



Tell No Lies

Gregg Hurwitz

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A series of anonymous threats intended for others puts a man—and everyone he loves—in the path of a relentless killer

Daniel Brasher has always been something of a disappointment to his old-money aristocratic San Francisco mother. Daniel left his high-paying job as a money manager to marry his community organizer wife and work at a job he loves, leading group counseling sessions with recently paroled ex-cons. Now he's ready to move on and start a private practice.

But before he leaves, he finds an envelope in his department mailbox—one intended for someone else that was placed in his slot by accident. Inside it is an unsigned piece of paper, a note that says only “admit what you’ve done or you will bleed for it. you have 'til november 15 at midnite.” The deadline has already passed and the person to whom the envelope was addressed was brutally murdered. But this first warning is only the beginning.

Soon, Daniel finds more warnings in his office mail, to people that the police cannot track down, and to victims that cannot be saved. Daniel's efforts, however, have alerted the killer to his involvement and next he gets a threat of his own. Now, with the clock ticking, Daniel—with no clue what he's supposed to have done or to what action he must confess—must somehow appease, or outwit, a seemingly unstoppable killer.

Tell No Lies Details

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From Reader Review Tell No Lies for online ebook

William says

Audio narrated by Scott Brick

If I had read this book instead of listening to the fine performance, and not had personal knowledge of San Francisco, it might have rated at just two stars.

From my mother's paternal side I am 5th generation Californian. The first ancestors arrived in 1847, from England, to sell weapons to Mexico during the Mexican-American War (1846-1848). My mother's father was born in the Sierras during the placer mining gold rush and moved Vallejo as an adult while he was employed in the boiler room of the Mark Hopkins Hotel in SF. My mother was born in Oakland 1922 before the family moved to San Mateo (the county just south of SF County). Her mother was a Brythonic Celt from Liverpool, England.

From 1849 to the present San Francisco has been a magnet for people who are eager to get something.

Back to the book. Hurwitz captures this dynamic polarization between cultural groups: the hard working capitalists versus the equally hard working socialists. At present, gentrification in SF, is flying at supersonic speed. Techies and the new rich have raised the cost of housing to a point that can't compare to other same size cities. There is a class war there resulting in 18% of the families have children, down the national average of 38%. In the middle of those two classes, are the political snakes like Nancy Pelosi (migrated from Baltimore), and Diane Feinstein, who play both sides against each other for their own political and capitalistic gains.

***filling up with gasoline yesterday, 2/18/2018, the state tax was \$0.45 per gal in order to drive on roads that ARE NOT maintained.

So listen to the audio version and learn a bit about SF before spend "an arm and a leg" just to visit a hilly tip of an unstable peninsula.

Wm, born San Mateo, 1947

Laura says

This is definitely the best crime novel that I have read so far this year! I thought the story was incredibly clever and not once did I manage to suss out what was going to happen next. It definitely kept me on my toes.

Daniel Brasher is a counsellor for the criminally convicted who are now on parole. This makes his job a little more interesting than most. He comes from a very wealthy background and from a flashback at the beginning of the novel, we know that he had a hard and if not cruel Mother. His wife Christina has not been as privileged as Daniel and not long ago she had a rare form of heart cancer, which she was lucky enough to get through.

Daniel doesn't want to continue working with ex-cons any more and plans to have his own private practice. But as he leaving work one evening he goes to collect his post from the mail room; there he finds a death threat, it is not addressed to him, but the recipient has to "admit what you've done or you will bleed for it. you have 'til november 15 at midnite". Shockingly that deadline has already passed and that person is already dead, having been brutally murdered.

But this is only the beginning. Daniel then finds two more death threats addressed to people he doesn't know with the same message but different deadlines. It is a race against time to find these people and save them from their potential gruesome fates.

I really liked Gregg Hurwitz's writing style in this. It seemed softer compared to some other crime novels I have read and I think it absorbed me in the story better and helped me get to know the characters.

I enjoyed all the characters in this, even the ex-convicts. They were so well developed and I really felt like I got to know them all. They really add to the story and when you are trying to work out who the killer might be, you just can't suss it out. Everyone is a suspect and the criminal possibly being someone from the group makes it harder for you to guess.

There was some really tense scenes in this novel and I found myself racing through it; my heart pounding as I read.

