



The Sister

Louise Jensen

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‘I did something terrible, Grace. I hope you can forgive me...’

Grace hasn't been the same since the death of her best friend Charlie. She is haunted by Charlie's last words, and in a bid for answers, opens an old memory box of Charlie's. It soon becomes clear there was a lot she didn't know about her best friend.

The Sister Details

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From Reader Review The Sister for online ebook

Linda says

I received a copy of The Sister by Louise Jensen through NetGalley for an honest review. My thanks to Bookouture and to Louise Jensen for the opportunity.

All we needed was the boiled rabbit.

Grace Matthews and Charlie Fisher were childhood friends who were as thick as thieves. From the turning of the first few pages, we find out that Charlie has died and Grace is inconsolable. Grace returns to the exact spot where the two had buried a memory box when they were fifteen years old. She digs up the box refusing to deal with its contents until later.

Grace is now twenty-five years old working as a pre-school teacher and living in a quaint cottage with her boyfriend, Dan. Grace has made attempts to check on Lexie, Charlie's wayward mother who battles with vodka bottles on a daily basis. Grace cannot cut the ties that bind. And her tightly wound relationship with the dead Charlie overshadows everything in her life. A letter in that memory box from Charlie insists on finding Charlie's elusive father whom she never met. Grace makes this her zealous quest.

Now here is where the lid is lifted on the pot that boils.....

The storyline ricochets from "Then" to "Now" which is necessary in order to fill in missing chinks in the armor of this story. While used cleverly by this author, it can be frustrating. Just when you've found a cozy spot on the couch, you're forced to get up and find another. All actions seem to be justified and labeled as such by the author. I did find myself ready to shake Grace out of her naivete state and deflate some of the air out of her head.

It appears that in some thrillers, we wish only to hear the squealing brakes and see snatches of the dark shadows in the night rather than the steps that have gotten you there. Although the writing is well-done, there are holes that do let in a bit of the breeze of discontent. I rounded up to a 4-star because Louise Jensen has quite the story here. The ending is a knotted twister. Looking forward to the next one from Ms. Jensen. The rattling of that lid on the boiling pot beckons you for more.

Candace says

Recently, I've been reading a bit more mystery/suspense. 'The Sister' seemed like it would be a great match for me. I love a book that can keep me on the edge of my seat, wondering what is going to happen next and making my heart rate quicken.

Grace, the heroine is still reeling from the death of her best friend, Charlie, years later. She never really got over the way that Charlie died unexpectedly. She's left with many unanswered questions, as Charlie died before explaining the cryptic note that she left Grace, apologizing for some unknown wrong.

When Grace goes to see Charlie's alcoholic mother, Lexie, she decides to seek out the father that Charlie never met. Enlisting the help of her long-time boyfriend, Dan, Grace begins digging into the past. What they

unearth is unexpected.

It seems that Charlie had a half-sister that she never knew about, Anna. Before long, Anna has infiltrated Grace's life. The two seem to have far more in common than Charlie. Exactly how much they have in common is something that Grace could not have guessed.

The more enmeshed Anna becomes in Grace's life, the more things start to fall apart for Grace. Suspicious things start happening. It seems that somebody is out to destroy Grace. She's being stalked and a string of calamities follow her every move. At more than one point, I questioned Grace's sanity while listening to this audiobook.

The story unfolds in pieces, jumping back and forth between the past and present. Piece by piece, the truth comes to light. Sometimes the alternating timeframes don't work so well for me, but I think it helped build the suspense in this story and worked well.

That being said, I wasn't as shocked by the "big reveal" as I expected to be. Honestly, it wasn't surprising at all. If anything, the culprit was so obvious that I dismissed it as a possibility.

Even though the person harassing Grace was not surprising, the motivations came to light little by little. Although they weren't particularly shocking either, some were a little unexpected. There were a few details that I didn't anticipate.

