


Never Look Back

Clare Donoghue

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He's watching. He's waiting. He knows.

Three women have been found brutally murdered in south London, the victims only feet away from help during each sadistic attack. And the killer is getting braver . . .

Sarah Grainger is rapidly becoming too afraid to leave her house. Once an outgoing photographer, she knows that someone is watching her. A cryptic note brings everything into terrifying focus, but it's the chilling phone calls that take the case to another level.

DI Mike Lockyer heads up the regional murder squad. With three bodies on his watch, and a killer growing in confidence, he frantically tries to find the link between these seemingly isolated incidents. What he discovers will not only test him professionally but will throw his personal life into turmoil too.

Never Look Back Details

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Author : Clare Donoghue

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From Reader Review Never Look Back for online ebook

Janet says

I've had this copy sitting on my Kindle for a while and decided to get to it. My regret ... is that I didn't read it sooner!!

This is a terrific debut from Clare Donoghue. A police procedural that had me hooked from beginning to end. Young girls are being found dead just yards away from public areas. Girls that seemingly on the surface may have a common denominator as to why they were targeted. The investigative team comprises of DI Mike Lockyer, a charismatic and charming detective who works in the MIT for a region within London. Working closely with his DS, Jane Bennett, they set out on a path that leads them into dark alleyways and rundown car parks as the body count mounts up. Coupled with the murders is a case of stalking that has left Sarah Grainger, the victim, frightened out of her wits. Bamboozled with relentless phone calls and mysterious notes her world becomes a slow decline into darkness, intense fear and abject misery. Managing to pluck up the courage to take her worries to the police, Lockyer and Bennett ask themselves if the two cases could possibly be linked.

This is a really tightly plotted storyline. Ms Donoghue hardly gives anything away as the book moves along, only giving the reader tiny insights as the suspects are lined up for us to fathom out. Once started I was really reluctant to book this book down; only really doing so to sleep. I had my suspect, I then discounted, only to suspect again! It all culminated in a high octane finish that left me wanting more, so much so, I'm moving onto the next book pretty much straightaway. The ending initimated that there could be more...

To sum up, in the world of police procedurals, I rank this one highly. Recommended.

Brenda says

Published in 2014, this debut novel is the beginning of a series. DI Mike Lockyer is not the typical policeman found in mystery novels. He is very human, shows his emotions both good and bad, and has his regrets and anxieties. He is not an alcoholic or a pill popper and has no more damage than any other semi-divorced man with an 18 year old daughter. He's very likable, maybe even lovable!

Mike deals with murders. He's very sensitive around crime scenes and is affected deeply by them. He has several to investigate, but gets involved in a stalking case as well.

The book was slow at first. Information is doled out by the author at an agonizing pace, but I never had any thoughts about giving up. As the cases progress, the pace begins to pick up. I was really captivated by that point and shocked at the turn of events when the cases were solved.

Some Goodreads friends read and reviewed this book, and a couple of them went right into the second book. Based on that, I have it here ready to go.

Bridget says

I've got a new guy! Mike Lockyer, a detective with heart, a troubled family past and a heart on his sleeve way about him. He is just lovely. I really enjoyed this crime novel. First in a series with lots of promise. I didn't guess the ending and it was nicely done all the way through. Creepily but not bloodily good!

Paul says

Brilliant Debut Thriller

Never Look Back is the debut thriller novel by Clare Donoghue and what a brilliant debut as this is a book that ticks all the boxes and makes you want to know whodunit. Donoghue keeps you on your toes all the way to the end, there is no telegraphing who the prime suspect should be this is a thoroughly excellent novel.

Detective Inspector Mike Lockyer is head of the Murder and Serious Crime Squad in South East London and he has his hands full with two murders by the same perpetrator when a body is found at the side of a Tesco's Metro that reminds him of his own daughter Megan. The perpetrator seems to be speeding up when another body appears within a shorter time frame and now it becomes a race between time to find the man and get him off the streets of London.

While the murder investigation is ongoing Sarah Grainger attends Lewisham Police Station to make a complaint that she is being stalked, getting stranger phone calls through the night and she feels like she is always being watched. Detective Sergeant Jane Bennett takes the complaint and gets Lockyer involved as the stalker could very well be their target the perpetrator of the murders.

Things start to spiral out of control for Lockyer when he gets involved with Sarah Grainger while her stalker case is still ongoing and his autistic brother has to be investigated when one of the victim's ear rings appears in his brother's room at an assisted living home. He is under pressure for results he needs to find the murderer as he seems to be toying with the police trying to show that he is far superior to them. Time is running out will he be able to track down the killer in enough time to protect those closest to him. You do not find that answer to that question until the end of the book when he reveals who really is the killer but will he still be able to save his nearest and dearest. The only way to find out is to read the book and take the twist, the turns and psychological warfare on Lockyer, and you will not regret it.

