



Blink of an Eye

Cath Staincliffe

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In a heartbeat, life changes.

A sunny, Sunday afternoon, a family barbecue, and Naomi Baxter and her boyfriend Alex celebrate good news. Driving home, Naomi's recklessness causes a fatal accident, leaving nine-year-old Lily Vasey dead, Naomi fighting for her life, Alex bruised and bloody and the lives of three families torn apart.

Traumatised, Naomi has no clear memory of the crash and her mother Carmel is forced to break the shocking truth of the child's death to her. Naomi may well be prosecuted for causing death by dangerous driving. If convicted she will face a jail term of up to 14 years, especially if her sister's claim that Naomi was drink-driving is proven. In the months before the trial, Carmel strives to help a haunted and remorseful Naomi cope with the consequences of her actions.

Blink of an Eye is a novel about the nightmare that could be just around the next bend for any one of us.

Blink of an Eye Details

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Author : Cath Staincliffe

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LucyLui's Reviews says

Blink of an Eye by Cath Staincliffe

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Author - Cath Staincliffe

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Your whole life can change in the blink of an eye. What started off as a fun family BBQ, soon ended in tragedy and chaos. Naomi and her boyfriend Alex are celebrating, they've had some good news. Whilst driving home a fatal accident leaves Naomi fighting for her life, Alex battered and bruised and nine-year-old Lilly dead.

Naomi is so traumatized she has no memory of the accident. Alex tells Naomi and everyone else that it was Naomi who was driving after she had been drinking at the BBQ. Naomi has no choice but to believe him as she cannot remember anything after getting to the party.

Will Naomi be prosecuted for driving dangerously and go to prison? or can she regain her memory in time to save herself and remember what really happened.

This book really shows you how your life can change in the blink of an eye. It also shows you how you have to cherish and fight for everything you have in life. This book was fantastically written, a real eye opener, this book makes you feel real empathy for Naomi and her family and it gets you really angry towards Alex, right from the start, I had a feeling Alex was lying and the more I read the more I hated him.

I love it when a book sends you on a roller coaster of emotions and this book definitely did this. Wonderfully written with great characters both ones you love and ones you hate, an easy and interesting plot, keeps you gripped and engaged in the story.

Rating - Five out of Five Stars

Would I Read Again? - Yes

Would I Recommend? - Yes

Would I read other books by the same author? - Yes

Reviews for this book can be found on:

Amazon (UK) under Lu's Reviews

Goodreads,

Net Galley (If a NetGalley Book)

My Blogs at <http://www.readingbeyondobsession.co.uk/>

www.lusreviewsblog.wordpress.com

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Bee says

I lost interest under the sheer weight of trivial and irrelevant description, and abandoned this a quarter of the way in.

Anna White says

Enforces my view of not drink driving!

Michelle Moore says

Following a family barbecue on a sunny Sunday afternoon, Naomi and Alex are driving home when they are involved in a fatal car crash – Alex suffers from broken bones, Naomi almost dies, and is left with no memory, and a young nine-year-old girl is knocked off her bike and killed. To make matters worse, Naomi's sister Suzanne insists her younger sibling had been drinking too much, and shouldn't have been driving.

The story starts at the barbecue, and is told from alternative points of view – Carmel, Naomi's mother, and Naomi herself. Carmel is convinced her daughter would not have driven when drunk, which puts her at odds with her oldest daughter, who can't forgive Naomi for what she's done. During her parts of the story, we also learn about her own background, as well as insights into the sister's relationships.

Naomi's part is told from when she first wakes after the accident, dealing first with physical issues, and then the emotional ones. This for me was one of the strengths of the stories, being with Naomi as the full weight of the accident bears down on her.

I have to admit that for me, the first half of the story was the weakest – the accident didn't have the impact I expected it to, and I couldn't connect that well with Carmel as she reflected on her early life. I was glad I stayed with it though, because the second half had me enthralled. I had an idea at this half way stage as to where the story may go, and I stayed up far to late to finish the book and find out if I was right.

Cath Staincliffe takes instances which could happen to any of us, and takes us into its depths – you can't help but wonder how you would feel and respond in the same situation, and characters are real and believable. Her experience as a script-writer also shines through – this would work brilliantly as a TV drama, and I would love to see it brought to life.

Mike Smith says

"A little girl? We hit a little girl?"