And just when you think you've got it sussed, Gregg Hurwitz throws in a major twist right at the end, which got me tensing all over again! Gregg very cleverly misdirects you, so that you have no chance of figuring out who the killer is on your own.

Overall this was brilliant, a gripping, suspenseful and heart pounding read that you will race through! A big thank you to Penguin books for sending this to me to review!

Elizabeth says

This is by no means a perfect book. There are holes big enough to drive semis through, such as

- police allow civilian into crime scenes
- police do not suspect civilian who seems to be in the middle of everything
- civilian is at fresh crime scene twice just before police get there
- no motive for one of the killers at all

But the story was very engaging. I bought into the high stakes feel of the problems. I really liked the main characters and even the evil bitchy mother was more than an evil bitchy person. Most of the characters had some depth to them. I also bought into the therapy involved with the violent offenders; it felt realistic and effective. There's also an overriding theme about the differences between the haves and the have-nots that I thought was handled pretty well. No answers given but both sides presented well.

I'd read more by this author.

Jan says

Tell No Lies was a super good read with a lot of suspense, intrigue and historical data about San Francisco. The main character has to outwit, unmask, appease or somehow stop a frantic killer while trying to help the victims. I loved the descriptions of the city and the buildings as well as the history of the St. Francis Hotel. His mother made me laugh as I've met monied ladies like Daniel's mother and was cheering for Daniel's wife when she and "mommy" got into it their first meeting.

Katherine Clark says

I like Hurwitz. He definitely kept me glued to the book. But I hate serial killer books, especially the ones (nearly all of them) where the serial killer is almost like a super hero with incredible powers, seemingly unstoppable. I've stopped reading other books like this in the past, and it may be time to do the same now.

I thought I had read this before! I would still give it a 3 stars. Hmm. I am reading his latest, and I think it is better. But good writer for sure.

David says

Daniel Brasher is the scion of a super-wealthy San Francisco family who is trying to sever his difficult, snooty mother's apron strings. Having walked away from the lucrative trade of managing the family fortune, he's now a psychologist working with violent ex-cons. Not that he's donned sackcloth and taken a vow of poverty - he still has his money, and as the book begins, he's making plans to start a private practice in a nice luxury office suite.

Much of the human interest involves his group of felons whom he meets with once a week as part of the terms of their parole. They are your usual assortment of poor, mostly non-white people who have made bad life choices, but each one has their little facets and secrets which are unveiled to give them a bit of added dimensionality. Much of the book takes place in their group counseling sessions, which of course turns out to be more significant when Daniel suspects that one of them is a killer.

Without spoiling anything, the killer is out to avenge a perceived injustice, and naturally Daniel turns out to be involved personally. Most of the plot moves in predictable fashion - you can tell when a "twist" is coming by how much of the book is left - but despite it being both somewhat formulaic and implausible (I really don't think the SFPD are going to keep asking a civilian who also happens to be the son of one of the city's most prominent families to keep coming to crime scenes where a serial killer may still be lurking about), I found it entertaining most of the way through. Only at the very end did it become so formulaic as to make me wish it had ended a chapter or two earlier.

Not a particularly thrilling thriller, but the plot moves nicely with a diverse range of characters, and being an expat Californian, I appreciated the San Francisco setting. 3.5 stars - I haven't read any books by Gregg Hurwitz before, but it was a nice break from the military SF I've been reading lately, and I would probably try this author again.

Linda says

I really enjoyed this book by the author of Orphan X. The book has been re released on the popularity of the Evan Smoak books, and certainly deserves being read.

Daniel is a councillor working with criminals on probation who need to reform and change their lives. Upon leaving work one night he checks his pigeonhole where Mail is delivered. As his mail slot is by the outwards mail slot he often receives letters not intended for him. This seems the case when he opens a letter that turns

out to be a warning of death for the recipient. As the deadline had passed he googles the person and finds that they have been murdered. When further warnings herald more gruesome murders, Daniel finds himself drawn into the web that points to one of his clients, and it seems he is next on the death list. I found this a real page turner and an excellent front runner to the Orphan X series.

Christine says

This is the story of Daniel who works as a counsellor. He finds threatening notes in his pigeonhole (office mail in American English) at work. He believes them setting out to trace the intended victims. He works out that a victim is about to be murdered and goes to the address in quite a heroic style, finding the murder in progress. Thus starts a cat and mouse game with the killer and Daniel.

