



Sleeping Beauty

Phillip Margolin

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Author Miles Van Meter is on a book tour to promote his sensational bestseller *Sleeping Beauty*, a true-crime account of a deeply personal subject: the attack by a serial killer that left his twin sister, Casey, in a coma. Tonight the audience waits to hear Miles discuss recent developments in his sister's case -- unaware that pieces of this complex puzzle of violence, unknown even to the author, are about to be revealed.

Six years earlier, life was much simpler for everyone involved, especially seventeen-year-old Ashley Spencer, a popular high school soccer star. Then one night an intruder entered Ashley's home and murdered her father and her best friend. Traumatized and suffering from a crippling sense of survivor guilt, Ashley is ready to give up on both soccer and life until help comes from an unexpected source -- a scholarship to the Oregon Academy, an elite private school, is extended to her by school dean Casey Van Meter. The school quickly becomes a haven for both Ashley and her mother, Terri. As Ashley regains her sense of self through the school's soccer program, Terri joins a writing group for adults led by Joshua Maxfield, a former literary wunderkind who has disappeared from the bestseller lists since his second book was panned by both critics and fans.

Then tragedy strikes again and Ashley has to run for her life, unaware that the key to her survival is in the one book she's afraid to read -- *Sleeping Beauty*.

With its blend of dizzying plot twists and thrilling suspense, *Sleeping Beauty* shows Phillip Margolin at the very top of his form.

Sleeping Beauty Details

Date : Published (first published March 23rd 2004)

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Author : Phillip Margolin

Format : Kindle Edition 416 pages

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

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From Reader Review Sleeping Beauty for online ebook

Dolceluna says

Ashley, diciassette anni.

Una notte un killer penetra in casa sua e le uccide il padre e un'amica ospite. Lei invece riesce miracolosamente a fuggire. La madre verrà uccisa in seguito, durante un colloquio con la preside della scuola di Ashley, che l'aveva convocata per fornirle delle informazioni sul presunto assassino e che, colpita a sua volta dall'aggressore, resta in coma.

L'assassino è noto, o almeno così si pensa. Ma riesce a fuggire, lasciando Ashley traumatizzata e ansiosa tanto da decidere di lasciare gli Stati Uniti e di rifarsi una nuova vita in Europa, lontano da tutto e da tutti. Ma poi l'incubo riprenderà forma, e Ashley sarà costretta a ritornare nel paese natale, e a scoprire, attraverso un copo di scena dopo l'altro, cosa è effettivamente accaduto e perchè è accaduto.

Senza infamia e senza lode, questo mio primo incontro con Phillip Margolin mi ha ricordato un po' i romanzi di Koontz, con trame che ruotano attorno a una giovane figura femminile sola, disperata a traumatizzata, in balia di un pazzo che, per motivi non ben chiari, ce l'ha con lei. La "Bella addormentata" del titolo, tuttavia, non è Ashley bensì la preside in coma, personaggio centrale per la vicenda.

Qualche momento di tensione c'è, alternato a momenti di stasi e a passaggi di dialoghi svolti fra le aule di tribunale, ma anche a passaggi riguardanti la storia d'amore tra Ashley e il suo legale.

Interessante la "cornice" del romanzo, poichè la storia della protagonista viene a sua volta raccontata da un altro personaggio che ne trae un crime-novel intitolato proprio "La Bella addormentata", e il libro di Margolin si apre proprio con la presentazione di tale libro, da parte dell'autore, in una libreria. Una sorta di libro nel libro, che riesca ad incuriosare il lettore.

In definitiva non è un cattivo thriller, ma non lo definirei memorabile.

Joyce says

A serial killer breaks into a family home in the middle of the night. He kills the father by repeatedly stabbing him, assaults, rapes and kills a girl spending the night with their teen aged daughter who manages to escape from him. This is how the novel opens. The girl who escapes transfers to an elite school after her father's death. There, while running one evening, she hears screams and when investigating, sees her Mother's body and that of the school's Dean in the Boathouse. She also sees a teacher from the school in the Boathouse holding a bloody knife. She runs for help and manages to escape once again. Ultimately the teacher is captured, but he escapes from custody while in Court. Years go by and the plot gets even more convoluted with the passage of time. Relationships are uncovered and discovered. No one is quite what they seem to be. The narrative is riveting enough to keep you reading long after you should have stopped. It is an excellent way to spend a long weekend.

Ashley Vidaurre says

One of the reasons i picked this book is simply because it is a murder mystery which I find relatively interesting and enjoyable to read. I do enjoy the author it didn't have any major awards. I like the types of books he writes and sells. I would recommend this book to someone who enjoys murder mysteries because

this book is a good example of one. This book did not receive I am writing this report for Ms.Orona my English four teacher. The title of my book is Sleeping Beauty and the author's name is Phillip Margolin. This book has 329 pages the publisher of this book is Harper The main character in the book "Sleeping Beauty" is a young girl who has bleach blond hair and crystal blue eyes. Her name is Ashley. The reason she is so important in this book is for the fact that all the main part of this story is taken place in her own home. Her best friend was murdered in just the very next room from her in her house. Ashley even though is only a child has to act and think quickly knowing there is a killer in her house and, not knowing if she was going to be there next target or not.

