



Lies That Bind Us

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From a prize-winning and *New York Times* bestselling author comes a chilling novel of deception under the sun...

Jan needs this. She's flying to Crete to reunite with friends she met there five years ago and relive an idyllic vacation. Basking in the warmth of the sun, the azure sea, and the aura of antiquity, she can once again pretend—for a little while—that she belongs. Her ex-boyfriend Marcus will be among them, but even he doesn't know the secrets she keeps hidden behind a veil of lies. None of them really know her, and that's only part of the problem.

Then again, how well does she know *them*?

When Jan awakens in utter darkness, chained to a wall, a manacle around her wrist, her echoing screams only give her a sense of how small her cell is. As she desperately tries to reconstruct what happened and determine who is holding her prisoner, dread covers despair like a hand clamped over her mouth. Because, like the Minotaur in the labyrinth in Greek myth, her captor will be coming back for her, and all the lies will catch up to her...

Lies That Bind Us Details

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Author : Andrew Hart

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From Reader Review Lies That Bind Us for online ebook

Hester says

For those of you who actually go on vacation, I'm a broke ho, so I don't even take vacations, this is a story of why you shouldn't befriend strangers just because you come from the same country and why you shouldn't keep promises to meet up five years later.

Jan is a mess, she's a liar and has been stuck in the same retail hell job for five years, maybe longer. She works long hours, her finances aren't the best she just lost out on a promotion and she's still pining for her ex. The only bright spot in her dark, dark drizzly world is an upcoming trip to Crete, yeah that Crete in Greece. Because all wage slaves can afford trips to Greece this makes perfect sense.

She's hoping to rekindle her relationship with her ex Marcus and meet up again with the radiant attention whore Melissa, her just there husband Simon, the basic cable TV star Kristen and her asshole husband Brad all of who she met five years earlier in Crete. These two couples radiate and sparkle with a type of moneyed glamour that makes everyone want to be near them. If this were Gilligan's Isle Jan and Marcus would be "and the rest". While Jan works a lowly retail job, Marcus is a teacher so it doesn't make much sense that these two couples would want to stay friends with such average work-a-day people, would it? But Melissa insists that they meet up in Crete 2,000 days later.

To Jan's disappointment, Melissa brought her friend Gretchen along. No one knows who this Gretchen is or why she's even there but one thing Jan knows is that that ho is trying to get with Marcus. Oh hell no!

She was hoping her vacation would be like this

Instead she got this

:

Jan wakes up in a dark room chained to a wall trying to figure out why she's there and how to get out. Also, the deranged psycho who locked her up makes an appearance from time to time questioning her and threatening bodily harm. But Jan doesn't know what she did or where she is...

Jan's response to being kidnapped is actually pretty calm and the reasons for and why she's in the predicament she's in is pretty fucking far fetch.

So many things about this book annoyed me and here they are....

(view spoiler)

The best way to sum up this entire story is like this....

My say something nice is.... I liked the Greek mythology that was included in the story.

Kevin Dowson says

Well, I gave it a day or so before reviewing and it still isn't much easier. I tortured myself over whether it was a 3 or 4 star book, in the end I rounded down to 3 stars, but it was marginal.

The plot is good and fairly novel. There are twists, but to be honest I could see the outline of the climax and pretty much guessed the culprits from a little over halfway through. Some of the lesser twists were a bit of a surprise, but that predictability (for me at least - maybe I've read too many mysteries and psychological thrillers) is the main reason I rounded down instead of up.

The characters....hmmm. I actually like the main protagonist, Jan. Perversely, I like the fact that she is inherently unlikable, a compulsive liar who sabotages her own life and those around her with her fabrications. I like her despite that because of her self awareness, the fact she hates herself for it and wishes she were different. I feel the other characters, though, are a little thin; not exactly two dimensional, but not really fleshed out enough to form an attachment, even Marcus, the closest Jan has to a co-conspirator. Some of the characters are decidedly unlikable, but that's how the author wants them to be. Maybe a little overdone in some cases, but that's okay, I get it. Gretchen, I could do without and really don't see the point in her. I just found her irritating from start to finish.

Some reviewers have complained that the book verges on a mythology history lesson at times, but I don't mind that, and while not integral to the plot, it does at least give some character to the setting and plays into the psychological mindset of some characters in their ordeals.

Overall, I'm probably making this a 3.49 star book. So nearly 4 stars but not quite. I did enjoy it, and I would read more from the author for sure. I could see it being a great holiday read, sitting by the pool (though maybe not in Crete!). Just a couple of minor frailties keeping it fractionally south of the border for me.

Suze says

Lies

My Kindle First Read choice for May- it is listed as Suspense, but I think it's more of a psychological thriller. The story took a totally different turn than I was expecting, very good read- entertaining.