Unfortunately for me, I found the plot rather ludicrous. If I found a note in my pigeonhole like that, it would go straight in the bin and I wouldn't be contacting the police.

I didn't warm very much to Daniel, his wife or his mother. The plot is so slow paced and I found about a third of the way in I didn't really care who the murderer was.

I will look out for this author again though, to see what some of his other stuff is like.

Cheryl says

Another dynamite thriller from Hurwitz

I think I've read all of Hurwitz's books, have enjoyed them and this is my favorite among them all.

Hurwitz writes dynamite thrillers, fast paced and exciting with a big bang at the end. And "Tell No Lies" shows the author at the top of his form.

Daniel Brasher grew up with a silver spoon in his mouth. His wife, Cristina, comes from a poor background. But he and Cristina decided they wanted to give back to their San Francisco community. Daniel is a counselor, leading group sessions with convicts on parole, and Cristina is trying to help a group of low-income people from being bought out of their homes by a mega corporation.

The action starts quickly in this tale and the speed just ramps up as you flip through the pages, trying to keep up.

GREAT character development - I felt like I could visualize them all and wanted to get to know most of them, even the ex-cons. Hurwitz creates a lot of empathy for his characters this time around.

Plotting - tight with no holes. It's an excellent idea for a novel and actually works.

This story will keep you guessing right up to the last pages. It's one of my favorite reads this year.

NOTE: I received an Advanced Reading Copy of this book in exchange for my honest review.

Luanne Ollivier says

I love suspense novels - especially those that throw an 'everyday' person into extraordinary circumstances.

Gregg Hurwitz writes this genre - and does it very well. His latest book is Tell No Lies.

Daniel Brasher comes from money, but decided to make his own way in life and make a difference in other's lives. Daniel works as a counsellor for a group of paroled violent offenders. While checking his oft neglected staff mailbox one night, he comes across a unsigned departmental envelope. The missive inside is chilling...

"Admit what youv don, or you will bleed for it. you hav til november 15 at midnite. jack holley."

The date has passed, and when Daniel and his wife check the paper - they find the news story detailing the murder of Jack Holley. Daniel contacts the police, but more letters - and more deadlines - keep showing up in his mailbox. Could it be one of the ex-cons in his group? Why is Daniel receiving these letters?

Hurwitz has populated Tell No Lies with lots of suspects to choose from. He plants red herrings and provides enough twists and turns that I really had no idea 'whodunit' until the last few chapters. You may have to suspend disbelief on a few plot points, but Hurwitz has written a great piece of escapist reading. Tell No Lies is all about the page turning action (which is exactly what I wanted). Daniel is somewhat fleshed out, but don't expect great characterization. His mother and some of the cons are a bit cliched, but serve their purpose.

The counselling sessions with the parolees were well written and actually provided some food for thought. There are some other social commentary bits scattered throughout the book.

Recommended for suspense and thriller readers. Fans of Harlan Coben and Linwood Barclay would enjoy Gregg Hurwitz.

Liz Barnsley says

A series of anonymous threats intended for others puts a man—and everyone he loves—in the path of a relentless killer

I am a huge fan of Gregg Hurwitz because he writes actually thrilling thrillers. Not only that, he leads you a merry dance while you are trying to work out what the heck might be going on....so not only do you get an edge of your seat read, but also a bit of a brain work out. Tell No Lies is no exception to this rule - and it is one of the best so far.

Daniel Brasher comes from money and privilege - he likes to think he has left that behind and he works as a therapist with groups of ex convicts to help them get their lives back on track..after one such session, he picks up his mail and finds an anonymous letter. "admit what you've done or you will bleed for it. you have 'til november 15 at midnite." The letter is not addressed to him however..and the deadline has already passed.

The story twists and turns, and moves along at a heck of a pace that leaves your head spinning and your heart pounding - at the same time Mr Hurwitz manages to create believable, sometimes eccentric, always intriguing characters that you actually care about - and often manages to give you something "real life" to think about. In the case of this book, the different opportunities in life available to the rich versus the poor.

I havent loved ALL the books equally - some are not quite as exciting, or quite as involving, but all are enjoyable. I put this at no 2 on my "Favourite Hurwitz Books" list just beaten to the post by "We Know" a novel I read in one caffeine fuelled breathless night last year. Anyone who loves a good thriller but likes them to be intelligent will enjoy this one. And probably a fair few others from this author...