Overall, I give this one 3.5 stars. It was good, but failed to provide the shocking twist that was promised. It held my attention and was entertaining, but didn't make my heart pound or keep me on the edge of my seat. It was good, but I expected more from this one.

Check out more of my reviews at www.bookaddictshaven.com

Obsidian says

Before anyone judges me, I did not know that was the full title of the book I bought because I just went by the Goodreads Paperback Edition. If I had, I would have skipped over this book though the summary did interest me.

So here's the main problem. It took way too long for some things to be explained in this book. The sentence structures were choppy as anything and the main character was not that smart. All other characters are not very developed and the twist part of the book I called when I was around 40 percent. Because everything pointed to this person and you must have never read a book before if you didn't get what was happening.

The main character Grace is still reeling from the death of her childhood best friend Charlie. Grace "feels" things a lot so she has taken to drinking and drugging herself because her life has no meaning without Charlie. Though Grace has a great job, a wonderful boyfriend named Dan, and a great relationship with her grandparents, only Charlie is what matters.

I really couldn't get a handle on Grace. Certain characters saw her as a strong person and I wasn't seeing it at all. The whole book shows a person who is not handling her grief at all, and was also scared to be abandoned by anyone, and obsessed with her best friend.

The secondary characters were so underdeveloped. It took me a really long time to put together the Dan that Grace was in a relationship with, as the Dan she met on her first day of school who was a jerk. And once you figure that out, the book doesn't work when we go back to "Then" chapters that has teenage Grace wanting to be with Dan. You know that she will be with him.

The character of Charlie read like a manic pixie girl. I got absolutely no sense of who she was at all in this story besides a character Grace was obsessed with.

Other people such as Grace's grandparents, Charlie's mother, etc. were also underdeveloped. People did things that no one else in the world ever would have for no real reason at all except to make sure that this book had a "twist" as far as I can see.

The writing was not good. The sentences hung together painfully.

"A grey ball of fluff is nestled on the stool of the piano that Dad taught me to play, hoisting me onto the leather stool virtually as soon as I could sit unaided."

"Afterwards, we snuggled in the multicolored throws that adorned the back of the sofa, and munched on Hawaiian pizza. I'd told Dan to order a pepperoni--he's never understood fruit on savory food but he knew I loved the sweet and salty combination."

"A wave of tiredness washes over me. Alcohol and emotion collaborate, forcing my eyes shut; I rub them, trying to dispel the past."

Also the book chapters kept switching between a "Then" and "Now". Frankly it would have made better sense to not do this since it took way too long for certain parts of the story to unfold. I think it may have been around 70 percent before we found out what happened to Grace's father. The flow was terrible from beginning to end. The book jerked to random stops and fits until the end.

The ending of the book was much too rushed and I thought once again didn't make a lot of sense.

Melissa says

This one was a little too contrived for my liking. I think the author crammed in too many ideas - multiple deaths, fires, bullying, cheating, stalking and even a psycho for good measure. At some point, it was overkill.

Grace has had a hard time coping with the death of her best friend, Charlie. Her marriage is crumbling and she's racked with guilt. Guilt for things the author only alludes to in the beginning. There is some suspense in trying to decipher what her role has been and a creep factor because someone is constantly lurking in the shadows.

Bits and pieces are revealed as the story flips between "then" and "now," but getting to the truth is painful. A lot of the story felt forced, almost like things were conveniently thrown in just to keep the plot-line going.

I don't know if it's to alleviate some of her guilt, but Grace decides she's going to track down Charlie's

father. She ends up meeting Charlie's half-sister, Anna, instead. Turns out Anna has no family and needs a place to stay. So sure, why not let someone you just met, move in with you and your husband? That sounds normal.

There were so many things about this book that didn't work for me. The biggest being Grace's naivety. There were times I just wanted to shake her and tell her to wake up! How could she be so blind?! Bad things keep happening to her and she has no clue what's really going on? I think you would have to be as naive as Grace not to see where this story was headed or who the culprit was. Far-fetched, over-the-top and just too much. I couldn't wait to get to the last page.