This is a brilliant, exciting and pulsating debut novel by Clare Donoghue and I really cannot wait for her next thriller if this is anything to go by then it will be brilliant.

Liz Barnsley says

Coming 13th March 2014 from Pan MacMillan

Many thanks to the author and publisher for the compelling review copy.

Three women have been found brutally murdered in south London, the victims only feet away from help

during each sadistic attack. And the killer is getting braver . . .

So, yet another brilliant debut novel due to hit the shelves next year “Never Look Back” introduces us to DI Mike Lockyer and his team as they investigate a series of murders...and a stalker.

Oh how I love when I get right in at the start of a new series, especially a headstart and especially when they are as good as this one. It was genuinely creepy – I have spent the last few days whilst reading it surreptitiously looking over my shoulder, checking out parked cars in case someone is in them and obsessively drawing the curtains in my house as soon as the sky starts to darken...Just in case you understand.

DI Lockyer is fantastic, I completely fell in love with him. Sidekick Jane shows intelligence and depth and offsets him perfectly...together they delve into a mind of darkness and try and figure out how to stop the slaughter- but both have personal lives that can get in the way.

Meanwhile we also follow Sarah, who is becoming increasingly withdrawn from life having received a number of sinister phone calls, and always having a sense of being watched – the police seemingly able to do nothing, she hides away, finding it harder and harder to leave her sanctuary. Could her world and that of the murder victims be about to collide?

Cleverly written, broken down into days, we watch the investigation, Sarah’s increasing paranoia and DI Lockyer’s struggle to separate his emotions from the practical necessities of chasing a killer...and all the while the disturbing atmosphere builds.

Ms Donoghue writes with a clear eye to the ironic, in a smooth and addictive style, all the while adding substance and clarity to her characters as we get to know them. The final resolution is perhaps one of the best ones I have read lately and with a teaser of what is to come at the end of my beautiful review copy, my chronic impatience has just kicked in once more.

Happy Reading Folks!

Raven says

I must admit that on receiving this book to read and review, there was a slight sinking in my heart when I saw the well-worn comparisons to Mark Billingham, Peter Robinson and Peter James. However, never one to be deterred by publicity blurb, I dove in to this debut crime novel with an open mind and was more than pleasantly surprised by what lay within...

From the outset you are plunged into a nightmarish insinuation that this killer has more than a passing resemblance to the resident weirdo killer in *The Silence of the Lambs*. Crafting his magnum opus in his spare room, that you just know is going to be constructed out of items accrued from his crime scenes. Cut to young woman being violently attacked on a London street and its aftermath, quickly introducing us to the main police protagonists, and straightaway Donoghue has raised the reader’s interest simply and succinctly. This is what you want from a British police procedural- straight in- boom- so loved that. Then, the story spirals out encompassing the miserable day-to-day existence of a previously vivacious woman and her nightmare experience at the hands of a stalker. Donoghue captures perfectly the claustrophobic dread of Sarah’s life from her waking moment under the microscope of her stalker’s eye, and this is very well depicted within the

plot. Inevitably, all the facets of the plot intersect nicely, as Sarah's cries for help are eventually answered by the intervention of DI Mike Lockyer and DS Jane Bennett as her stalker enters their radar, in the course of their murder investigation...

I did like the tight control that Donoghue kept on the pace and gradual unfolding of the plot, never resorting to implausible coincidence and keeping the tension high. I was slightly less sure of the development of the relationship between Lockyer and Sarah, and did raise my eyes to the heavens a little as this came to light, but both characters, carrying their own emotional baggage, were empathetic enough, and this did help overcome the slightly hackneyed nature of their personal interactions. Overall, the characterisation was very good, and Lockyer makes for a good central police character, with more importantly further room for development. He displays all of the central tenets needed by a leading character, and though not quite as charismatic as DI Tom Thorne from Mark Billingham, there are definitely sparks of interest. I'm also hoping that in any future books DS Jane Bennett has a greater part to play as I think she could well be a character to take more of a role from this initial encounter with her.

So to sum up, a more than satisfactory debut of another player in the British police procedural genre. Despite my minor quibble with one aspect of the plot, I would be more than happy to pick up another in the series, and always nice to encounter a new author. Promising stuff.

Mike Gabor says

Three women have been found brutally murdered in south London, the victims only feet away from help during each sadistic attack. And the killer is getting braver . . .

Sarah Grainger is rapidly becoming too afraid to leave her house. Once an outgoing photographer, she knows that someone is watching her. A cryptic note brings everything into terrifying focus, but it's the chilling phone calls that take the case to another level.

