



The Things You Didn't See

Ruth Dugdall

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Her instincts are telling her something isn't right...

On a chilly morning in rural Suffolk, Cassandra Hawke is woken by a gunshot. Her mother is clinging on to her life, the weapon still lying nearby. Everyone thinks it's attempted suicide—but none of it makes any sense to Cass. She's certain there's more to it than meets the eye.

With her husband and father telling her she's paranoid, Cass finds an unlikely ally in student paramedic Holly. Like Cass, she believes something is wrong, and together they try to uncover the truth. But is there more to Holly's interest than she's letting on?

With her family and loved ones at risk, Cass must ask herself: is she ready to hear the truth, and can she deal with the consequences?

The Things You Didn't See Details

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From Reader Review The Things You Didn't See for online ebook

Linda Strong says

Holly and Cassandra have more in common than they think.

Holly is a paramedic in training. She is called to a farm .. the very scene of a shooting she witnessed 20 years ago. That night has changed Holly's life forever.

Today she meets Cassandra ... her mother shot herself. Everyone thinks this is a case of suicide ... all but Cassandra, and now Holly.

The two of them try bucking the system ... they know something isn't quite right .. but what is it? And how are two shootings 20 years apart connected?

A medical condition known as synesthesia is introduced, compounding what may or may not be the truth. People are lying and keeping secrets .. but why? What really happened to Cassandra's mother?

There are twists and turns that permeate the entire story. The main characters are credible, as are all the secondary ones. This is a well-written psychological thriller that keeps the reader guessing from start to finish.

Many thanks to the author and TBC Reviewer Request Group for the digital copy of THE THINGS YOU DIDN'T SEE. Opinions expressed here are unbiased and entirely my own.

Amanda Sayer says

The story starts on Halloween twenty years ago, Holly witnesses a shooting in a barn. Twenty years later there is another shooting and she becomes involved again, this time as a paramedic.

Set in Ipswich, Suffolk (12 miles from where I live) Holly is called to a suicide at the same farm where her brother shot someone twenty years previously. However, is it really a suicide attempt or can Holly help to uncover what really happened?

This is the first book I have read by this Author, it was a good storyline, however I felt that it was very slow going for me and I really struggled to keep going from the middle of the book until the end.

Thanks to the TBC Reviewers Group for a copy of this book.

Empress Reece (Hooked on Books) says

I'll be honest, when I first started reading this story I didn't think we were going to get along very well, mainly because of the way it's written. The author mixes Cassandra's 3rd person thoughts/memories in with

her first person narration. (I think I said that right- lol) Anyways it was confusing as hell at first and completely unnecessary. Evidently I got use to it though, or the author tones it down in the second half of the book, because it didn't bother me quite so much the further I got into the story.

If you can get pass that, it's a good psychological thrill ride- especially if you like reading about dysfunctional families and needy women- aka Cassandra. I normally don't read too many books with female characters like her because they make me want to just slap some sense right through my Kindle & say, hey you're better then that! She and her shitty husband will definitely draw some emotions from you.

*I won this copy from Goodreads and the author in exchange for an honest review. Thank you!

Carole says

When Maya is found seriously injured at the foot of her staircase with a gun at her side everyone says it is a suicide attempt. Cassandra, her daughter, and Holly, a trainee paramedic who attends the scene think differently.

This story is narrated by Cassandra and Holly. Cass is determined to manage without her dominating mother and not to let her previous mental health issues impact on her quest. Holly has a medical condition synaesthesia which causes her to empathise and experience other people's feelings and see things that others cannot. The pair set out to prove that someone shot Maya and it was not suicide.

I enjoyed the pace of this novel and the way the story and the characters developed. There was a collection of twists and turns, red herrings and I was left uncertain as to the truth. I was disappointed in the ending and was left with the impression that the author had run out of steam and went for an easy option which after being enthralled until the end left me feeling cheated.

I have not read anything else by this author, but will try more.

I received a complimentary copy through TBC Reviewer Request group on Facebook . These are my own opinions.

Jo says

Woah! What an absolutely fantastic psychological suspense read this was with bags of emotion. The opening of the book, which is set on the night of Halloween, twenty years before the present day story, hooked me right in. Here we meet Holly when she is aged only eight-years-old, as she witnesses a shooting at the local farm. My heart ached for this little girl and how this event must have impacted upon her life.

We then fast forward to the present day. Holly is now twenty eight and training to be a paramedic. Fate seems to be at play here, because she finds herself attending a shooting, a possible suicide attempt, at the same farm. It is here that we meet Cassandra, the daughter of the woman who is found with a near fatal gun shot wound. And the incident revolves around her. Cassandra's story is intense and intriguing. Told in second person, the writing style instantly drew me in and captured my imagination. It also helped to add a hugely personal and vulnerable element to this woman's character. Within the first few paragraphs of meeting her, I understood her vulnerability, and then later on, her difficulty in getting others to take what she said seriously. She is a wife, a mother, but she seems to have lost her identity, her role in life, and I felt incredibly sorry for

her.