Take this review for what it is - my opinion. It could just be a case of me, not you. Especially if you consider, I didn't share the opinion of many of the other reviews I've seen posted.

ARC kindly provided by Bookouture and NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.

Michelle says

Grace and Charlie have been best friends since childhood but when Charlie suddenly dies at 24 yrs old Grace's life becomes upended. She can't eat, she doesn't get out of bed, and her relationship with her long time boyfriend Dan becomes strained to the point that neither seems to want to make an effort anymore.

Then Grace's life starts to slowly get back to normal through therapy. She's working again and is trying to maintain her composure. Charlie was raised by a single mom and before she passed away she told Grace how much she wanted to find her father even though her mom won't tell her anything about him. Grace is now on a mission to find him in hopes that it will bring her closure.

Who she finds instead is Charlie's long lost sister, Anna, and let's just say this is where things get complicated.

Louise Jensen is a wonderful writer and has the incredible ability to lure her readers in. You can't help but to fly through the pages. This was an enjoyable book overall but not the most original nor one I would go around raving about to everyone I know. A quick, easy book to read that would be a great palate cleanser between heavier, darker reads.

Thank you to Grand Central Publishing for sending me an ARC in exchange for my honest review.

Deanna says

My reviews can also be seen at: <https://deesradreadsandreviews.wordpress.com>

3.5 Stars

The Sister begins in the present. Twenty-five-year old Grace Matthews is digging up an old time capsule that her and her best friend Charlie buried ten years before.

She never thought she'd be alone opening the box that contained all of their hopes and dreams. Things that were important to both of them as well as a bright pink envelope that Charlie slipped in right before they buried it. Grace doesn't know what's in the envelope but hopes if it will give her some answers to all the questions she has. Questions that Charlie can't answer herself since she passed away four months earlier.

Charlie's last words go around and around in her head.

"I did something terrible, Grace. I hope you can forgive me."

When she opens the envelope she realizes just how little she knew about her best friend. Since Charlie's death, Grace has become even more determined to find out what Charlie did that was so terrible. These thoughts occupy so much of Grace's time that she feels she won't be able to move on until she knows everything. It's even affecting her relationship with her boyfriend.

When Grace met Charlie in middle school she instantly felt like she could trust her. The book delves into the friendship between her and Charlie as well as their close friends and the drama surrounding them all. There are many references made to Grace's parents and her past. We are aware that something tragic has happened and Grace seems to feel very guilty. She refers to it as the day she's tried to forget.

"Am I really to blame? Am I always to blame?"

When Grace starts an online search for Charlie's father, someone else from Charlie's past shows up. At first Grace is really happy, but it's not long before strange things start happening. She begins receiving strange phone calls, things start to go missing, and she feels like someone might be following her. She wonders if she's in danger or if she's making a big deal about nothing.

When things start to take an even darker turn, Grace doesn't know who to trust. Is this all related to Charlie and the past? Grace feels like someone is playing with her life and she's terrified to find out what they'll do next.

I thought "The Sister" was a good psychological thriller. It was easy to follow as it alternated between past and present. The story line and characters were interesting. However, there were a few times that Grace **REALLY** annoyed me. She would be overly paranoid about some things but didn't seem to notice things that seemed glaringly obvious. A few of the decisions she made really baffled me, but it wasn't enough to dissuade me from continuing on. I did have a few questions but still felt the book ended pretty strong.

Although I had to suspend belief occasionally I tried to stop analyzing (so hard for me sometimes) and just enjoy the book. Honestly, all in all it was a pretty good ride. The author did a great job of keeping me in suspense, and there were some good twists that I did not see coming! It was a very hard book to put down.

I think this is an very good debut novel and I look forward to more from Louise Jensen.

Thank you to NetGalley, the publisher, and Louise Jensen for the opportunity to read this book in exchange for my honest review.