Besides Ashley there is also her best friend who she has known forever and also shared the same compassion for soccer. There's not a thing they would do without one another. She watched all those fun memories wash away as she heard her best friend screaming for help as she was murdered in the very next room. There is also Ashley's dad who was her protector and number one fan on everything she does. She also saw him sacrifice his own life just to try and protect her from getting killed as well.

This book is a mystery book which took place in her own home. The time period this book was written in was now in the present days. The main important place that the event took place in was her house. There were some pretty violent and scary settings in this book there was a brutal murder of Ashley's best friend. Also the killing of Ashley's dad that the killer did without an sympathy. Ashley is trying to find and figure out with this person has done this to her friends and family. The outcome of all this craziness is that there is only one person to blame and that who killed her dad and best friend.

My final thoughts of this book is that I did enjoy this book about a murder mystery which I understood pretty well. I enjoyed how it was an ongoing mystery that you had to figure out. The good points about this book is that it shows the character trying to figure things out and keeping herself together instead of going crazy and possibly getting killed because she can't think. The weak points are how she doesn't tell people right away about what happened. What I learned from this book is to be aware anything can happen to you. I would recommend others to read this book for sure if they enjoy mysteries and a thrilling rush while reading.

Jerry B says

Tenth thriller's plot almost too twisty to believe...

We have read and generally enjoyed all nine of Margolin's previous outings, and find that this lawyer turned writer can craft a suspenseful story line along with the best of them. The books that have left us a little cold were ones where the author overpopulates with so many events and characters, doing justice to few of them, that hardly a reader can keep it all straight. Fortunately, in "Beauty", we have a cast of just a few main players to consider:

Ashley Spencer, a teenager who witnesses the brutal murder of her girlfriend and her father, and just narrowly escapes herself;

Joshua Maxfield, the alleged murderer who for much of the book is either a fugitive from the crime or in prison for it;

Miles Van Meter, best-selling author of a true-life account of the Spencer murders and the impact on his comatose sister;

Casey Van Meter, yet another victim who after Terri Spencer (Ashley's mother, who was away during the first attack) is killed in her sight, is struck on the head and spends years in a coma (ergo, the sleeping beauty!);

Randy Coleman, Casey's soon to be ex-husband from a mistaken quickie marriage;

and Jerry Philips, Ashley's attorney, who for a while takes almost too much personal interest in this whole matter.

Which one of these is really the killer? We're lead down many a path before all becomes clearer toward the end. Even with the big twist that gets to be a little foreseeable, a further twist right at the very end is good for a pretty shocking climax. Interesting courtroom drama helps break up the more violent action of much of the novel.

Most will find Margolin's latest a pleasing puzzler. We were not totally enamored by the telling of the story through flashbacks alternating with current time scenes where Miles is entertaining a crowd at a book signing. But the plot proceeds at a good pace, the characters are portrayed well enough, and the ending will catch many off guard. Guess that's what a thriller is all about!

Garth Slater says

I want to end this review on a positive note since there are many. To me, this is both a 2 star and a 4.5 star book. First the 2 star.

While grilling the survivor of an attempted rape and murder where she witnessed her best friend being murdered, the detectives needed to know what the perpetrator had touched in the kitchen in order to get DNA. Why not get a sample from the victim. Another reference right at the end of the book was similar. I personally am offended by the detailed sexual references. Too graphic for my taste. I needed an excel spreadsheet to keep track of all the characters.

I found the chapters about the courtroom section anticlimactic.

On the 5 star side, amazingly creative story line. I found it intriguing how the reader kept getting moved from present and past through the writing of the character. That was masterful. The book within a book concept was highly creative and artfully orchestrated. I really enjoyed the main characters and the fact they weren't overly developed. I am able to create my own concept of what they look like.

Ben Campbell says

Phillip Margolin wrote us a simplistic murder mystery with a few plot twists as to who-done-it and why who-done-it. Mediocre characters, mediocre clues, mediocre staging, mediocre dialog, mediocre emotions, mediocre situations, am I sounding repetitive and pedestrian? It's all to prove my point. Sleeping Beauty is more like sleeping puddles, someone steps into a muddy puddle and a few seconds later the puddle settles into a lifeless sheen.

Oh yeah, there are murders and a rape, arrests and escapes, a fugitive and courtroom dialog, and excitement

was lost somewhere in the boredom mix of storytelling.

I gave *Sleeping Beauty* 2 stars mostly for effort, that also reflects my discomfort intermingled with weariness about reading the book in its entirety.

My next read: *Murder in Marais* by Cara Black.

Alissa says

Great murder mystery that keeps you guessing until the end.