Naomi Baxter is a normal 25-year-old girl. She has a serious boyfriend, she's graduated from university and is on the job hunt. Her worries of finding employment are however no longer important as on her way back from a family barbecue, Naomi is involved in a car accident that leaves 9-year-old Lily Vasey dead. A horrific incident made even harder given the fact that Naomi can't remember it at all.

Now straight of the bat I'm going to say that I didn't enjoy the writing style. We are told the story from two perspectives, that of Naomi and of her mother, Carmel. Given that Naomi can't remember anything about the accident we are given the majority of the details from her mother.

Despite the book only being around 270 pages long we are overwhelmed with information, most of which is trivial and lead to the book becoming tedious. Even the chapters that are meant to be filled with suspense lacked the impact that I'm sure the author desired.

The "Plot Twist" was expected and came almost as an anti-climax, there was however more fluid and free-flowing writing in the scenes building up to the court case.

The two star review may be a little bit harsh but the writing style added to the tediousness. I do however agree with several other reviews and can see this as a television drama, often they do not do books justice but this has a very *Happy Valley/Broadchurch* feel to it.

Samantha Curtis says

I really do love this author Cath Staincliffe. After reading quite a few of her books this one caught my eye.

Starts off at a family BBQ at Naomi's sisters house Suzanne's. Naomi and alex (her boyfriend) are celebrating good news.

Driving home Naomi causes a deadly accident after 9 year old lily is killed and Naomi seriously injured. Naomi fighting for her life alex bruised and bloody. Families torn apart as they fight with each other to find out the truth.

Naomi finally comes round but cant remember anything of the accident or the death of the little girl till her family tell her.

Carmal, Naomi's mum stands by her daughter and doesn't believe her daughter would drink and drive, so she tries going round every one that was at the BBQ.

Things come to a head in the family. Will things ever be the same again?

I really loved this book. One of the best reads I have had this year.

Well worth a read

Kerry says

Story about a social worker whose daughter is in a road traffic accident when a 9 year old Girl is killed. The daughter is charged with drink driving. She was unconscious and has no memory of the accident. The mother tries to support her daughter and hold her family together as her daughter faces a jail sentence.

Dale Harcombe says

Two and a half stars. A sunny afternoon and a family barbecue where Naomi and her boyfriend Alex are celebrating his new job, turns into disaster. After they leave, they are involved in car accident. A nine year old girl on a bike dies, Naomi also dies but is revived. Alex suffers, what compared to Naomi, are relatively minor injuries. Carmel, a social worker who has seen plenty of how peoples' wrong actions can affect others, cannot believe her daughter would drink and drive. But she does have a past history of reckless behaviour and Naomi's sister, Suzanne, insists Naomi was drunk. Carmel tries to balance this information against the fact that Suzanne and Naomi have never got along. Suzanne is a judgemental character who has high expectations of herself and all those around her.

The story is told from Carmel's point of view and that of Naomi who has lost all memory of the accident. This gives insight into both their emotions as well as filling in background story about the family, not all of which is necessary to the plot. Having read one other of this author's books which I enjoyed and reading the premise of this one, it sounded interesting. It was, after a fashion. But for a short book there seemed to be a lot of repetition, the ending felt obvious from very early on and dialogue is liberally sprinkled with the F word. All in all it was an okay read but not as good as I expected. But there may well be others out there who will find this a satisfying read. I guess it all depends on your expectations and taste. What it does clearly show is the dangers of drunk driving and how one person's thoughtlessness can destroy more than one life. That earns it an extra half star.

Anne says

Blink Of An Eye has firmly confirmed Cath Staincliffe's place as one of my favourite authors, she's delivered a novel that deals with serious and sensitive issues, and leaves the reader wondering just what they would do in the same situation.

The lives of the central family are shattered one Sunday afternoon. Life had seemed pretty perfect as they all gather for a barbecue. Carmel and Phil, the parents, were finally about to set off on their travels. Their daughters were settled; Suzanne is happily married with a gorgeous new baby and younger sister Naomi is celebrating her boyfriend Alex's new job. That was BEFORE. Then comes the AFTER. Naomi and Alex have an accident on their way home from the barbecue. Naomi is seriously injured and Alex pulls her clear from the burning car. They've hit and knocked down a nine-year-old girl who died at the scene.