Happy Reading Folks!

Siobhan says

This was my first dealing with the author, an author who has been on my to-read list for quite some time, and I'm rather annoyed with myself for waiting so long to pick up one of his books.

For the first couple of chapters I was asking myself why I was sticking with the book, not enjoying it all that much. I'd expected things to start with a real bang – a page one bang – and when it took a while for the crime aspect of the story to get started I felt myself lagging somewhat. Oh, what a mistake that was. In retrospect, it merely felt like a long time before the story started – really, it wasn't much at all.

Out of nowhere things got truly interesting. Then, the next thing I knew, I'd read the large majority of the book and had lost a few hours of my life.

Filled with interesting characters, a gripping plot, and new questions constantly coming to light, I was on the edge of my seat and unable to put the book down. In fact, this book is very close to being a five star review. Had I not been iffy to start with I probably would have given it five stars – instead, it is a strong four point five.

Without a doubt I will be returning for more now that I know what to expect from the author.

Lindsay Nixon says

I didn't love this as much as the Orphan X series but it was gripping with the right amount of diversions to keep me on my toes... well paced unraveling. I am going to keep reading more by this author.

The story has social commentary (its delicate) which adds to the story. I didn't find the main character very likable, but he wasn't unlikeable... it was interesting to care about knowing what happens while not rooting for the guy or being emotionally invested in his outcome.

Summary: psychologist finds murder threat letter to someone else in his mailbox and suspects it's a patient. The rest of the novel is figuring out who and why and what's the connection? Ultimately it's a story of consequences and how it's easy to forget that better for someone means it's worse for someone else.

?Susan? says

I enjoyed the premise of this murder mystery but it did remind me a bit of a movie starring Bruce Willis called "Color of Night". The characters were unique and the story kept up a good, fast pace throughout. Even though it had a somewhat predictable ending it was still exciting.

The author did a great job with the descriptions of the city of San Francisco. I used to live there and he brought back many memories for me. He showed just how diverse and beautiful the city is and how it has its own distinctly different weather pattern.

I would read more from this author should any come up as Daily Deals as this one was.

Best Crime Books & More says

I was really quite excited when I received an early review copy of the new Gregg Hurwitz. The synopsis had all the key ingredients to make a perfect Hurwitz belter. Daniel Brasher is a counsellor who lives a reasonably ordinary life. His job dealing with affected individuals who are usually on parole keeps his day to day work interesting. His longer term plan is to jack in the public stuff and start his own private practice. With that in mind, he aims to enjoy his last few weeks with his current group. As he leaves work one evening he finds a letter in his pigeonhole, only it's not for him. It's too late as Daniel has already read the note which declared that the recipient has until midnight on November 15th to admit what they have done or they will bleed for it.

The first part of the book was typical Hurwitz with descriptions of each of his group, and the discovery of the note. It's all pretty high tension stuff and you realise that Daniel is in a pretty awkward position. However, when he informs the police what is going on and they intervene, it seems like they just miss the killer each and every time. It seems that with each note Daniel receives, he has to figure out the puzzle. Who is the victim and what have they done. I admit that the first few chapters flew by and I was totally engrossed, and then something weird happened. The book sort of took on a weird, disjointed kind of air to it. I felt like the middle of the book hit a bit of a stumbling block and I struggled to get through the pages.

However, having read and loved many of his books I carried on. Towards the last third of the book, the pace picked up again and once again I was taken down the smooth road of taut and tense scenes created by Mr H. Towards the end of the book I was still none the wiser about who the murdered was, but when all was revealed I kind of felt like there was a major piece of the puzzle still missing from the book. This review may sound slightly strange, but in all honesty that's kind of what the book was like. If I read it not knowing the author I might have guessed it was a new author who had it 60% right!?

Overall it was an average read, but for Gregg Hurwitz it definitely wasn't up to his usual standard. I have no idea if this was due to maybe the mood I was whilst in reading it, or whether other people will agree? I just feel like there was something missing that his books never normally miss. I will always look forward to reading a Hurwitz book and can only assume that this story just wasn't for me, of maybe it just isn't as good as his others? Either way, I still eagerly await the next book.