Lara says

While the plot of *Sleeping Beauty* was intriguing the writing was flat. I could get lost in the plot but when I stepped back and really looked at the prose, it was just so...simple, I guess. The sentences were short and basic. The character development was bland and narrated instead of demonstrated. Again, the plot was interesting and moved it along. A true crime novel about a solved murder sparks a new investigation and more horrors against the heroine who survived the murders the first time. I am someone who always reads the ends of books first, I found this fun because the reader knows the ending. And now we have to figure out the journey.

Lynne Curry says

I liked how the author established character and setting details and had great plot twists. I'd like to have given it 5 stars but couldn't. Twice, he created contrived plot turns, where a likable protagonist didn't go to the police and agreed to meet someone in a secluded area without thinking to at least alert the police and thus got herself killed. It moved the plot along but lost me as a reader.

I'm a budding novelist and reading this book sent me back to my own work in progress to cut out a character I loved but who didn't have enough meaning, that I was crafting a plot to keep her in it. I'd like my own novel ratings -- when I get there -- to match my nonfiction book ratings. So if you're also a writer, this is a great book to remind you what to do and don't do.

Debbie Oxier says

This was a very good legal thriller. Ashley was a witness to the murder of her father and best friend. After the killer performed his evil deed he went downstairs, ate a piece of cake, drank a glass of milk, then came back upstairs to deal with Ashley. But her mortally wounded father had crawled into Ashley's room, cut her loose, and told her to run. She escaped to a neighbor's but the killer remained at large.

The story moves back and forth between past and present. A man has written a book about Ashley's experience and in doing so opens a can of worms. Things come to light that no one knew before and several twists and turns keep you turning the pages. I had my suspicions about how things would end up but didn't

know for sure until I reached the conclusion. Very good read.

Kathy says

From a blog post I wrote in 2005:

I got hooked on Phillip Margolin when I read *Gone, But Not Forgotten*. Spoiler alert - the bad guy actually got away which made me crazy and nervous. I don't do well with serial killer books where the villain isn't dead or locked up at the end of the story. It just creeps me out but that's a problem with my imagination that tends to run wild.

Margolin's latest bad guy is a serial rapist/murderer who attacks a young high school girl and kills her father. Her mother is then apparently killed by the same man and the girl goes on the run since the police are doing a crappy job of protecting her.

There are several plot twists, a few that I did not see, but I pegged the killer from the beginning. Margolin's story telling is always entertaining and he does a good job of portraying the evil that men (and woman) do. If you like James Patterson, you'll enjoy Phillip Margolin.

Victoria says

This is an average mystery novel. The plot was interesting and certainly kept me turning pages, but it was overall predictable... I liked the characters and found them to be sympathetic as well. The real downside of this novel was the writing style. It has been probably 8 years since I last read a Margolin novel, and I did not remember the style being so simplistic, with errors in verb tense. While the short sentences did set the book at a faster pace, sometimes it completely pulled me out of the story to marvel at how a book at such a low-reading level was targeted for adults.

This was definitely for a mature audience, as there were some downright creepy scenes. The dialogue was fairly believable and there were a few lines that made me laugh out loud. I liked Joshua's character and his occupation as a writer added a fun twist to the book.

Basically, this is a quick, vacation-read type of mystery. Margolin may not be my favorite mystery writer, but he is a consistent choice for a fun way to pass the time.

manNie says

This is the first Phillip Margolin book I have ever read, chosen quite randomly from the bookstore shelf. I must say that I was truly impressed by his writing style in this particular book. He jumped back-and-forth from the present to the past without creating any confusion on my part as the reader. You could create a number of endings as you proceed with the book, and I must say that I was pretty pleased with how the story progressed and presented itself. I was easily absorbed in the story line and finished the book in record time.

An absolute must-read for me that I told my husband to read it as soon as he finished his last book. I am sure to be on the look out for more of Mr. Margolin's book on my next trip to the bookstore.

Heather L says

I was told about this book from a perfect stranger I happened to converse with at a discount bookstore. We got to talking about new books and she suggested I give this writer a try, specified this title in particular. And with that, onto my compelling review:

Wow. Chills. That's what I got at the end of this one. Without giving anything away, the author truly gives the reader a sense of utter amazement and shock. Rarely do I read novels that put me into that category, and Margolin did that for me. I had a suspicion on the accusations but I never would have predicted the outcome. The author does such great work at making you feel for Ashley, Norman, and the others. And the emotions that you experience with everyone involved is just awesome. I love when an author can achieve that. The little subtleties throughout the book really put it all together. You think back and realize "OMG, yes!" How the reactions and expressions of the characters really bring the story into another dimension for the reader. I am a true Margolin fan now!! I can't wait to experience more.

Sharon Clark says

This book was OK with various twists and turns. But after a while the plot became contrived and convoluted with an ending that was meant to take a surprising turn, but just didn't seem credible.