Melisa says

That was the best nail-biting page turner I've read in awhile! I could not put this one down.

First of all, well done Louise Jensen. Cannot believe this is a debut novel. Really great storytelling and writing. I could not for one second figure out where the plot was going to take me. In my humble opinion, it is the sign of a great thriller writer that the reader is left guessing a different alternative ending from chapter to chapter. She completely had me guessing that one character was the bad guy... but then - oh wait! - now I think this guy is in on it! I was constantly questioning every character's motives, I trusted no one, and there was a constant sense of doom lingering. My heart was racing the whole read.

I also loved all the "British-isms" - the language, the food, the slang - all of it.

A really great psychological thriller, highly recommend! 4.5 stars

Thank you Louise Jensen, Bookcouture and Netgalley for a copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

Zoeytron says

Copy furnished by Net Galley for the price of a review.

Grace has a lot of problems. Many months have passed since the death of her best friend, and she still isn't back to right. She pops pills and guzzles booze to cope. She is shrewish and naggy with her longtime boyfriend. Whiny, brittle, and needy with everyone else. I was somewhat sympathetic in the beginning, but before all was said and done, I just wanted her to **stifle herself!** It is a matter of supreme indifference to me as to whether I like the main character of a book or not, but there were so many instances of Grace whimpering, Grace mewling, Grace blaming herself for everything under the sun, that I finally lost patience. Enough is enough, and too much is just foolish.

The writing seemed a mite trite and made-to-fit. On the upside, I liked the "Then" and "Now" chapter headings, and the pacing was fine. Also liked the Charlie character, and enjoyed the author's acknowledgments.

(view spoiler)

Chelsea Humphrey says

Here's another one of those cases where I was being a good little girl, minding my own business and being all mature; not requesting anything else from NetGalley until my ratio stabilizes (go ahead and laugh). But then all my friends were reading it, and if there's anything you can count on, its Chelsea not wanting to be

left out of the cool reading group. Of course the summary drew me in along with the GORGEOUS cover, so there went my NetGalley sabbatical and all my dignity with it. I'm really glad I let go of my pride and humbly begged for this one, because it was well worth my time.

The prologue, or first chapter, really draws us in. It's so vague and mysterious and there are so many questions. Then, the whole tempo changes and we are busy setting up the background and plot, which was a little slower paced than your average gimmicky thriller, but hang in there because its worth it! At about 20-25% in is when we meet Anna, and things start to pick up. All these mysterious things keep happening to keep us guessing who has it out for Grace and why. Things just start rolling along more quickly, and I'll be darned if it wasn't an entire night of "just one more chapter", until I realized I had read the whole book. The ending provided full closure, but more on that later.

"It seems a long time now since we laughed like that. Loved like that. Grief has pushed us apart like repelling magnets: no matter how hard we try to reach each other, there's a gulf between us that we just can't bridge."

Grace and Dan have a tricky relationship. Not only have they been friends since elementary school, but they were also mutual friends with Charlie, who has now passed, since elementary school. One of the aspects I truly loved was this novel's flipping between present and past tense, giving us an insider look on how these friends grew into who they are now and what they had to endure along the way. There was a greater level of depth to the characters than is typical in thrillers these days, as it seems the fad now to focus all efforts on the dreaded "big twist"; this was not the case here. I was impressed at how this book seemed to break genre barriers and carry along into multiple interest levels. I could just as easily see someone who is interested in Women's Fiction loving this story as another reader who is strictly a Suspense/Thriller consumer. The characters had significant background, which I feel was quite a feat given the sheer amount of people who cropped up along the way. Of course this was a thriller as described in the summary, but there were also undercurrents of women's issues, such as depression, prescription drug abuse, body image issues, and finding your voice/standing up for yourself in a hostile relationship.

