



## **His Other House**

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He was dismayed how readily he took to lying. He'd always thought of it as a decisive abandonment of the truth. Instead, he realised, it was simply a matter of one word slipping into the place of another.'

Dr Quinn Davidson and his wife Marianna have endured years of unsuccessful IVF and several miscarriages, and Quinn can't face another painful attempt to conceive. Marianna is desperate to be a mother and their marriage is feeling the strain. At a small-town practice a few hours from their home, Quinn meets Rachel, the daughter of one of his patients. Drawn to each other, it's not long before they find themselves in a passionate affair and Quinn realises he must choose between the two women. Then Marianna announces a surprise natural conception, news that will change the course of all their lives.

Set in the lush Australian subtropics, this taut emotional drama poses questions about moral courage and accountability, and asks whether love means always telling the truth.

## **His Other House Details**

Date : Published March 1st 2015 by Pan Macmillan Australia

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Author : Sarah Armstrong

Format : Paperback 384 pages

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# From Reader Review His Other House for online ebook

## Andrea Barnett says

As a child of a father who lived such a double life, I appreciated the depth Armstrong gave all the characters, and the moral quandary Quinn navigates. No matter that people are people and fall in and out of love I can't overemphasize how devastating it is to encounter strange children calling your father daddy.

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## Sharon says

Dr Quinn Davidson and his wife Marianna have spent many years going through the painstaking process of the IVF and several miscarriages. The emotional roller coaster is taking its toll on the couple and Quinn can't bare to go through anymore, simply knowing how desperate Marianna is to be a mother, Quinn doesn't know how he will tell Marianna, he wants to take a break from it all, in fact he wants a permanent break.

With tension in their marriage, Quinn finds himself attracted to a patient's daughter. Quinn and Rachel hit it off straight away and before they know it things have escalated very rapidly. Quinn now has to decide who he wants to be with, but It may not be quite that simple because Quinn is about to receives some news that will turn his world upside down.

His Other House by Aussie author Sarah Armstrong was a very enjoyable read and for me an emotional read. Reading about the couples struggle going through the IVF hit a personal nerve for me. Having been through the IVF I know just how that emotional roller coaster feels and by the end of it you are physically and emotionally drained. A well written story which covers many topics and one in which I have no hesitation in highly recommending.

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## Dale Harcombe says

Dr Quinn Davidson and his wife Marianna have endured years of IVF and several miscarriages. The constant trying for a baby has put a strain on their marriage. Desperate to be a mother, Marianna wants to persevere despite the most recent miscarriage but Quinn wants to call it quits on trying for a baby. It was easy to feel for this couple and think how hard it must be for those facing such a situation. Added to the strain on their marriage is Quinn working in a small town practice a few hours from their home. There he meets Rachel and the two are attracted to each other. Without reading the blurb on the back of the book, the reader can guess what is going to happen. The situation becomes even more complicated as events unfold.

The book is filled with tension and is very readable, since it deals with issues that occur in society. I found the characters believable if not likeable. I did get tired of incidents of the f word that occurs throughout. Even when the author could have used the term 'making love' she chose to use the cruder term.

It's hard to write much about this book without giving too much away about the plot. I will say, my sympathy was very clearly with Marianna. I didn't like Quinn who was, 'gutless' and neither did I like Rachel. They were both selfish and cared little for anything other than what felt right for them, despite who got hurt. As often happens in these situations, it is the children who suffer. At the end of the book I felt it portrayed the largely self centred aspects of society which, while it may reflect our world, I found depressing. So, well written and realistic, but not for me an enjoyable read. Others may enjoy it more than I

did.

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### **Adele H says**

Sarah Armstrong has written this novel with creativity, care & emotion. Complicated lives of three main adult characters and two beautiful children. What could have easily been a storyline that was predictable Armstrong has given depth to this novel; this depth involves the reader and gives it the body which makes the reader want to continue and discover how this storyline could possibly end in a happy place.

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### **Ally Van Schilt says**

3.5 stars. The concept of the book was fantastic, even if it felt like it had been done before. This made it a really easy read. It's hard in these types of books to know just where your sympathies lie - they've all got massive crosses to bear. Loved the use of scenery, but in the end it was just "okay" for me.

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### **Ann Graham says**

Interesting story, probably something that happens from time to time a man leading a double life with two families on the go. Quite well written, with believable characters.

