



Six Years

Harlan Coben

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Harlan Coben, the master of domestic suspense, returns with a standalone thriller in the vein of #1 bestsellers *Hold Tight*, *Caught* and *Stay Close* that explores the depth and passion of a lost love . . . and the secrets and lies at its heart. Six years have passed since Jake Fisher watched Natalie, the love of his life, marry another man. Six years of hiding a broken heart by throwing himself into his career as a college professor. Six years of keeping his promise to leave Natalie alone, and six years of tortured dreams of her life with her new husband, Todd. But six years haven't come close to extinguishing his feelings, and when Jake comes across Todd's obituary, he can't keep himself away from the funeral. There he gets the glimpse of Todd's wife he's hoping for . . . but she is not Natalie. Whoever the mourning widow is, she's been married to Todd for more than a decade, and with that fact everything Jake thought he knew about the best time of his life—a time he has never gotten over—is turned completely inside out. As Jake searches for the truth, his picture-perfect memories of Natalie begin to unravel. Mutual friends of the couple either can't be found or don't remember Jake. No one has seen Natalie in years. Jake's search for the woman who broke his heart—and who lied to him—soon puts his very life at risk as it dawns on him that the man he has become may be based on carefully constructed fiction. Harlan Coben once again delivers a shocking page-turner that deftly explores the power of past love and the secrets and lies that such love can hide.

Six Years Details

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Author : Harlan Coben

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From Reader Review Six Years for online ebook

Lindsey Rey says

[4.5 Stars]

Sue Davis says

Very very bad writing. The author neglected to do his research on academic life and Political Science. Locke and Rousseau weren't political scientists, for example. Two professors would most likely have some intellectual interests rather than video games and picking up women. Jake would not have been department chair six years after finishing his dissertation, and "vice" chair is not a powerful position but the job of arranging course schedules if the department secretary doesn't do it. I don't remember Harlan Coben being this bad in the other novels I have read of his. No character development and a contrived sappy plot. Still, it kept me reading.

Kemper says

Jake ~~Sanders~~ Fisher thought he'd met the love of his life in Natalie, but she dumped him abruptly to marry her old boyfriend, Todd. At the wedding, Natalie made Jake promise that he'd never try to contact her again. Six years passed as Jake taught political science at a small New England college, but he never got over Natalie. When he comes across Todd's obituary, Jake thinks that his promise no longer applies so he heads to the funeral to ~~bang the widow~~ pay his respects.

However, Jake gets a big surprise. The widow at the service is not Natalie, and Todd had been married to this woman for years before the wedding that Jake witnessed. Adding to the weirdness, it turns out that Todd was murdered, and it's as if Natalie never existed. Jake starts digging into the past to find Natalie and uncovers a lot of very dangerous secrets.

Here we've got a high concept thriller by a very capable genre writer, and it works well in that context. I particularly enjoyed the early part of the book when a confused Jake can't even find someone who admits remembering Natalie or confirm a single fact about her. That gave the whole thing a slightly creepy feel.

However, there were a couple of factors that weighed the whole thing down. As a college professor who was a bar bouncer in his youth, Jake makes a pretty good amateur sleuth character in that he's smart and can hold his own in a fist fight while still seeming over his head. The problem is that the whole plot hinges on this idea that even though Jake has pined for Natalie since he lost her, he was able keep his promise to the point where he never even tried to do a Google search or look her up on Facebook once in six years. Yet when he's trying to track her down and he gets several valid warnings that he could do her harm by looking, he keeps going. There's some internal character conflict there that Coben does try to have Jake rationalize, but I never really buy it.

Also, there's just too much suspension of disbelief required at a couple of points. (view spoiler) None of this was enough to make me dislike the book, but it did cut down on my enjoyment of it.

It's a competent thriller with a nice hook to it, but frankly, I had a good idea of the explanation for what happened to Natalie fairly early in the book. I would have liked a few more surprises along the way and some more consistent behavior from the main character who claims to be doing it all for love.

Also posted at Shelf Inflicted.

Lila says

2,5 stars for me.

I have a theory. First book you read from Harlan Coben will probably end up being your favorite or one of favorites from him. My first was Tell No One. I remember staying all night reading it. I was one very satisfied reader when I closed my book. Of course I wanted to read everything by him. The trouble is, that first excitement- novelty of his style that grabs your attention with first book- starts to fade with every new book of his that comes into your hands. You can predict what's going to happen. I would go so far to say that hero/heroine (I'll stick to his stand-alone novels) sound so similar you have a feeling you know him/her. You've been inside their head already.

