



# Tattletale

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**Tattletale** Sarah J. Naughton

**A sinister novel about finding justice in revenge, perfect for fans of *In a Dark, Dark Wood* and *I Let You Go***

After years of estrangement from her family, Mags receives a shocking phone call. Her rebellious brother, Abe, is in a coma, and the police suspect he tried to take his own life. But Mags isn't so sure, and she begins to crack away at the life of the brother she once knew: the dark apartment building, the whispering tenants, and her brother's mysterious girlfriend, the only witness to the incident, who raises more questions than answers. As Mags picks up where the police left off, she begins to unearth the secrets her brother left behind—and awakens her own talent for revenge.

## Tattletale Details

Date : Published March 2017 by Hachette Australia

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Author : Sarah J. Naughton

Format : Paperback 336 pages

Genre : Thriller, Mystery, Fiction, Psychological Thriller, Crime, Mystery Thriller

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## **From Reader Review Tattletale for online ebook**

### **Shannon says**

Thank you to Sourcebooks for sending me a copy of *The Girlfriend* by Sarah Naughton. I devoured this book yesterday. The twists and turns were on POINT! This story is read with multiple POVs with fast chapters.

Mags is a hard ass lawyer who lives in Las Vegas. She is shocked when she gets a call that her estranged brother, Abe, has listed her as his next of kin and has been in a terrible accident. Once Mags goes back to London she learns from the police that they believe Abe committed suicide. Although Mags has not seen her brother in years she finds it hard to believe he'd take his own life.

Abe's fiancé, Jody, lives in the same complex as Abe. She is the one who found him at the bottom of the stairs. She stays by his side while he is in a coma at the hospital. Once Jody and Mags meet, Mags has even more questions than answers. She is almost positive he didn't commit suicide. If Abe and Jody were so in love why didn't he leave her a note? Mags then decides to investigate further into her brothers life.

We get a glimpse of what the characters go through as children. And I must say be prepared for what some people call "triggers".

This book made me feel all the feels. I was happy, confused, and sad but I was rooting for everyone! This morning my girl asked me what I thought and I told her it was a solid 4 stars but she made me go back and read the first chapter. As I did, I was like ahh holy shizzzz! I get it now ha! For that, I'm going to bump it to a 4.5 and I recommend!

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### **Sandy \*The world could end while I was reading and I would never notice\* says**

EXCERPT: Blood doesn't look like blood in the dark.

Now that the adrenaline that powered her scramble down the stairs has drained away, she feels as if all her bones have been pulled out. She can barely stand, has to grasp the metal newel post for support as she stares and stares.

The fourth-floor landing light goes out.

ABOUT THIS BOOK: A sinister novel about finding justice in revenge, perfect for fans of *In a Dark, Dark Wood* and *I Let You Go*

After years of estrangement from her family, Mags receives a shocking phone call. Her rebellious brother, Abe, is in a coma, and the police suspect he tried to take his own life. But Mags isn't so sure, and she begins to crack away at the life of the brother she once knew: the dark apartment building, the whispering tenants, and her brother's mysterious girlfriend, the only witness to the incident, who raises more questions than answers. As Mags picks up where the police left off, she begins to unearth the secrets her brother left behind—and awakens her own talent for revenge.

MY THOUGHTS: *The Girlfriend* by Sarah J. Naughton was a book that, once I got into it, got all the

characters straight in my mind, I didn't want to put down. There are four main characters, Abe, Jody, Mags and Mira. The story is told mainly from their POVs, with an occasional view from one of the more minor characters.

It is a complex story, but a riveting one, told mainly in the current timeline with occasional flashbacks. It seems that everyone has some sort of abusive past and, of course, this affects the person that they have become. I admit to occasionally getting the person and the past muddled, hence the 4 stars, rather than 5.

There were times while I was reading that I felt tied up in knots. The characterisation is superb, and you never really know where you are with any of them. I would be thinking one thing, and reading something entirely different from what I expected. The plot twists, turns and doubles back on itself. It truly is a roller coaster ride!

