



Half of What You Hear

Kristyn Kusek Lewis

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From well-loved women's fiction writer Kristyn Kusek Lewis comes a breakout novel about a woman moving to a small community and uncovering the many secrets that hide behind closed doors—perfect for fans of Liane Moriarty and Elin Hilderbrand.

Greyhill, Virginia—refuge of old money, old mansions, and old-fashioned ideas about who belongs and who doesn't—just got a few new residents. When Bess Warner arrives in town with her husband Cole and their kids, she thinks she knows what to expect. Sure, moving to Cole's small hometown means she'll have to live across the street from her mother-in-law, and yes, there's going to be a lot to learn as they take over Cole's family's inn-keeping business, but Bess believes it will be the perfect escape from Washington. She *needs* it to be. After losing her White House job under a cloud of scandal, she hardly knows who she is anymore.

But Bess quickly discovers that fitting in is easier said than done. Instead of the simpler life she'd banked on, she finds herself preoccupied by barbed questions from gossipy locals and her own worries over how her twins are acclimating at the town's elite private school. When the opportunity to write an article for the *Washington Post's* lifestyle supplement falls into Bess's lap, she thinks it might finally be her opportunity to find her footing here...even if the subject of the piece is Greyhill's most notorious resident.

Susannah "Cricket" Lane, fruit of the town's deepest-rooted family tree, is a special sort of outsider, having just returned to Greyhill from New York after a decades-long hiatus. The long absence has always been the subject of suspicion, not that the eccentric Susannah cares what anyone thinks; as a matter of fact, she seems bent on antagonizing as many people as possible. But is Susannah being sincere with Bess—or is she using their strangely intense interview sessions for her to further an agenda that includes peeling back the layers of Greyhill's darkest secrets?

As Bess discovers unsettling truths about Susannah and Greyhill at large, ones that bring her into the secrets of prior generations, she begins to learn how difficult it is to start over in a town that runs on talk, and that sometimes, the best way to find yourself is to uncover what everyone around you is hiding....

Half of What You Hear Details

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From Reader Review Half of What You Hear for online ebook

Jen says

A small town, a new family trying to fit in, an eccentric old lady, and gossip that never stops. Greyhill, Virginia is a small town with lifelong residents. Cole grew up in this town and is ecstatic to be moving his family back. His wife, Bess, is not so sure. Behind this idyllic setting is a web of gossip that fuels the residents. As Bess tries to find her way in this new town of hers, the women make it hard with their judgements and backhanded compliments. Bess is feeling insecure and on edge, so when she's given the opportunity to write a story about the mysterious Susannah Lane she jumps at it. Told in multiple perspectives, it was fun to read the actual events and then follow along with different townspeople as the story was altered or perceived differently in the subsequent rumor mill. Half of What You Hear was a fun Southern tale with a side of mystery that left me turning the pages. For me, Half of What You Hear was ????????/5 stars. Thank you @harpercollinsus for this advance reader in exchange for my honest review.

Nanette says

3.5 stars. Reviewed for Booklist.

Steph says

Full review at <https://thischickloveslit.com/2018/12...>

Susan Csoke says

Bess is elated to be leaving Washington with her husband Cole and their twins to begin a new life in old quiet Greyhill Virginia just across the road from Cole's mother. Soon Bess is rethinking her decision as she unravels the dark secrets of Susannah Lane, a prominent figure in Greyhill!!!! Thankyou Goodreads for this free book.

Elizabeth of Silver's Reviews says

FULL REVIEW WILL BE ON DECEMBER 31.

"HALF OF WHAT YOU HEAR addressed social issues as well as personal issues of fitting in.

There are secrets that the residents of Greyhill have kept for many years, and as the mystery unravels, the book's interest picks up and ends up with a few surprises.

There also are a few very unlikable residents. 4/5

This book was given to me by the publisher via Edelweiss as an ARC in exchange for an honest review."

Amanda says

Decent, quick read. Thank you to thre publisher and Edelweiss for the ARC.

Page says

After reading a few too many World War II novels in a row, I needed something a little less depressing. "Half of What You Hear" was a perfect palate cleanser. It's light and fast paced. The characters are believable, and the relationships ring true. Not everything in this book is happy; far from it. Many of the characters are deeply flawed, and all of the characters face struggles. But if you're looking for a quick, engaging read, I recommend it. Now back to the Nazis.

Thanks to Edelweiss+ for an advance copy.

Rachel Wells says

When Bess and Cole leave DC for Greyhill, VA to take over Cole's parents' inn, the picturesque town seems like the perfect escape from the hustle and bustle of their old life. However, small town southern life is a whole different ball game. As Bess dives into the intricacies of what makes this town tick (and the rumor mill run), she discovers that not everything is as it seems in Greyhill.

Kristyn has managed to capture life in a southern town...where everyone knows your name and your business before you do! This book was a charming tale filled with just the right dash of suspense and intrigue to keep the pages turning!

Amy says

A decent read about a woman who moves with her family to her husband's hometown in Virginia. She writes a newspaper article about a resident from one of the prominent familes of the town and finds she has to deal with the drama, gossip and secrets of the people and their community. I enjoyed this book. And the main character had twins...as did I. Always fun to read about something you can relate to.