So, *Six Years* is your usual Coben. Jake Fisher is a college professor, who lives very calm and happy life except one little thing: he isn't over his ex girlfriend. Natalie left Jake six years ago to marry another guy and she told him at her wedding never to bother them. Six years later he saw obituary of Natalie's husband and he goes to funeral to...get a glance at love of his life? But the mourning widow isn't Natalie. And that's where mystery part begins and from there we follow Jake as he slowly reveals what's behind Natalie's actions six years ago.

If you read Coben before, you'll find yourself guessing what's next. Even end is predictable and so similar as it was in previous novels. (view spoiler)

My point is this: if you never read Coben before, you'll probably enjoy this more than me. If you read his work before, don't expect anything new. I don't know if I would pick it as soon as it came out, if it wasn't a MCT group monthly read.

Mandy says

Talk about a roller coaster of a ride book! This was the first Harlan Coben novel I read and knew from then on I had to read more of his. After this I read *The Woods* which was just as good. This book captured my attention from the first word and I had a hard time putting it down. Highly recommend!!!

Didi says

What a great book! It was sharp, suspenseful, funny and had me on my toes the whole time. I was hooked from page 1, and then after that I became so invested in the outcome. I kept thinking, "what the fuck is going on?!" Over and over. And exactly that phrasing mind you, it was that good. And when I say funny I don't mean, comedy, I mean wit, pure and intelligent wit.

There were twists and turns with every chapter, questions that wouldn't go away but would gain momentum. This was incredibly well written and really challenged my sleuthing skills.

I loved the main character, Jacob Fischer. His voice was very fresh, at least for me. He was a smart man that needed answers and wouldn't give up. I found him both charming and stubborn. This was told in 1st person POV, which in this case was perfect. But then again, I love 1st person. It always makes me feel more connected to the character and everything they're experiencing.

Lots of characters in this one, but not in a confusing way. The plot was brilliant in my opinion. It took me out of my romance zone and made me want to stay there. The connections between everything were fabulous, very tight and thorough. I never figured anything out before I was told, either.

Thanks Raquel for rec'ing such a great book! You read my mind with wanting to expand my reading niche. I loved, loved the ending. Sometimes with this type of genre things are explained but left almost needing some sort of closure--or that might be the expectations of a romance lover--. Not here, though. Things were done right. Highly recommended for anyone including those of us that need a good change once in awhile.

James Thane says

This is another of Harlan Coben's stand-alones, filled with his patented twists and turns. It opens as a college professor named Jake Fisher watches the love of his life, Natalie, marry another man. Jake and Natalie had met at a retreat in Vermont where he was completing his doctoral dissertation and she was an artist. They had a whirlwind romance and were seemingly made for each other when Natalie suddenly tells Jake that she has decided to marry an old boyfriend named Todd. The wedding is held a week later. Natalie invites Jake to make sure he gets the message, and after the ceremony she begs him to leave them alone and never to contact her again.

Jake is completely crushed, but honors Natalie's wish. For the next six years, he devotes himself to his job as a professor in a small liberal arts college while continuing to pine away for his lost love. Then one day, almost by accident, Jake notices an obituary for Natalie's husband, Todd. By some miraculous coincidence, it turns out that Todd was a graduate of the college where Jake teaches and the obit is published on the college website.

Now Jake determines to contact Natalie, if only to offer his condolences. He rationalizes this by telling himself that he had promised to leave "them" alone. He has honored his promise for six years, but he figures that they is no "them" anymore and so he's not really breaking his word. Jake flies south to the funeral, only to discover that Todd's widow is someone else entirely. The widow claims that Todd was never married to anyone else, and certainly not to anyone named Natalie.

This is a novel by Harlan Coben and so naturally, things will get increasingly stranger as the story progresses. Jake launches a determined effort to find Natalie, only to discover that powerful forces are arrayed against him and that he and any number of others may be in deadly danger if he persists in his search.

This is an interesting, if not quite believable premise, and Coben jacks up the tension as the story progresses. I enjoyed it up to a point, but as often happens in these novels, Coben threw in so many abrupt twists that the whole edifice of the story simply collapsed, at least for me, and I could no longer continue to suspend disbelief and take the story seriously. I've enjoyed a lot of Coben's books, especially the Myron Bolitar series, and it's hard to argue that a guy who sells a gazillion books every time out of the gate could possibly be doing anything wrong. But I would have enjoyed this book a lot more if the story had been a bit more believable.