Naughton has written a very clever, a diabolically clever, novel. The Girlfriend has it all - crime, drama, mystery, suspense, secrets, suspicions and lies. Lies that the liar believes. . .

The Girlfriend by Sarah J. Naughton was previously published as Tattletale. The new title is far more fitting.

Thank you to Sourcebooks Landmark via Netgalley for providing a digital copy of The Girlfriend by Sarah J. Naughton for review. All opinions expressed in this review are entirely my own personal opinions.

Please refer to my Goodreads.com profile page or the 'about' page on [sandysbookaday.wordpress.com](http://sandysbookaday.wordpress.com) for an explanation of my rating system.

This review and others are also published on my blog [sandysbookaday.wordpress.com](http://sandysbookaday.wordpress.com)  
<https://sandysbookaday.wordpress.com/...>

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## Dennis says

In a genre that has been over-saturated with B-List *Gone Girl* and *Girl on the Train* Kmart brand variations, ***The Girlfriend*** soars passed the competition. Seriously everyone, this book is going to be a sleeper hit in the mystery genre for 2018. I was not only thoroughly surprised by the plot, but I was *engrossed with the characters, the heartbreak, and just everything!*

The story mainly focuses on the mysterious attempted suicide of Abe—a caregiver in London who has fallen down a flight of stairs and is in a vegetative state. Police are adamant on ruling this as an attempted suicide, but after contacting Abe's estranged sister Mags, they get more than what they bargained for. Mags is a successful attorney who has moved to Las Vegas; defending criminals and con-artists for a living. Mags is skeptical to believe that Abe would try to take his own life and once she meets his fiancé Jody, she further questions the validity of the police report. As Mags begins to investigate the mysterious loopholes in the investigation, she starts seeing the secrets behind the life her brother has left behind. NO MORE STORY TIME. NO SPOILERS. GO IN BLIND!

It's 2018 and are we tired of the whole "*Girl*" gimmick yet? Well I for one, am not with ***The Girlfriend***. As I started reading the story, I felt a level of familiarity with the plot; insert a mysterious crime that the protagonist believes to be incorrect; insert a deviously antagonistic character that throws a wrench into the whole investigation. However, ***The Girlfriend*** is so so **SO MUCH MORE**. Not only does the story take an

original and provocative change of pace as you read along, the story also provides a level of sympathy for the main characters that you wouldn't expect. We first meet a group of characters who don't appear to be likable in any capacity, but as the story develops, you fall victim of falling in love with them. You sympathize with them, you feel their burden, and you root for them. This story is deemed as a suspense-mystery, but it also is a tragedy; a tragedy of acceptance, of love, and of heartbreak. *The Girlfriend* is a powerful read, and I don't think I'll ever forget it.

**Thank you Source Books for my copy in exchange for an honest review. It was honestly my pleasure!**

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### **Louise Wilson says**

Wow. What can I say other than I loved this book. There is not much more I can say otherwise my review would be full of spoilers.

I do recommend that you do get yourself a copy of this book. I am sure you will love it too. Well written with an ending that's unexpected.

I would like to thank NetGalley, Orion Publishing Group and the author Sarah J. Naughton for my ARC in exchange for an honest review.

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### **Dita says**

I would REALLY have appreciated if the marketing for either this book or The Girlfriend made it clear it was the exact same book.

(Before they both arrived this week.)

At least I'm consistent, I ordered one a week and the other over a month ago.

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### **Liz Barnsley says**

I'm crazy in love with this book for many many reasons none of which I can tell you otherwise I'll spoil it and then prevent you from falling crazy in love with this book.

That would be the shortest review ever though so we'll talk around things a bit. For a start you'll probably be expecting the usual sort of psychological thriller. Well yes. And No. She says enigmatically.