Blink Of An Eye is a fairly short novel, but Cath Staincliffe gets under the skin and into the minds of the lead characters so well. Carmel is horrified to find that Naomi had driven home after drinking all afternoon, she cannot believe it. Naomi was not the easiest of children, she had her moments during her teenage years, but

Carmel would have bet her life that she would never have driven whilst drunk. Naomi has no recollection of the accident at all. When she learns that she is responsible for the death of a small child, and that she faces a prison sentence, her life crumbles. Her guilt eats away at her, she distances herself from her family and breaks up with Alex. Naomi's sister Suzanne does not hold back with her opinion, she is disgusted and rejects Naomi outright.

Carmel is determined that she will find out all of the answers and begins her quest to find out the truth. The truth turns out to be the most shocking part of this story, an explosive discovery that changes things but doesn't make them better.

Told in alternate chapters by Naomi and Carmel, this story is so skilfully written, allowing the reader to get a real insight into the characters behind the story. The tender, yet hard-hitting and descriptive writing shows just what the impact of such a traumatic event can have on an entire family. Cath Staincliffe has a real gift for getting into the mind of the character, portraying Naomi's gradual breakdown with sympathy and realism.

A novel of betrayal, guilt and family relationships that is an utterly compelling read.

MJH says

The basic concept and plot of this book was very good, and it kept me reading it even when other aspects of it really annoyed me. I won't rehash the plot, which others have stated. The ending was quite unexpected, although when I look back I think I should have seen it coming. I liked the mother (one of the narrators) but took an immediate strong dislike to the older sister,. It was a good idea to switch back and forth in perspective from the younger sister to the mother, although sometimes it was a bit jarring and abrupt. The book started really well, but then it started to get a bit repetitive and melodramatic, about half way through. But even worse, it became preachy, which I cannot stand. But the most annoying thing, which almost made me give up 3/4 of the way through, was when it almost turned into an advert for drug companies and antidepressants -- which was totally not needed for the story line! I did care about a few of the characters so I hurried through the crap and was, in the end, glad I had stuck with it to find out the resolution.

Heather Hyde says

Predictable in parts but a very good read Cath Staincliffe writes well penning believable accounts of stories that could affect us all, I have enjoyed all of hers that I've read, particularly Half the World Away and Letters to My Daughters Killer. This story has a twist that although you suspect it's coming is none the less well delivered and emotive.

Norhashimah kamarudin yacob says

I love speeding on the highway so I picked up this book hoping I could read through the consequences of my action, of somebody whose shoe I might feel if I don't stop my road speeding behaviour.

I am giving this book 5 stars cause first it helped me reflect on griefs that face the family members of those involved, and also because it spoke of trust and betrayal.....Someone who loved you dearly and someone

you thought you knew so very well, maybe you don't know that person well enough or maybe you don't know him at all. Happens to all of us who trusted recklessly.

Lynda Kelly says

I liked this WAY better than the last one of hers I read, I must say. It was a lot more recently done, though, so better edited, although I was still disappointed in the mistakes in a paid for book. Seems you can't escape errors if you want to stick to reading on devices. A pity.

It was a fascinating story about an accident which kills someone and how it affects those left behind that were in the car and their families. Something that could easily happen to us of us, I'm sure. I really enjoyed it and there was plenty to hold my interest. There were some very funny moments in it despite the grim story as well. A lot of it I guessed ahead of time but that in no way spoilt it.

I didn't like that she opted suddenly now for American spellings !! Eulogized/socializing/modernized...not good in Manchester !! Odd words were missed from sentences, too-like of/in. There weren't any apostrophe mistakes, though !! I'll definitely read more by her, just not the Sal Kilkenny set.

Christine Blachford says

I think I must have picked this up in a Kindle sale because it's not my normal kind of purchase. I whipped through it quite quickly, it's an easy read in terms of style and writing, but the content is where it gets tricky. Telling the story from a mother and a daughter's perspective, we're granted the inside line to what happens when a terrible car accident changes the family's life forever.

It was quite predictable in places, but there were also some interesting insights in others. It came back to a satisfying ending, and given the circumstances in the book, I was glad it wasn't a completely happy one with all the stories tied up in a neat bow. As it wasn't too much of an investment, I enjoyed reading it, but I'm not sure I would particularly recommend it to others.

Helen says

This wasn't what I was expecting from Cath Staincliffe - though it departs from the compelling crime fiction I associated her with, this is just as gripping. I loved the characters and the Manchester settings (it's great to see places I pass every day on my way to work immortalised in literature!). The subject matter is harrowing but so sensitively handled. The outcome is very satisfying. Well done Cath Staincliffe on a new departure and another fantastic read!