Mary Carrasco says

I had forgotten how effortless it is to read a Harlan Coben book. This was no exception. I was instantly drawn into the story. I really liked the main character, Jake. He had a great sense of humor even in the middle of some wild predicaments. There was plenty of suspense but that's really par for the course when reading any Coben book.

Suzanne says

I was very excited to come across this book a couple of days ago, considering I'd just looked into reserving it at my library. AND I'd spied it on my cousins bookshelf while on holidays, tempted to ask if I could take it with me!! I found it at a charity store the next day and the lady serving me asked me if she could read it after me!

This book had everything I want in a thriller. It was easy to read, the protagonist was likeable - down to earth, capable, friendly, affable, clever. The writing made it such that it skipped along and I did not want to put it down. The story was narrated Jake Sanders, he seems to be losing his mind, or others around him just don't know who he is.. A successful college professor who makes the hard decision to forget the love of his life when she decides to marry someone else, an ex. He sticks to his promise to Natalie and does not try to contact her, that is until he sees the obituary of her husband. Why not try to seek her out after this six year period, he has nothing to lose?? From here we follow his story and it was so very easy to read as it was told in a low key conversational tone as we went along on his journey. You felt like you were his buddy along for the ride.

An author I'm so excited to come across, I am already on the hunt for more. Highly recommended and easy reading.

Morgannah Mayfair says

This is my first time reading Mr. Coben's work and I was thoroughly pleased with his writing and the story. I found out after the fact that Six Years is being adapted into a movie with Hugh Jackman playing our MC Jake.

While I was reading it a good friend of mine asked how I liked Coben's writing. Here is how I responded: "His writing is kind of bare bones, you get the story and not much else but the story is good! It's not thought provoking literature and there are basically no underlying themes. It feels like I'm sitting listening to an articulate charismatic guy tell me all about something outlandish that happened to him and my response is 'no way!' and then he says 'yes way and here is why and what happened next!'. Overall it's a ridiculous story but then he fills in the details and suddenly you see that it makes sense."

Our MC Jake is looking for a lady that dumped him six years ago and he feels this lady is his soul mate. There are bad guys, worse guys, and good guys who might be bad guys. There's twisting, turning, and a lot of very typical (and enjoyable) confusion as Jake tries to make sense of the conflicting information that

seems to come his way with every question asked.

I found the book to be incredibly well paced. I finished it in 48 hours and some change whilst in the middle of a reading slump and was not the least bit disappointed in the resolution. What more can you ask from a summer read? I'm going to genre rate here – Six Years gets 4 stars for being a terrific, well written, plotted and paced thriller that's fun to read. It would be a PERFECT beach read. This book will make you believe in soul mates if you don't already. I already did.

Sandra says

Six years ago Jake Fisher was dumped by his love-of-his-life girlfriend Natalie---she sent him a note telling him she was going to marry her old boyfriend Todd. The next day Jake gets an invitation to her wedding. He decides to go, speaks briefly to Natalie at the wedding, and tells her he'll always love her. She tells him to move on, it's over between them, and "promise me to leave us alone".

Six years later...Jake is doing well as a Professor at Lanford College in Vermont, and he has kept his promise to Natalie. One day, while talking to a student at college, he sees an obituary and the photo in the obituary looks like Natalie's husband Todd. He decides to go to Palmetto Bluff, South Carolina, near Savannah Georgia, where Todd's funeral is being held. He needs closure on the relationship, to really put this behind him. But when he goes he doesn't see Natalie there. Another woman called Delia is pointed out as Todd's wife. Jake starts to get curious, wonders if he's even at the right funeral. After he gets a flight home this is still bothering him and he begins to ask questions. What happened to Natalie? Why can't he find any recent info on Natalie on the internet? How come the priest Jake talked to at Natalie's wedding doesn't remember him or the wedding? Why is Natalie's sister acting like they never met, etc...

Then Jake receives an email one day that says "You made a promise". Convinced it could be from Natalie he thinks of backing off but he seems to keep getting more and more drawn into this mysterious situation concerning the missing Natalie. At times he thinks he's being followed. He's becoming suspicious of his friends. Who can he trust?

This was a really captivating read. I had a hard time putting the book down, I kept wanting to find out what was going to happen next. It was fast-paced, funny at times, and easy to read. It was also told in the first person POV (point-of-view). I liked the main character Jake. He really did love Natalie and he wanted to keep his promise to her, he did for six years, but he was afraid she may be in danger (if she's still alive). This was my first read by this author and it was really very good with an interesting storyline, evil villains, and lots of suspense!