"Could I have saved her? The thought that I might have been able to nestled inside me, as if it belonged there as much as my bones, my kidneys, my lungs. My skin would shed cells, my scalp would lose hair, my liver repair itself. My body would refresh and renew in the years to come, but the guilt? I knew that would stay. Forever a part of me."

Guilt seems to be the heaviest and greatest theme to this book. There is such a great web spun from this group of friends who have experienced so much of their lives together, and I was fully intrigued by each person's individual guilt along with the guilt each felt over certain incidents together. There were quite a few surprising twists near the end, and I found myself still thinking about this book days after turning the final page, which is partly why I am just now writing the review. Louise Jensen has enormous talent and I am absolutely waiting on pins and needles to read what she produces next. Highly recommended to readers of all genres as this one crosses boundaries on so many levels.

*** I received my copy via NetGalley from the publisher in exchange for a fair and honest review. Many thanks and looking forward to my next Bookouture read!**

Jan says

If you are a fan of Lifetime movies, you will really enjoy this.
Unfortunately for me, I'm not...

Grace and Charlie; childhood friends brought together because they shared something in common-neither had a Father. But something happened in their past, and now Charlie is dead. Soon after, Anna arrives, saying she is Charlie's half sister. Grace has found another tie to Charlie and she can't believe her luck. But then things start to happen....

I won't bother sharing some of the things that start to go wrong. You've watched these movies, you know what happens. I wish I could say there was something new here, but there just isn't.

It's not poorly written, in fact that is what kept it at the 3 star mark. I think the author has a promising future here, she just needs some fresh ideas.

My thanks to NetGalley for the ARC in exchange for an honest review.

Carrie says

The Sister is another wonderful psychological thriller from Louise Jensen. The Sister was originally published in 2016 and was Ms. Jensen's first thriller but I did not begin reading her work until her next book. So far she has released four thrillers and I'd read three and enjoyed them so when I saw this one was re-released I knew I had to pick it up and I'm glad I did.

The Sister follows twenty five year old Grace who is still mourning the loss of her best friend Charlie. Grace and Charlie had buried some mementos when they were kids and with Charlie gone Grace thinks it's now time to find out what it was that Charlie had put in the box.

As we are following Grace in the present time though the story also flashes back to the past to show Charlie and Grace as they became friends. It follows the pair all the way up to the events that led to their eventual separation and to the day that Grace lost Charlie forever.

When Grace finds that Charlie wanted to eventually find her father and knowing that she never did Grace comes up with the plan to do it now in her honor. So when a girl named Anna claims to be related to Charlie Grace is happy to bring her into her life and the home she shares with her boyfriend.

The Sister thankfully was another that was easy to follow even though it switched between time periods and I never felt lost as it went back and forth the way you may do with some books. With different events going on in both timelines it's almost as if reading two stories but of course everything eventually weaves together wonderfully. Another great read from an author I've come to enjoy.

I received an advance copy from the publisher via NetGalley.

For more review please visit <https://carriesbookreviews.com/>

Maureen says

Thank you to Netgalley and Bookouture for my ARC in exchange for a fair and honest review

Though there was something of a slow start, I somehow sensed that this was just an interlude in which to catch my breath before the action really started.

Grace, Charlie (Charlotte), and Dan have been friends since primary school. The friendship has endured into adulthood, and while Grace and Dan set up home together, Grace and Charlie still remain inseparable. On Grace's 15th birthday, the girls had buried a memory box, and Charlie put a letter inside and made Grace promise that she won't come back and open the box without Charlie there.

Around the time the girls reach 18, Charlie just ups and leaves without saying goodbye, leaving Grace hurt, angry and bewildered. Charlie leaves a message saying she's sorry, and hopes that Grace can forgive her. But forgive her for what?

Five years later, Charlie turns up unannounced, but before Grace can ask her what she meant by those words, Charlie collapses and dies.

Grace is traumatised, but after some time she decides to find the father that Charlie never knew, thinking it was something that Charlie would have wanted. Dan helps her set up an appeal asking for anyone knowing his whereabouts to come forward. A young woman called Anna comes forward and claims to be his daughter.

