although he hasn't achieved all they hoped, he seems stable and happy in his work. It's then that Catherine reads a book which mysteriously appears on the bedside of their new

home. The book disclaimer has a neat red line through it ‘Any resemblance to persons living or dead....’ Catherine only appreciates the significance of this as she reads on!

Catherine finds that she is the main character in the book and that it reveals a secret that she thought only she could now know. This is where it begins and we are off on a rollercoaster of a ride as Catherine’s world falls apart. I loved this psychological thriller as it played with my head as the story unfolded. I was never sure whose side I was on and not quite sure where my sympathy’s lay.

I found the plot was well written and the story kept me hooked right to the end of the book. Disclaimer is a damn good thriller which I can thoroughly recommend.