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### **Exlibris\_readmorebooks says**

Rezensionsexemplar

Titel: nachts schwimmen

Autor/in: Sarah Armstrong

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Bewertung insgesamt: \*\*\*\*\*

Klappentext

## HEIßT LIEBEN, IMMER DIE WAHRHEIT ZU SAGEN?

Tagsüber kämpft Rachel um das Leben ihrer kranken Mutter, nachts entspannt sie sich beim Schwimmen. Eines Abends ist sie nicht allein. Auch Quinn, der Arzt ihrer Mutter, liebt es, in der Dunkelheit durchs Wasser zu gleiten. Jeden Tag fiebert Rachel nun dem Sonnenuntergang entgegen. Dem Moment, wenn sie nebeneinander ihre Bahnen ziehen, rede und sich näherkommen. Die leidenschaftliche Affäre ist unausweichlich, obwohl sie wissen, dass ihre Gefühle nicht sein dürfen. Denn Quinn ist mit Marianna verheiratet, und die wünscht sich nichts sehnlicher als ein Kind...

>>Kluge Einblicke in Gefühlswelten, ohne dabei Klischees zu bedienen.<< Freundin

### Inhaltsangabe aus dem Buch

Seit Jahren versuchen Quinn und Marianna ein Kind zu bekommen. Marianna kennt mittlerweile kein anderes Thema mehr, und die Ehe der beiden steckt in einer tiefen Krise. Quinn braucht Abstand und nimmt einen Job als Arzt in einer anderen Stadt an. Hier lernt er die Tochter einer Patientin kennen: Rachel. Eine Frau, die so anders ist als Marianna -bodenständig,optimistisch. Zusammen mit ihr spürt Quinn wieder Leichtigkeit, spürt eine Verbindung, die ihn tief berührt. Er weiß, dass er sich entscheiden muss und ist bereit, für Rachel alles aufzugeben. Doch dann überrascht ihn Marianna mit einer Nachricht, die alles verändert.

### Über die Autorin

Sarah Armstrong wurde in Australien geboren und studierte Journalismus. Danach arbeitete sie beim Radio und gewann den renommierten >>Walkley Award<<. Zusammen mit ihrem Mann, der ebenso Schriftsteller ist, unterrichtet sie Kreatives Schreiben. Die Autorin hat eine kleine Tochter und lebt mit ihrer Familie in der Nähe von Sydney. Demnächst erscheint ihr zweiter Roman im Diana Verlag.

### Erster Satz

"Als Rachel erwachte, trommelte Regen aufs Dach, jener vertraute und trostreiche Ozean aus Lärm."

### Meine Meinung

Das Cover ist nicht zu schlicht oder gar zu pompös, es passt perfekt. Der Titel für das Buch ist auch gut für die Geschichte ausgewählt worden, obwohl ich mir gewünscht hätte,

dass es (also das nachts schwimmen) öfters hätte vorkommen sollen. Generell das Cover und der Klappentext haben mich echt neugierig gemacht.

In dem Buch geht es sehr viel um Schmerz und Sehnsucht.

Die Geschichte ist super ausgedacht und aufgeschrieben worden.

Meiner Meinung nach sind die Kapitel perfekt aufeinander abgestimmt -> nicht zu kurz, nicht zu lang. Bei diesem Buch fand ich auch gut, das es in der dritten Person geschrieben worden ist, weil ich so alles viel besser verstanden und besser verfolgen konnte. Man wusste sofort, wer jetzt in diesem Kapitel vorkommt und es gibt keine Wechsel von Vergangenheit und Gegenwart, welche einen hätten verwirren können. So war es auch angenehm zu lesen.

Der Schreibstil ist sehr locker und flüssig. So konnte ich die Geschichte angenehm lesen und habe auch alles verstanden. Sarah Armstrong hat es super geschafft, die Gefühle und Emotionen realistisch erscheinen zu lassen.

Die Charaktere Rachel, Quinn und Marianna werden meiner Meinung nach genau richtig zur Geltung gebracht. Man erhält tiefe Einblicke in die Gefühlswelten von ihnen, ohne dass sich die Autorin in schwülstigen oder zu poetischen Beschreibungen verliert oder verheddert. So konnte man nicht so schnell Partei für einen ergreifen. In diesem Buch gibt es zusätzlich auch kein eindeutiges Schwarz oder Weiß und genau das hat meine gewünschte Erwartung erfüllt.