This book has two hugely interesting female protagonists. Both have flaws, and both took me a little while to warm to them. But, most importantly, I believed in them and their stories.

This book is deliciously slow paced with great attention to detail. I loved the fact that I could savour this book and that it didn't feel rushed or too pacey. Due to this attention to detail, I felt as if I really knew Holly, and understood her. I needed to understand Holly to be able to join the past to the present day, and to fully understand what had happened.

The Things You Didn't See is an emotional read that kept me guessing until the final pages. This is a book that shouldn't be rushed. It contains plenty of twists and you never really know who is telling the truth, until the very end.

A gripping psychological thriller that is incredibly clever. Loved it!

With thank to the author who sent me a digital Advanced Reader Copy via NetGalley.

Maggie says

I have been a fan of Ruth Dugdall's Cate Austin books so I was interested to read something different from the author.

The book starts on Halloween when eight year old Holly tags along with her brother to a local farm that is supposed to be haunted. In the barn they do see a ghost. A shot is fired and from then on Holly struggles to get the image out of her head.

Twenty years later Holly is a trainee paramedic when they get a callout to that same farm. A woman lies at the bottom of the stairs, covered in blood with a gun beside her and Cassandra, her near hysterical daughter close by. Whilst the paramedics deal with Mona, Holly tries to calm the daughter and realises that they had been at school together although Cass was a few years older.

Holly has synesthesia- something that makes her super sensitive to other's emotions. Although everyone tries to tell Cass that Mona was attempting to commit suicide she refuses to believe it and Holly senses Cass is right, this was attempted murder.

Cass's father and her controlling husband constantly try to change Cass's mind until she feels sure she is going mad. Holly can't leave the mystery alone either. Through many twists, red herrings and surprises we finally find out what did happen.

I loved this book. I think it's the best one she has written yet & I hope we are going to read more about Holly & her strange 'gift'

***Ritzrenee* says**

Literally in a whirlwind of revelations

It was pretty dramatic

The new element to this mystery book was actually 'Synesthesia' whereby Holly could perceive a person's emotions/ flashbacks with a gut sense or physical contact respectively. I actually guessed the killer right at first but I changed my mind as the story progresses or as the author led readers to believe in something else.

But, the revelation was a bit messy in how the events could change so drastically. I thought that portion could be crafted more smoothly instead.

Sean Talbot says

a very interesting look at the psychological impact that comes with a death. it had a lot of good points including Holly who had a lot of amazing parts and really enjoyed it.

Susan Angela Wallace says

the things you didn't see by Ruth Dugdall.

twenty years ago Jamie, holly and Carl and ash go to the haunted of innocence farm. they are hoping to see a ghost. they see someone in white. Jamie shoots his gun then they run. now.

holly and leif are going trick or treat. holly had synaesthesia. it started when she was 8 years old. men who were keen on holly would turn cold.

innocence farm.

Cassandra.

Cass hears there dog her barking. when she gets downstairs she sees her mum.

she has shot herself. her dad hector is there. can they save her mum Maya?
or has she?

holly must go there for her training to be a paramedic.

but can she go back there?

an absolutely fantastic read. I loved the story and the characters. it wasn't who I thought it was. I loved the ending too. 5*.

Julie Williams says

When Cassandra Hawke discovers her mother Maya's motionless body with her Father's gun laying by her side she refuses to believe the explanation given that it is an attempted suicide. An ambulance arrives along with trainee Paramedic Holly, who has history with the farm on Innocent Lane and bad memories come flooding back to haunt Holly. Holly is an interesting character who suffers from Synesthesia, which I must admit I haven't previously heard of so I did a bit of Googling and discovered what a fascinating condition it is to read about but does have pitfalls for the sufferer. It is basically where the person can feel the emotions of others as if they are their own, and in Holly's case it is triggered by touch.

This is more than just a ‘who dunnit’ as it is full of twists and surprises that had me constantly changing my mind of who was responsible for the shooting as there are plenty of suspects!

My thanks to Ruth Dugdall for asking me to review this psychological suspense novel and to Julie for posting on her wonderful blog.

Fiona says

I haven’t read any other books by this author so came to it without any expectations.

I thought it was very well written and pretty gripping.

Maya is found with a gunshot wound. It would appear that she has tried to kill herself but her daughter Cass is not convinced.

What follows is a complex plot with Cass desperate to prove that someone has shot her mum. Holly, a trainee paramedic who is one of the first on the scene, is the only one who believes Cass but she is hiding a 20 year secret which involves Cass so how reliable are her feelings? To add further confusion, Holly has synesthesia, something I’d not heard of, but it gives an interesting angle.

It’s difficult to say much more without spoilers. I did correctly guess what had happened as far as the shooting was concerned but not how it would end.

There are enough red herrings to keep you guessing and I did enjoy the book very much but I was slightly disappointed by the ending, hence 4 rather than 5 stars.

My thanks to TBConFB for this copy.

Tracy Fenton says

This is a difficult review for me to write, because I adore all the authors previous books and am a huge fan of her Cate Austin series and loved her standalone book *My Sister and Other Liars*, but I feel I should be honest in my reviews regardless.