Kerry Clair says

Tedious, superfluous, terrible characters

Really couldn't stand this book. Disliked even the main character, in addition to all the characters. The story was just so overdone, the ending completely ridiculous and unbelievable. I wanted to put it down a hundred times and I should have.

Nicole Patterson says

I chose this book as my May kindle first read book. It sounded interesting but I found it weird and boring. I gave it 2/5 stars because the twists were actually pretty good and I just thought it was going to end with Jan saying it was all a lie, so that was a plus that it didn't end that way.

Debbie "Buried in Her TBR Pile" says

3.5 stars

What a strange trip - I stopped and started this one many times but kept picking it back up. I had to figure out what was going on in this seeming innocuous story that ended up being suspenseful and somewhat psychological. Sometimes it felt like the author had just taken a class on Greek mythology (Crete, Minotaur) and wanted to incorporate it into a book - fiction, mystery, suspense but at times wasn't sure how to go about it - or perhaps it was me as the reader not catching on early enough. It was only toward the end that I truly saw where the story was heading.

Jan is the protagonist and a pathological liar. Her ex, Marcus, is a professor. While on a vacation in Greece, they "by chance" meet a idly rich and seemingly golden couple (Simon and Melissa). Simon and Melissa are vacationing with another couple (Brad and Kristen). Melissa invites Jan and Marcus to dinner at a popular restaurant because there are only reservations for 6. Jan and Marcus make up the difference. The holiday eventually leads to a split between Marcus and Jan by the time they return from their holiday. A few years later, Simon and Melissa invite Jan on an all expense paid vacation to relive their first holiday. Enter Marcus, Brad, Kristen and Gretchen.

This did not seem like a mystery/suspense/psychological thriller for much of the book. I kept wondering where this was going. But all the information is there to lead up to a very weird, strange, harrowing, and revealing ending of the house party from a nightmare. This is not horror - just something I did not really expect. In many ways, it reminded me of some other mysteries I've watched and read - except without a detective to put it all together for you. Mostly, it is Jan's memories, current view and thoughts and actions that reveal all.

I'm glad I finished this one. It will forever be fuel to my OCD to finish books even when I don't want to. So, I'm not sure if this is a curse or a blessing.

E.C. Pollick Byrnes says

I'm surprised this book is ranking so low - this is one of my favorite reads of 2018! (And I'm normally a harsh critic).

This is a story about lying.

The main character lies to both us the readers and the other characters, and yet, she does share with us her true feelings that she hides from the other characters, so we sort of trust her and yet we don't. I love characters that are multi-dimensional and have obvious flaws.

I love the idea that this book references a lot of Greek mythology, which you can argue, are also lies. Stories that aren't real, but are meant to teach us something about ourselves.

The constant side stories of mythology (hiding Baby Zeus from his father) and World War II (The Allies protecting the city of Alexandria) emphasize the use of misdirection for a greater purpose. Again, more lying, but interesting moral dilemma: Is it wrong? In this context, no.

The dynamic of the group, the six "good friends" is also riddled with quirks and words and actions that are inconsistent with true friendships. Again, more lying to each other about what they actually think of one another.

All of these things are really cool ways to integrate the theme but make it relevant to the reader.

I also thought he tells the story of Jan's imprisonment chillingly well. Like I feel other authors glance over this - the girl wakes up, she's chained up in a basement and she has an escape plan after 2 paragraphs. Jan methodically goes over different scenarios and tries different things to find freedom - it made me there in the room doing those same things.

I am currently very cranky at work because I stayed up far too late last night finishing the book. Totally worth it.

Lisa Dicus says

Gripping!!!

Gripping, can't put the kindle down, read. I loved the way the author intertwined Greek mythology around the story line. Would highly recommend this book and the author. Onto one of his next books!!

Joey R. says

3.5 Stars— “Lies That Bind Us” by Andrew Hart was a Kindle First selection that I put off reading because the premise of the book sounded weak. Despite the fact that “Lies” starts off ridiculously slow, my opinion of the book changed about halfway in as I found myself fully consumed by the very well drawn characters whose phony outer shells come off to reveal damaged, interesting people. The book is told from the perspective of Jan (another unreliable, compulsive liar narrator) who goes to Greece for a reunion of sorts with 4 friends and an ex-boyfriend who all met while she and her ex were on vacation there 5 years prior. The awkwardness and tension begin when Jan arrives and finds out one of the other characters invites her female friend to come along as a potential romantic match for Jan’s ex-boyfriend. The plot and mystery which the book is centered around is weak at best but the author’s ability to draw such distinctive characters

who speak with such different voices drew me in. One of the other friends, Brad, is such an obnoxious, know-it-all, he will remind you of the type of person that you try to avoid but get stuck listening too at a dinner party for 3 hours straight. The book comes to a neat conclusion, and I admit as weak as I thought the book was at times, I could not put it down for the final 80 pages. I definitely liked it better than a lot of reviewers and would definitely give the author another try in the future.

