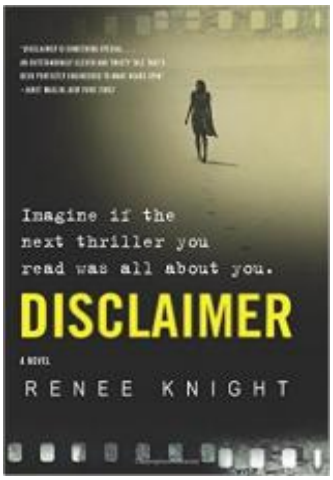
Disclaimer

by Renée Knight



About the Book

What if you realized the terrifying book you were reading was all about you?

A brilliantly conceived, deeply disturbing psychological thriller about a woman haunted by secrets --- and the price she will pay for concealing the truth.

When a mysterious novel appears at Catherine Ravenscroft's bedside, she is curious. She has no idea who might have sent her *The Perfect Stranger* --- or how it ended up on her nightstand. At first, she is intrigued by the suspenseful story that unfolds.

And then she realizes.

This isn't fiction.

The Perfect Stranger recreates in vivid, unmistakable detail the 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 Catherine so desperately wants to forget is catching up with her, her world is falling apart. Plunged into a living nightmare, she knows that her only hope is to confront what really happened on that terrible day...even if the shocking truth may destroy her.

Discussion Guide

1. Describe Catherine, Robert and Nicholas and their family dynamic. Now think of Stephen, Nancy and Jonathan and their family dynamic. How are the two families similar or different because of the tragic event that links them?

2. What do you think draws Catherine and Robert together? How has their marriage evolved over the years? When first presented with the incriminating photos, why is it so easy for Robert to believe his wife capable of committing adultery?

3. Would Catherine have been better off telling someone the truth about what happened to her right away or do you think she was justified in keeping the secret to herself? Do you think Catherine would have ever broken her silence if not for Stephen?s harassment?

4. Is Catherine a good mother? Do you think she reacted to her personal tragedy in a way that was best for Nicholas? How can Catherine be a better mother now that the truth has come out?

5. How might Nicholas?s life have been different if he?d had someone to talk to about what he saw when he was a child?

6. What will Catherine and Nicholas need to do to rebuild their relationship? Do you think it is too late for their relationship or can recent events atone for past mistreatment?

7. How does the author ratchet up the suspense in the story? What clues does she provide to point you toward the truth --- or away from it?

8. Before uncovering the truth, Stephen believes Catherine should be punished for the death of his son, Jonathan. Do you think his malice toward Catherine was justified? Would your answer to the latter be different if Stephen?s version of events turned out to be true?

9. Think of the photos Jonathan took of Catherine. What impact does image play in the story, both literally and metaphorically? What are the dangers of taking things at face value?

10. How is Nancy?s reaction to Jonathan?s photographs similar or different to Robert?s reaction to the same photos? How might the story have been different if both had reached understanding --- even forgiving --- conclusions?

11. Does Stephen get closure when he discovers the truth behind his wife?s story? How do you think he might have responded to the truth if Nancy had still been alive?

12. What is the role of forgiveness in this novel? Do you think all of the characters deserve forgiveness for their behaviors? Why or why not?

Author Bio

Renée Knight worked for the BBC directing arts documentaries and has had TV and film scripts commissioned by the BBC, Channel Four and Capital Films. In April 2013, she graduated from the Faber Academy "Writing a Novel" course, whose alumni include S. J. Watson. She lives in London with her husband and two children.

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