The characters in Tattletale are all extraordinarily intriguing, but they won't necessarily do what you expect them to do at any given time. Sarah J Naughton has a keen eye for psychological knots – and she'll tie you all up in them from start to finish. There really is some beautifully layered storytelling, challenging assumptions, exploring some dark themes and juggling the emotions of the reader from one extreme to another with almost every chapter.

Very very clever. At times very devious. Certainly emotive. And you know, surprising. Genuinely surprising. The resolution is genius, unexpected, when I got there I had to step back for a bit and take stock of what I was feeling. BAM. It gets you. But gently...

I loved it. Because its not really about what you think it is about. The surface will offer fans of psychological thrillers everything they could possibly want – then the hidden depths will offer everything else. So really. Everyone should read this book.

No one believes a liar. Even when they're telling the truth.

What is the truth? Well you'll have to read it if you want to find out. Sorry. Thats the way it goes..

My lips are sealed.

Highly Recommended

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### **Danielle (The Blonde Likes Books) says**

I really really wanted to like this book, but to be honest, I struggled with it, and it took me about a month to finish, which is really unusual for me. The premise is that Mags finds out that something happened to her brother who lives in another country, and he's in a coma. When she arrives, she meets his fiancée Jody, though she's never heard of her before. The police are convinced that it was a suicide attempt, but Mags isn't convinced.

I felt like the story was slow moving, which made it easy for me to put down and not want to continue reading, because there wasn't a huge mystery happening. When the reveals did come, I was left feeling a little underwhelmed, and was waiting for something else to happen.

All in all, I thought this one was just okay. It wasn't bad, it just wasn't quite what I was expecting, so I don't think I was the right reader for this one. If you like slow burning domestic suspense novels, without fast paced or action packed chapters, this may be more up your alley! Thank you to Sourcebooks Landmark for my copy of the book. It was my pleasure to provide an honest review.

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### **Michelle says**

This was a decent psychological thriller.

Mags returns home to England after hearing that her brother Abe has killed himself. He threw himself off the 4th floor balcony in his housing complex. The only witness was his fiance, Jody. Mags instantly knows that something is amiss even though she has been estranged from her brother for many years. She then starts asking questions of other residents in the building. Certainly someone had to hear or see something, right?

As soon as I started this I knew things weren't going to be what they seem which always compels me to keep turning the pages. I will say that I did figure out the twist early on but that didn't take away from my enjoyment. (Hey, it is nice to be right once in awhile!) And while I did enjoy this and finished it in just over

a day it's just not one that will linger in my brain for long. A nice easy thriller that won't make you think all that much. 3 stars!

*Thank you to NetGalley for providing me with a digital ARC in exchange for my honest review.*

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### **megs\_bookrack says**

Wow. Okay, let me catch my breath. I just finished this book moments ago and I have a lot of thoughts but I can't seem to wrangle them. The Girlfriend, by Sarah Naughton, is a very unique thriller told from multiple perspectives. I transitioned between a 3.5-star and a 4-star rating throughout the book and ultimately decided to go with a 4-star.

The writing style was likable for the most part; nice short chapters, mystery and fluid prose. I liked one of the main characters, Mags, a lot and found I related to her the most. The other main character, Jody, was less likable and less relatable to me personally but I think she was developed well by the author. Jody was an unreliable narrator (VERY) with a traumatic past who clearly struggles with mental illness throughout the course of the book. Having never experienced the types of mental struggles and stressors that Jody was experiencing personally, it is hard for me to judge whether the mental illness rep was a proper characterization or not; I will leave that for others who know more about that topic to debate. In regards to Jody however, I was pleasantly surprised with the position she found herself in at the end of the story. I think as a story arc, hers was the most satisfying, definitely leaving off at a more promising place than she started in.