The Just-About-Cocky Ms M says

I'm going to be brief here, because this tale is not worth a lengthy exposition. As another reviewer pointed out, the decision to remove the sample pages feature most assuredly increases the chances of finding oneself staring in dismay at a literary pig in a poke. Such is the case here, for me.

The first chapter is overwrought and overwritten, full of italics and angst, and failed to show me the alleged panic and terror this woman—we assume she is a female—feels chained in a cell in the dark. And that is the problem: I don't see this; I am told it is happening. That sort of amateurish writing jerks the literary rug from beneath any novel, especially one billed as "suspense."

The second chapter, by contrast, is an amazingly pedestrian account of the main character's promotion, her repeated thoughts of uncertainty about handling her "team leader" status, and then the muddled decision by her group of nondescript friends to celebrate their long friendship by a vacation on Crete. The presentation of the characters, including What's-er-Name, the intended damsel in distress, was as exciting as cardboard, and about as developed. I rolled my eyes, and plowed on, not caring much about these people.

And then here we are, back to the italics and the telling panic—pun intended—as the damsel in distress continues to wonder what exactly got her into her present pickle. I laughed at the prose, and plowed on.

Let's end this now, shall we? I skimmed the last two-thirds of this book because that was the best I could do besides deleting it without finishing. I admit to a certain faint fascination, a slight curiosity to see if it got better, or if the plot veered off onto the road less traveled. But alas. The tale did not improve, the writing remained in stasis between purple and dull, and the plot remained true to a trope that has almost been done to death. In more skilled hands, perhaps I might have been inclined to offer a better opinion of this book.

"Award-winning author?" Really? As far as I can see, just another overhyped scribbler who fails to deliver much at all.

Dorothy Stone says

From the first page to the last you are trying to figure out who and why.

This well written thriller keeps you guessing until the end. I usually figure it out well before the end but not this time. This Author knows how to grab your attention and make you feel like you are there. Would recommend this for anyone who loves a great thriller.

Carolyn says

My free Kindle First book for May. I was surprised by how much I liked it. It presented Jan's lying like an addiction. An interesting story of her journey to self awareness, entwined with the mystery and intrigue happening around her.

RedRedtheycallmeRed says

2.5 STARS

It's revealed fairly early in the book that Jan is a liar, she lies about big things, she lies about inconsequential things. She's aware of this, yet acts affronted when people don't believe her.

The book opens with Jan being shackled to a wall, her memory foggy. Then it flashes back to her arrival in Greece. It goes back and forth, but the present chapters were much more interesting, as the stakes are much higher. The flashback chapters are longer (sometimes too long), filled with one unlikable character after another. They pretty much drink all day and throw vague insults (and the occasional menacing look) at each other.

This book reminded me of "In a Dark, Dark Wood", but it didn't grab me in the same way (not nearly as atmospheric).

Julie Parks says

This felt like a bad copycat of Girl on the Train. Even the cover if you squint your eyes and look at it from afar.

Just read go on Amazon and read the sample...only Chapter One at that, it's like it's trying to copy the style and Rachel's chain of thoughts. It's distractingly close, too. Only, Girl worked because we'd never read anything like it. Now everyone wants to be the next Girl.

This book is supposed to be twisty and unexpected but I guessed exactly what's going on quite early on, then flipped to the last chapter to check and realized that it's most likely not going to have anything else that could dazzle me, so I just skipped through the rest.

I saw some of the people saying here that the characters were hideous or terrible. Well, those are strong words. Sometimes a writer develops a character well, it's just that the character is someone you'd normally dislike in real life. I think that's more the case here.

I started thinking what kind of people I would recommend this book to....still thinking...

Thank you NetGalley for this copy in exchange for my honest review.

Debby "Piene Raven" says

Audiobook Review:

First time read for this author and it seem like it was going to be an okay story. However, I had a hard time following it. This was one that started off good and got confusing somewhere in the middle and made its way back to good in the end.

This is a story where the major charactor is a liar who reunites with her friends in the Greek Islands. and decides to put on a "pretend" once again. However, pretending goes wrong and her secrets and lies catch up with her.

I thought parts of the story was unbelievable and the major character was very flawed. Dialogue between characters was terrible and expected better. Even though I didn't find it an enjoyable listening ...JMO, the story did have some pretty good twists especially at the end, when I thought it was all just a dream for her.

Kindly giving this 3-Stars