Ionía says

This is the most suspenseful book I have read in a very long time. Not only can you not figure out what is going to happen at the end, but every single chapter contains new surprises.

When Jake Fisher notices an obituary for the husband of a woman he loved six years in the past, he makes the fateful decision to look for her. This sets events in motion that may forever change his life.

There was not a moment during this book that I thought I had everything all figured out. The pacing was perfect. The pages that were not filled with action were filled with psychological puzzles that about drove me crazy. Just when I thought I had it all put together, something else would change and I would have to start guessing all over again.

Harlan Coben has written a lot of really good books, but this one is my new favorite. He has managed to write a complex, layered story with characters that you want to see succeed on their various missions. There is action, suspense, love, longing, murder and every other component that makes for a thrilling read.

I was surprised by how well the first person POV worked for this book. Where sometimes it can come across as a little one-sided and make the book feel superficial, this time I appreciated it. This POV allowed me to get inside the head of the main character and get to know him, which this made me feel almost like I was thinking through his mind as well and trying to solve the mystery right along with him.

If you are looking for the perfect book to take you away from everything else in your life, this is it. I couldn't focus on anything else while reading "Six Years."

Harlan Coben is clearly at the top of his game!

I reviewed a digital ARC copy of this book. My opinions are my own.

Carolyn says

I haven't read a book by Harlan Coben for quite some time and I'd forgotten how good it is to cosy up with a book of his for a couple of hours. His plots are always well constructed with a puzzling mystery that takes a few twists and turns and keeps you thinking right up to the end. His characters are all interesting and well fleshed out so that you come to care about what happens to them.

This novel was no exception. Jake Fisher, a young handsome college Professor, has never recovered from losing Natalie, the love of his life six years ago when she inexplicably dumped him after a perfect summer romance and promptly married an old flame. Since then he has had a few short term relationships but no one has been able to come close to replacing Natalie. He loves his teaching job at his small East coast college and is popular with the students and has a good drinking buddy amongst the staff. However, one day he sees something that makes him wonder what really happened with Natalie and as he starts to look into past events, gets himself and a lot of other people into a whole world of trouble.

An excellent fast paced and entertaining page turner!

Vicki says

I have to say, this is the very first book by Harlan Coben I have read. What in the heck have I been missing? Wow, this book was literally amazing. I could not put it down.

Jake Fischer and Natalie Avery meet while both on retreats in Vermont. They fall in love. At the end of the summer, Jake receives a wedding invite from Natalie since she is marrying someone else. She makes Jake promise to leave them alone. He does. For Six Years. Then he sees an obit for her husband. Well, he did promise to leave them alone, but there is no more them. He heads down to go to Todd's funeral and this is when everything gets really weird.

Again, I love this book. I love that there is mystery, twists and turns, not everyone is who they say they is, and through it all, Mr. Coben has Jake Sanders having such a facetious attitude. I loved it. I truly can't believe I had never read any of his books before and he will definitely be on my authors I love list now.

Patricia Kurz says

I hope I can say enough about this horrible book that will keep enthusiastic hopefuls from spending time and money to acquire it. I cannot compare it to anything else by Coban except for "Stay Close," which was marginally readable. But this one, it's so bad, so implausible, so repetitive, so convoluted that it seems to have been written by a first year Composition student. The cliches are rampant. The love story that drives the dumb plot is dumber than that student writer's first draft. This man, this protagonist, Jake Fisher, is such a mope, such a feminized character that his described big, handsome physique seems wrong. His "fight" scenes are successful because of luck and some tricks, not because he is so enraged and impassioned that he is aggressive or cunning. His best friend, (requisite "black guy") Benedict is not as he seems. There is a sweet waitress and a crotchety old secretary. Everyone lies. There are (non-Italian) mobsters and African drug cartels. There are funky FBI agents and fence-riding cops. There is a lot of shooting and running and disguising. There are two references (in case you missed the first one) to a Lesbian couple. So Coban hit all the right notes politically. But none of that can Bandaïd a shoddy story and lousy, boring characters who generate no sympathy (from me).

The ending lines actually explain the whole thing, and once you know why Natalie has disappeared, it's pretty flaccid. I still couldn't have cared less. By the time we are told why Natalie disappeared, we have been exhausted by events that do NOTHING to advance the Natalie story.

Many reviewers described this as a wild ride, high-tension, edge-of-the seat thrill. Not even a little bit of this story was so compelling.