As far as negatives go, I only have a couple items: I was a little taken aback by a few sentences describing the size of side characters which after first noticing, then seemed to just pop up everywhere for me like a beacon. I am sure that the author was maybe just trying to show some sort of attitude of the characters thinking these things but it happened with multiple characters - for example, Mags thinking, "I never thought a fat woman could be so beautiful," (ugh) and later Jody thinking, "...panting, perhaps with the adrenaline rush of a narrow escape, or maybe just because he's fat." (ughh) This being said, if you are someone who may be sensitive to this type of sentiment being batted about in a story, you may want to stay clear. Furthermore, I would say trigger warnings for child abuse, sibling abuse, rape and sexual assault. My only other slight critique would be that personally I do not enjoy second person narratives.

Overall, I found this book to be exciting and engaging. I would definitely recommend it to anyone who loves thrillers and is looking for something with exciting twists and unpredictable turns. Thank you so much to the publisher for providing me with a copy to review - I enjoyed it thoroughly and look forward to hearing what other readers think a well!

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### **Liz Barnsley says**

**\*\*Copied over review from UK Edition: Tattletale\*\***

I'm crazy in love with this book for many many reasons none of which I can tell you otherwise I'll spoil it and then prevent you from falling crazy in love with this book.

That would be the shortest review ever though so we'll talk around things a bit. For a start you'll probably be

expecting the usual sort of psychological thriller. Well yes. And No. She says enigmatically.

The characters in Tattletale are all extraordinarily intriguing, but they won't necessarily do what you expect them to do at any given time. Sarah J Naughton has a keen eye for psychological knots – and she'll tie you all up in them from start to finish. There really is some beautifully layered storytelling, challenging assumptions, exploring some dark themes and juggling the emotions of the reader from one extreme to another with almost every chapter.

Very very clever. At times very devious. Certainly emotive. And you know, surprising. Genuinely surprising. The resolution is genius, unexpected, when I got there I had to step back for a bit and take stock of what I was feeling. BAM. It gets you. But gently...

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No one believes a liar. Even when they're telling the truth.

What is the truth? Well you'll have to read it if you want to find out. Sorry. Thats the way it goes..

My lips are sealed.

Highly Recommended

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## **Kendall says**

The Girlfriend is a decent psychological thriller but it was missing the mark just a tad in my book.

Mags Mackenzie is a 30 year old corporate defense lawyer that lives in Las Vegas. Many years have passed since Mags has seen her younger brother Abe. Mags receives a phone call that Abe is in a coma due to an attempt to throw himself off his apartment balcony.

Mags moves into Abe's apartment temporarily trying to piece together the final events that led up to Abe's medical condition. The last person to see Abe alive is his fiancé Jody. But, some things aren't adding up to Jody's explanations to what happened with Abe. Is Jody responsible for Abe? Who saw what happened that night?

This is a definite entertaining read but for some reason it just fell short for me and didn't live up to the full hype. The actions of the characters were a bit unbelievable at times for me and I was expecting a tad more.

There are a few surprises here and there but many that I already saw coming. But, hey my detective skills worked eh? :).

In my opinion, it's best to go into this one blind and avoid reading too many reviews.

3 stars.

Thank you to Netgalley and Sourcebooks Landmark for the arc.



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## **The Book Review Café says**

All my reviews can be found at <http://thebookreviewcafe.com>

Tattle Tale by Sarah J Naughton Is a book I nearly gave up on as the first few chapters left me bewildered, the chapters moved between events and characters with no explanation but I persevered and once I had worked out who the characters were in relation to the story it made for a quick and enjoyable read. I'm not going to say much about the plot as I hate spoilers but Abe is lying in a coma and for his sister Mags and fiancée Jody the nightmare is just beginning, what follows is a twisted tale of two damaged women, lies, abuse, and mental health issues.

The two women have disturbing pasts which at times made for a difficult read, (some readers maybe upset by some of the content) although I felt some empathy for Mags and Jody they were difficult characters to like. Both have issues which are evident in their actions, and although they both have very different personalities I couldn't for the life of me find any endearing qualities in either of them. As the plot unfolds I did find myself wondering who was the more reliable narrator, as both women have issues and secrets they would prefer to keep hidden. I do love an unreliable narrator and the author uses this to good effect. The author expertly draws you into her character's lives, creating tension and layers of suspense as she goes.