Die Story ist sehr durchdacht worden und hat auch sehr viel Tiefe, sodass man sich auch selbst mal die aufkommenden Fragen oder Handlungen durch den Kopf gehen lässt. Jedoch gab es auch mal eine langweilige Stelle (Achtung Spoileralarm!), wie zum Beispiel als es nur um Sex und nichts anderes ging. Aber ich finde, kein Buch kann perfekt sein und nur aus aufregenden Handlungen bestehen. Dann wird es auch langweilig;). Die Teile in dem Buch (es gibt zwei Teile) sind meiner Meinung nach super ausgewählt worden, weil man manchmal schon dachte, dass sich die Geschichte noch richtig in die Länge ziehen wird, es jedoch nicht passierte. Es gab auch Stellen, die mich wirklich überrascht, geärgert oder zum Nachdenken veranlasst haben. Das fand ich sehr gut, weil es von jedem etwas hat. Zudem gab es dann manchmal auch Stellen, die eine Wendung genommen haben, welche man nicht erwartet hat.

Als einziges hat mich enttäuscht (was aber nicht so ausschlaggebend meiner Meinung nach ist), dass das Ende ganz anders war, als ich gehofft/erwartet habe. Ich wollte zusätzlich gerne ein geschlossenes Ende haben, jedoch ist es meinem Gefühl zur Folge, ein offenes Ende und soweit ich mitbekommen habe, gibt es auch keine Fortsetzung. Aber naja...

Als Fazit kann ich herausziehen, dass mir die Geschichte super gefallen hat. Diese Autorin hat mich im Gegensatz zur letzten positiv überrascht, weil mir die Schreibweise usw. echt super gefallen hat. Das Buch regt zum Nachdenken an und ich wurde auch richtig von der Geschichte gepackt, sodass ich das Buch auch nicht weglegen konnte. Meiner Meinung nach ist die Geschichte überdurchschnittlich gut geschrieben. Zudem auch noch über ein sensibles Thema. Die Handlungen sind nachvollziehbar ausgewählt worden. Also: Ich kann die Geschichte nur weiter empfehlen!!

Danke an das Bloggerportal für das Rezensionsexemplar!

Eure Jacky

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## **Annika says**

Mal ein ganz anderes Buch, wo ich schon das ein oder andere mal tief durchatmen musste. Es gibt 3 Hauptcharaktere und bis zum Ende habe ich situativ mit jedem einzelnen mitfühlen können.

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## John Bartlett says

Reading this book was like walking on broken glass - a very dangerous enterprise. This is a story of good people who make non-deliberate bad mistakes, perhaps because they love too much.

The three main characters in this web of confused emotions are truly all rendered in a compassionate way. There's no judgement here about the actions they take, about the mistakes, the difficulties in which they are trapped.

But the lies and hidden lives have a truly devastating effect on everyone, in particular the two children who become the centre of the last few chapters. Will their innocence and their love be enough to compensate for the mistakes of their parents?

This was the sort of book that I had to put down towards the end. Was that because I dreaded the outcome of the final chapters or because I wanted to savor the unfolding story.

This is a dramatic but a poignant and compassionate story where the drama comes from the way human being try to negotiate (not successfully) their relationships.

The style is truly poetic and sensual and I'm in admiration of Sarah Armstrong.

The way she deals with peoples' painful emotions will take your breath away.

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## A Reader's Heaven says

(I received a free copy of this book from Net Galley in exchange for an honest review.)

*Dr Quinn Davidson and his wife Marianna have endured years of unsuccessful IVF and several miscarriages, and Quinn can't face another painful attempt to conceive. Marianna is desperate to be a mother and their marriage is feeling the strain. At a small-town practice a few hours from their home, Quinn meets Rachel, the daughter of one of his patients. Drawn to each other, it's not long before they find themselves in a passionate affair and Quinn realises he must choose between the two women. Then Marianna announces a surprise natural conception, news that will change the course of all their lives.*

This came as quite a surprise - while the blurb doesn't really give anything away, it was written by an Australian author (which I am a sucker for) and it delved into the heart of family, love and honesty.

What I took from this was the following: a husband and wife who have tried everything in their power to have a child. The husband, a doctor, falls for the daughter of one of his patients. The wife falls unexpectedly pregnant. The triangle only has sharp edges.

Written with skill and full of heartbreak and hope, this novel really reaches down into our hearts and squeezes - it doesn't really let up. The emotional impact of this novel cannot be overstated. I found myself, in

turn, feeling sorry for all three of the main characters - and then found myself hoping that they all got the resolution they needed - which, in a "love triangle", is pretty impossible.

Definitely recommended reading!!