Firstly, I think the current blurb is misleading so I read the book expecting something quite different. (I believe the blurb will be updated nearer publication date).

In my opinion, and again this is purely my own thoughts, there is no doubt that Ruth Dugdall is a brilliant writer and has always written books that cover slightly uncomfortable or taboo subjects. This book, however, is very different to any of those books.?

There are two main characters, the first is Holly who has synesthesia, and if like me you have no idea what that is it means she can feel the emotions of others as if they are her own feelings.?

The second character is Cassandra, an emotionally unstable woman who discovers her mother lying at the bottom of the stairs with a gunshot wound in an attempted suicide or is it attempted murder.

The story is narrated through both characters, Holly is the trainee paramedic who arrives at the scene and has a dark secret going back 20 years which is connected to this family. Cass is the troubled and distraught daughter determined to prove her mother didn’t try to take her own life.

There are lots of suspects, plenty of unlikeable characters, a couple of twists, but overall this book just didn’t work for me. I personally would have enjoyed it more if the entire book was about Cass and her

dysfunctional family which I did enjoy reading about.

Christine says

The Things You Didn't See is the latest novel by Ruth Dugdall. I have been eagerly waiting for the release of this one, for ages.

The story starts with a bang. It goes down hill from there. A woman is found shot at a farm-house. The only people who suspect that this was not a suicide attempt are her flaky daughter and a trainee paramedic. Both have their own reasons for suspecting foul play. The two women, Holly and Cass, join forces to investigate what happened.

There seems to be a trend of characters living with synesthesia. The best I have read recently being Dominika in the Red Sparrow trilogy. Holly reads people intuitively. She can feel their emotions, as if they were her feelings. This is quite a useful skill to have, when investigating a crime.

Usually a Ruth Dugdall novel is a strong and disturbing read, with some lovely original twists. This time, we get a rather disappointing mystery, which fails to work. It lacks pace and that Dugdall special flair. It is incredibly slow. The characters were not vibrant enough, to keep my attention. Ruth Dugdall can do better than this. I know she can.

Joan says

Plans are in place for Innocence Farm on the edge of Kenley in rural Suffolk. It is going to be turned from a struggling chicken and pig farm supplying the local Waitrose into a luxurious new health spa which will generously support the Hawke family and end their daily grind with both animals and the land. The plans have been drawn up and work should begin on the transformation within the next few weeks. Maya Hawke, the owner of the farm, has sanctioned the change of business in the wake of her remission from Cancer after treatment by celebrity healer who is married to her only child Cassandra.

But then Maya is discovered seriously injured at the foot of the staircase of the farmhouse with a gun at her side. Everyone but her daughter Cassandra believes she has committed suicide. The paramedics arrive and with them is a trainee called Holly who once knew the family through being at school with Cassandra. She follows the case of her own accord, filled with memories of the past and a night two decades earlier when she witnessed another shooting at the farm when she was only a small child. That night is a secret she has been the guardian of for twenty years and now it all comes flooding back, filling her with guilt. She comforts Cass and together they join together to prove that Maya had not attempted to commit suicide, as she lies in a hospital bed in a deep coma.

This story is narrated jointly by Cass and Holly. Cass is determined to manage without her mother who has always taken care of the big decisions. The thing that terrifies her most is that her fragility will result in her being sectioned once again. She steps up to the mark, determined not to be brought down by her grief and to prove that she is a strong woman, able to manage her depression and survive without medical intervention.

Holly is the guardian of a terrible secret and is riven with guilt. She is also determined to overcome her medical condition synaesthesia which causes her to empathise and ‘read’ others using her special talent which she sees as a curse. Her choice to train as a paramedic was solely to use her special gift for the benefit of her patients. She also knows that Maya is the victim of another person who shot her. She can feel it with certainty. Together these two remarkable women join forces to prove that Maya has not attempted to take her own life.

This absorbing novel tells the story of the police investigation and of Cass and Holly’s search for the truth. The gorgeous storytelling is wondrously adorned with suspense and mystery and with many twists and turns, red herrings and all this is accompanied with a bucketful of deception and outright lies. The characters that drive this story forward are an eclectic mix, as in life itself. There’s a journalist bent on revenge, a single parent family of farm workers who help, support and are dependent on the Hawkes, nosy neighbours, a secret love-child, a blackmailer and many others. Be prepared to be led astray and also to enjoy the rollercoaster and emotional ride. I never once guessed how this story would end and was held in its thrall throughout the entire novel. I was not a huge fan of the ending to be absolutely honest, but I thought it was a very good read. I loved the play on words within the title, but I half expected that, along with the well informed and intelligently presented storyline, meticulously researched. I always learn something new from this author and I am a great fan of all of her novels.

I was very grateful to receive a complimentary copy of this novel from publisher Thomas & Mercer through my membership of TBC (The Book Club on Facebook) Reviewer Request group. These are my own honest and well considered opinions.

Greta Halliday says

A totally gripping psychological thriller. This book kept me guessing throughout and I still hadn’t figured it out at the end. Thanks to TBC for giving me the opportunity to read this wonderful thought provoking book.