As Mag's investigates her brothers accident everyone comes under suspicion, as the plot progressed and Mag's attempts to unravel the truth from the lies, the reader gets a sense of unease and foreboding. I did find myself wondering where the plot was leading, there were a few surprises along the way, a couple of which I guessed. Although I wasn't prepared for the dark and disturbing turn it took, and although perhaps a little unbelievable it was a suitable and apt ending.

If I'm honest Tattletale is a slow starter, but the author builds on the intrigue and suspense making for an enjoyable read. I thought this was going to be a five star read but unfortunately it didn't quite meet the mark, because Tattletale is told in short sharp chapters that cut from past to present and character to character, it didn't read as fluidly as I would have liked. I'm sure there will be plenty of readers who will love this taut psychological thriller, for me it was a thoroughly enjoyable read but not one I loved.

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## **Jamie says**

When a thriller surprises you, it's that much better! In the past year or two, we've seen a huge spike in the "psychological thriller" genre and I have found it rare for a book to truly differentiate itself. I have to say, Naughton did extremely well setting herself apart from the pack in this genre! The Girlfriend was a fresh take on the psychological thriller and held my interest and kept me guessing until the very end! I look forward to seeing what she does next!

I received an advance copy. All opinions are my own.

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## Reading.Between.Wines says

??????? / 5

The Girlfriend by Sarah Naughton was quite the page turner for me. Unreliable narrators (yes there is more than one!), and a fast-paced story kept me interested until the very last page.

Mags is a corporate lawyer in Las Vegas, and when she finds out her brother Abe that she hasn't see in years fell down a forty-foot stairwell, she immediately hightails it to London. Jody, his grieving girlfriend, is beside herself with sadness and Mags feels sorry for her... at first.

Everyone is unreliable, and the big question is did Abe fall, or was he pushed? Mags and Jody both had very rough upbringings and my heart went out to them as we learned more about their backgrounds which are told in flashbacks throughout the book. I actually ended up absolutely hating Mags at times, but in the end I liked her a lot more. I loved the depth to these characters and Naughton definitely put me through a range of emotions with this book.

I thought the writing was a tiny bit repetitive at times, but nothing crazy. More words/phrases being repeated a little than anything else. And the fact that you don't know if Abe fell or if he was pushed, isn't even what kept me reading this book with an inability to put it down. I was just so caught up in the character's stories that I had to keep reading. Especially Mira, the flat neighbor of Abe and Jody from Albania. She had a small part in the book, but her character really resonated with me for whatever reason.

Final Thought: *The Girlfriend* had me hooked from the beginning, and I thought the beginning and end were both very clever. The ending was bomb actually, and left me feeling very satisfied. That being said, there are a couple of triggers in this book: child abuse and rape. It was a bit darker than I thought it was going to be, but very good. I can't wait to see what Naughton releases next!

*The Girlfriend* in 3-ish words: Absorbing, Bold & Unpredictable

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## sue says

This was one hell of a book'

When I started it, in the first few chapters I was struggling to work out who was who and what was what. I was thinking ' please don't say this is going to be a book that I have so longed for, danced when I got an early copy to read, but it's going to fall flat on it's face'

WRONG

Once I got to learn who was who.

Abe

His fiancé

His sister

Mira

Then the ones in the tenant block.

The ghetto sort of surroundings.

Then I understood which character was going back in time or their thoughts, that was the major start for me, I couldn't stop reading. Then when I did have to stop, I couldn't wait to start again.

It's complex in its characters as each have a brutal past or living in a domino effect from they're emotional hell.

The fact that Abe is in a coma means no one can ask questions of him and find out the truth.

It's an intense, purely raw book that rattled my head.

Would I recommend you read this? Yes

Stick with it, it all becomes clear.

The title of the book caught me, I now know why the author chose that title.

My thanks to Orion Publi Group via Net Galley for providing me with an early copy.

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