Paul  
ARH

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### **Carolyn Docking says**

I really liked this book. It kept me intrigued from start to finish. I really wanted to know what was going to happen to Quinn and whether his world was going to explode. The characters were captured really well and I almost felt I knew them and their idiosyncrasies. The plot moved along really well and kept me from wanting to put the book down. It was very readable with easy language. It was a novel that could so easily be a real life saga. It showed how easily someone can get swept away in lies. I thoroughly enjoyed this book.

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### **Katharine. says**

I read this book again. It is fiction. Probably general fiction. It has a husband, a wife, a mistress and two children. The desperate wife is finally pregnant but so is the lover. Two children, a boy and a girl, are born weeks apart. The father leads a double life. His wife, and, their daughter, remain ignorant that there is another family. They both accept that he has a job that requires he spend half his time away. This deception goes on for six years. The husband is forced into making a decision by his mistress. He must tell his wife. The daughter puts enough pressure on the mother to drive to the other town but when they visit nothing prepares them any of them for the outcome. Circumstances make it necessary for them all to share a house for the night. The half siblings, just five years old, are traumatized by everything and a passage in the book is wonderfully written showing just how devastated a child can be by this outrageous deception. The mother takes her child and leaves. She goes to family with the hint that it is permanent. The lover decides it is all a bit too much and banishes the same man she demanded tell his wife. The author does a wonderful job describing two selfish people and the affect their behaviors have.

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### **Lisa Walker says**

'His Other House' is Sarah Armstrong's second book, coming ten years after her Miles Franklin shortlisted debut novel, 'Salt Rain.' Both books are set in the Northern Rivers Region and the lush environment is an intrinsic part of the story.

'His Other House' is a tense domestic drama focusing on a love triangle of sorts. The book was inspired, Armstrong says, by a news story she read about a man who lived a double life with two wives and two families for many years.

Quinn is a doctor whose marriage is pushed to its limits by efforts to have a much longed-for child. A succession of IVF rounds and miscarriages leave him drained and needing a break, but his wife Marianna



wants to press on with another attempt. She can't see how her life will ever be complete without a child.

While Quinn lives in Brisbane he is doing a stint as a visiting doctor in Corimbi, a town much like Mullumbimby. Here he meets Rachel, a disillusioned journalist taking a break from her job. A night-time swim in the town pool leads to an unplanned kiss and soon Quinn and Rachel are involved in a passionate affair.

Quinn's intention to leave Marianna is tested when she unexpectedly falls naturally pregnant. It is at this stage that the tension ratchets up. Quinn decides to keep his relationship with Rachel a secret, a decision which involves him in a web of lies. 'He was dismayed how readily he took to lying. He'd always thought of it as a decisive abandonment of the truth. Instead, he realised, it was simply a matter of one word slipping into the place of another.' While it would be easy to judge Quinn, by now we know him so well that we can only empathise, even if we suspect that it's going to end badly.

The time this novel has taken to come to fruition shows in its insight and many delightful turns of phrase. As in 'Salt Rain' Sarah's writing is evocative and striking. While all the characters are believable and finely drawn, it is the children who linger most strongly in my memory. 'His Other House' is both a page-turner and a powerful story of morality within relationships.

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### **Liz says**

I loved this book & would have given it four & a half stars if able. I was instantly drawn in to the story & found it hard to put down. Without giving too much of the story away it's about Quinn, a doctor who ends up having two homes & families with children born only months apart. He knows what he is doing is morally wrong but desperately wants to protect the children & enjoy their childhood for as long as he is able. Whilst Quinn was obviously not behaving in an open & honest way with at least one of his partners I did feel sorry for him & the situation he found himself in, even though it was of his own making. He just didn't have the heart to hurt anyone involved in the situation, until his hand was forced. A thought provoking & well written book which draws the reader in & keeps you guessing till the end. Thank you netgalley & the publishers for the opportunity to read & review this book.

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### **boogenhagen says**

Re His Other House - I did not read this as a romance or women's fiction - I read this one as a character study on how and why some people make decisions and others don't and how the effects of not making a choice (which is also a choice), reverberate and permeate a person's life and all who know them. This is a very good study of dysfunctional relationships and also a good study on the nature of everyday pervasive evil - how people you never would suspect just slip into a absolute moral and ethical decay that they will never really recover from and how that decay affects the most innocent.

Neil Gaiman in Good Omens said, "It may help to understand human affairs to be clear that most of the great triumphs and tragedies of history are caused, not by people being fundamentally good or fundamentally bad, but by people being fundamentally people."