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A slightly above average police procedural. Different POV's from some of the characters. Well paced but dialogue a bit lacking. Mike Lockyer is a solid character but I felt the author could have fleshed out the other members of his team a bit better. Bit of a twist at the end but still felt a bit forced. As this is a debut novel I will give the second book a try as I feel that the series does have some potential.

Deb Jones says

A good first novel for Ms. Donoghue. Her protagonist, Detective Inspector Mike Lockyer, is an interesting man with plenty of foibles -- some of which get in the way of his actions and ability to see a clear picture as he leads an investigation into the rape and murders of three young women.

The plotting kept the story moving forward. I found it difficult a time or two to place certain details into the

focus of the story, but some of that was the author's deliberate misdirection.

I look forward to reading more books in the Lockyer series and hope to find a protagonist who grows emotionally as he learns from his mistakes, both personal and professional.

Bill Kupersmith says

I'd really thought this one would be a four star, but the fate of an attractive character in the gratuitous thriller conclusion quite annoyed me. Till then I quite enjoyed the author's depiction of the detective's different relationships, with his daughter, his autistic brother, & his sergeant. This series probably will be worth following, but there's too much else on my TBR list that appeals more.

Bianca Coppens says

Een echte pageturner!

Maud says

schitterende debuutthriller van deze schrijfster met goed uitgewerkte personages en vooral voldoende spanning, tot op het einde.
Heb ervan genoten.

Fiona (Titch) Hunt says

I LOVE Mark Billingham books. The way he writes is gritty and to the point. I picked up Clare Donoghue's book as I needed something gritty and a good police procedural book.

Well, when I started this book, I wasn't sure on it. Was slow to start off with, places it got better and I was clicking along as I was reading. I nearly gave up as I thought, where is this going. We're going all over the place, but I carried on and was glad I did. I had a inkling who the killer was, but wasn't confirmed til nearly 5% left to go from the end.

I have the second book to this to read. So I will read more from Ms Donoghue.

Richard says

Been wanting to start this new series for sometime. I enjoyed the writing and some of the set pieces are quite tense and emotionally engaging without resulting to graphic embellishment. Less can be more. I appreciated the plot and the crime team tackling what appears to be a serial killer getting bolder and choosing his victims with more regularity and without leaving DNA evidence.

I especially liked the use of a young man with autism as a character; his condition and behaviour was treated with great understanding. I also shared the DI's frustrations with a potential witness who was unable to give anything other than a bland description and make a generic edit that had everyone believing they knew the suspect.

The book was slow to get going and then collapsed towards the end. I don't know if there was a problem with the plotting as the perpetrator seems at first credible and beyond the suspicions of the police only to make silly errors to compromise his freedom, while the police suddenly realise the suspect in the correct light.

I also found it too great a leap of faith to accept the two major poor decisions of the lead investigator where one alone could have caused his dismissal and both compromised the hunt for the killer.

I did enjoy the relationship between DI Mike Lockyer and his DS, Jane Bennett but again struggled with some of the things he kept from her. The author acknowledges this in the narrative and therefore I assume that the more positive note that the book ends with will be carried into the next books as there are many relationships needing help and scope for the series to grow and flourish.

There is sufficient here to merit further reading. The author has the ability to emotionally engage her readers and hopefully build a trust with a readership who will discover a real talent as they share the journey her characters have started in this interesting first outing.

Li'l Owl says

Really enjoyed this **debut** and first in the **DI Mike Lockyer series**.

A quick paced, suspenseful book with an ending that both surprised me and left me wanting to read the second one very soon! Very well done with likable, realistic characters and a plot that's very conceivable and interesting, to say the least. Quite a few twists and turns that kept me turning the pages faster and faster as the book went on.

I've been reading quite a few books that have been set in the UK and I always enjoy the difference in language and setting. This one being no exception. *Clare Donoghue* does a splendid job of allowing the reader to visualize sharp impressions of the people and places surrounding the mystery with wonderful descriptions and use of words and phrases that are unique to both the UK and the individual characters. Very nicely done!

I seem to be reading a lot of books by authors I've not read before as this, too, is the first full length book of Clare Donoghue's I've read. I did read the prequel to this series and loved it! I'm pleased to say I've been on a hot streak of 4-5★ ratings for authors new to me thus far and I'm happy to add her as another great author!

Most

Excellent! 4½★'s

Terri Wino says

Decent for a first book. A little too many cliches than were necessary, especially in respect to Lockyer. But I do like the character and will read more from this author. Based on the final pages, I'm assuming there is more to come from DI Lockyer and his investigative unit. Also, the author did a good job keeping the killer a surprise, at least for me.