It's after this that events take a very nasty turn, and that interlude I mentioned at the start was very much appreciated!

Wow! This is one twisty, tense, nerve shredding novel, and can it really be Louise Jensen's DEBUT novel? Well honestly, we're all in for a treat in the future!

Sue says

THE SISTER by Louise Jensen is this author's debut novel, and it is a definite winner...and from my favourite publisher! This is a dark psychological thriller, full of twists and turns and I kept on turning the pages, not willing to miss a thing... wanting to know more. I did not want to do anything else but read this fabulous book. I can't believe that this is a debut novel!

Grace, Charlie and Dan have been friends since public school. Grace and Charlie were best friends...they were inseparable! On Grace's 15th birthday, Charlie gave Grace "half a gold heart on a chain engraved with BFF". Charlie had the other half. On this special day, the girls buried a memory box, and Charlie put a letter, a "pink envelope" inside and made Grace promise that she won't come back and open the box without Charlie there.

But Charlie would never make it back. Charlie died and her last words to Grace were...

"I did something terrible, Grace. I hope you can forgive me."

Forgive her for WHAT!

The Sister is written alternately in the current day and the past. The chapters are titled NOW and THEN to differentiate between time frames and this worked well. During this time frame we follow Grace and Charlie as children, teenagers and Grace as an adult.

After Charlie's death, life was a hard struggle for Grace. It affected her relationship with her boyfriend, Dan, and with Charlie's Mum, Lexie. Grace is determined to fulfill Charlie's wish to find the father who abandoned her and to find out what exactly Charlie was referring to when she said she had done something terrible and was sorry.

"When Grace starts a campaign to find Charlie's father, Anna, a girl claiming to be Charlie's sister steps forward. For Grace, finding Anna is like finding a new family, and soon Anna has made herself very comfortable in Grace and boyfriend Dan's home."

"But something isn't right. Things disappear, Dan's acting strangely and Grace is sure that someone is following her. Is it all in Grace's mind? Or as she gets closer to discovering the truth about both Charlie and Anna, is Grace in terrible danger?"

This was a brilliant debut novel. The tension and suspense built up gradually. The story moves along at a balanced pace, with short chapters, as little bits of information are revealed in chapters of 'Then' and 'Now'.

The characters in this novel are easy to follow and very engaging, some more than others. The author allows the reader to reflect on their own childhood memories, friendships, things that they shared and other things that they kept hidden. It is also a testament of the strength of character, which allows the traumatised person through acceptance and forgiveness to heal and move on with their life.

Many thanks to Louise Jensen, Bookouture and NetGalley for my ARC in exchange for an honest review. I cannot wait for more work from this talented author! Read this book!

Melissa ♥ Dog/Wolf Lover ♥ Martin says

So I started out loving this book!! I wanted to know what was going on! Who did what and why!?

Then over half the damn book I wanted to stab everyone in the book!!!!

Then toward the end when more revelations came about, I started liking it again. But I'm leaving it at 3 stars for my angst. So there!

Mel ♥??

Brenda says

"A psychological thriller with a brilliant twist you won't see coming." That's the promise in the title. My initial reaction was, "I'll be the judge of that."

The main character, Grace, was well developed. I could sympathize with her up to a point. At times she seemed too needy, too paranoid, and too willing to jump to conclusions. I liked Charlie more because she was stronger and unafraid of tackling life. I was sorry Charlie just up and left. Anna was everything I expected her to be.

Supporting characters like Dan, Grandma and Grandad and Lexie were important. Grace's mother could have been left out, though, I think. She was so very minor.

The switching from Then to Now and back was not a problem for me, but I had to pay close attention to the titles. Many times a Now followed a Now, for instance.

This was a well written debut novel. I felt an impending doom throughout the book, and it held my interest to the end. I think I would have left the title as just "The Sister."