And Jim Butcher of Harry Dresden fame said, "Most of the bad guys in the real world don't know that they are bad guys. You don't get a flashing warning sign that you're about to damn yourself. It sneaks up on you when you aren't looking."

Those two quotes describe this book perfectly for me, Rachel, Marianna and Quinn form a triumvirate of weakness, indecisiveness and willful obsession and while one of the triad, Marianna, is arguably ignorant of the severe problems she is entangled in, I felt it was more a case of putting her hands over eyes during the scary part of the movie rather than true ignorance. Marianna had the subconscious knowing, but as long as she had the illusion of a good marriage and more importantly, she had her child - she never really questioned Quinn's actions.

Quinn is a pathetic person, he slides into adultery, slides into dual households and is completely unable to make any kind of personal decision whatsoever - his choice is consistently not to make a choice - he lets first Marianna and then Rachel drive him into pursuing their own agenda-- and he never once in the story makes a decision or a choice on his own. He can only react to the actions of both Marianna and Rachel, and it is this lack of inner drive that allows him to drown in a sewer of moral morass which will contaminate every relationship he has for the rest of his life. Quinn becomes evil not by overt choices to do wrong, but by disinterest in changing his status quo, and thus he demonstrates the slow tarnishment of his soul and his person, and sadly it spreads to encompass his kids.

I believe he really does love both of his kids, but he is so ineffectual at decisions and his moral compass is so twisted, that by the end of the story the reader knows that he has hit his interpersonal relationship zenith five years earlier and the rest of his life is just going to be a slow rotting of decay as he will die a lonely old man and no one will remember his name. He is totally lost in his own internal fantasizing and his refusal to see reality makes him the most pitiable character of the book. He really is like Gollum falling in at Mt. Doom by the end.

Rachel and Marianna are actually very similar in willful determination to achieve their goals, (and it is why Quinn moves so easily between them and why he is attracted to both of them). They both demonstrate the force of will to do whatever they need to achieve their desires and devil take the hindmost. They are by far two of the most powerfully goal motivated women I have read about in recent years. They go for what they want and they don't count the cost.

The difference between R and M, is that M is satisfied with the birth of her child and her illusion of a perfect marriage. Make no mistake, I believe M knew there was something wrong, she had just hung around Quinn so long that his choice avoidance ennui is embedded in her psyche. Once she is shaken out of her complacency, she is once again driven to reach her goals, but this time it will be an independent and more satisfying life with no trace of Quinn in it-- and that includes marginalizing Quinn in her daughter's life.

Out of the three of them, Marianna is the one I believe will recover and move on to a happy and satisfying life. I don't think she will ever sink into complacency again and of the three, she is also probably going to prove to be the best parent.

Rachel is just as driven as M, but she is capricious in her wants and the only thing that really excites and motivates her is the thrill of the chase and the win. Once she has it, she doesn't want it, and I foresee a long dreary future of back and forth between her and Quinn, with the eventual addition of future lovers for both, to make huge messes of tangled relationships that are ultimately going to end in a lifetime of regrets, damaged feelings, emotional pain and aloneness for both R and Q.

Rachel and Quinn will lose their son Ned, as even at his young age he already shows the ability to walk away from dysfunction with the inner fortitude to soothe his own internal hurts. There was heavy foreshadowing at the end that Ned would eventually abandon both his parents and that he would actually be much better off with that outcome, but there is every indication that both R and Q will never again have a real and deep connection to another person, their legacy will only be grief and heartache and the world will eventually move on without them.

If they do stay together it will be a dysfunctional affair of resentment, bitterness and mutual distrust because they have lost their ability to be honest and giving, and more than likely they will alienate any other who tries to get close to them, as neither one of them is capable of putting another's needs above their own so eventually no else will want to have them.

Needless to say I did not like anyone in this book but the children. My heart hurt for them-- but both of them showed that were very strong people even at their young ages. They had an ability for inner healing and very strong moral compasses to guide them, plus M's daughter had a very decent mum who would do her best to ensure she was emotionally healthy and happy.

My final thoughts on this book are best summed up by Dostoyevsky when he said "Nothing is easier than to denounce the evildoer; nothing is more difficult than to understand him."

I think in terms of characterization and the dissection of a moral trainwreck, SA did a great job in showing how inertia and cowardice rot both the soul and a person's life and how that rot ripples outward to taint all it touches. So in that respect the book is definitely a five star book, in terms of my sense of rightness and the feeling that the world is a better place for reading this book, well IMO this book is a 2 - I can tolerate it, but I don't want to think about it really - I am a bit sadder and sorrier I read it.

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