Patty says

Half Of What You Hear
By

Kristyn Kusek Lewis

What it's all about...

When Cole and Bess return to Cole's small Virginia town to run his family's inn they have no idea of what living in a small close knit community would be like. Mean girls, mean women, gossip...lots of gossip...surround them. Not only does Bess have trouble trying to fit in but her daughter does, too.

Why I wanted to read it...

I love books like this one...there is lots of mystery and intrigue mixed in with growing up in a small town that has lots of secrets. Susannah is one of those mysteries. After living in NYC she returns only to shake this small town up again! She is quite a character. And a character that Bess gets involved with right away.

What made me truly enjoy this book...

I tend to forget just how nasty mean girls can be and how difficult it is to stand up to them. Bess not only has issues with women her age but also her daughter and her mother in law.

Why you should read it, too...

Readers who love small town mysteries with a Southern twist will love this book.

I received an advance reader's copy of this book from the publisher through Edelweiss and Amazon. It was my choice to read it and review it.

Stephanie says

Half of What You Hear by Kristyn Kusek Lewis is a fast-paced, compelling page-turner that reminded me so much of what it's like growing up in a small southern town! When you grow up or live in a small town like Greyhill, the small, old-moneyed Virginia town, in Lewis' newest novel, everybody knows everybody else and if they don't, many of them try and find out everything they can about you until they think they know you. You can't go outside without someone you know stopping to give or get the latest gossip, which will then be passed all over town by the end of the day...and never told the same way twice! Oh, the gossip and secrets! That's one thing that seems to keep small southern towns a buzz even if the secret was never supposed to be shared!

After a shocking episode that causes her to be fired from her job as the social secretary at the White House working for the first lady, Beth Warner is ready for a more carefree and relaxed life where she can begin recovering from her very public humiliation, but she doesn't bargain with the struggle to fit in with Greyhill, the sleepy southern town where everyone, including her husband Cole, has been friends since practically birth and she's viewed as an outsider, especially by the pack of gossipy, petty adult women who have the high school mentality that they run the town. Even her own mother-in-law is overly critical and her kids are pushing her away, especially her daughter as she struggles to fit into her new school. Beth feels more lost than before since she can't find a way to adjust to her new life in her town.

When Bess is offered the opportunity to interview Susannah Lane, Greyhill's most famous and mysterious resident, for the Washington Post, she accepts since she thinks this will be a way to get a foothold in with the town since tongues have been non-stop wagging since Susannah's return after living in New York City for decades! Beth finds that she starts to hit it off with Susannah but when Susannah starts to spill shocking and disturbing secrets about the past, Beth can't help but wonder about Susannah's motives. Can Susannah be trusted? Or is she crazy like town gossips say she is?

I really enjoyed this domestic drama! It has a great plot with an intriguing mystery in it that I didn't expect. The cast of characters were all enjoyable even the side characters, and Susannah is one lively character that I won't forget for a long time! I had to shake my head at several of the characters when they were gathered to gossip because some just had no clue that they were being talked about in another part of the book!

Lewis really portrays the power gossip has to destroy someone unless a person is willing to search for and speak the truth. A great lesson in only believing half of what you hear unless you know it's the truth! I definitely recommend it to fans of contemporary women's fiction and light domestic drama...if you're a fan of Emily Giffin, Elin Hilderbrand, or Liane Moriarty, then I think you'll like this one but expect to be transported to a southern setting where the tea is sweet and the gossip not so much! *Half of What You Hear* releases on December 31, 2018, so make sure you grab a copy!

****Thank you Edelweiss and Harper for an ARC copy to read in exchange for my fair and honest review. ****

Sandra says

This was an ok read, but it didn't really keep my attention. I thought the characters were mostly well-written, and the town, but maybe there was too much drama, or maybe the plot just didn't jibe with me all the way through. It had too many "mysteries" going on, so I ended up not really caring about any of them. I enjoyed it, but didn't love it.

ashley lloyd spanton says

Originally posted on citygirlscapes.com.

I don't read a ton of "women's fiction", but any time I have, I'm always surprised by how much I enjoy it. I was hoping that *Half of What You Hear* by Kristek Kusek Lewis would be much of the same. I liked that it took place in a small town and revolved around a woman who moved there and discovered all their secrets.

My one worry going into this was that it would be gossipy and that's exactly how the book started. I had reservations and wasn't sure if I was going to get into this, but it actually started to grow on me and I think it really found its groove the further I read. It was written so that these gossipy moments set the scene and built the rumours kind of outside the actual story. Each mini chapter had unnamed characters kind of talking about other characters to add to the progression of the plot, without actually showing those scenes in the story. It was a unique take and I thought it broke up the book nicely.

At first the characters didn't really speak to me, either, but again, the more I read, the more they grew on me.

Or at least the more Bess did. I pretty much hated every other character, but you're kind of supposed to. At least they aren't very likeable, or they don't treat Bess very nicely, anyway, and it brings back a whole lot of my own memories, dealing with girls like that. So I had a lot of feelings and emotions intertwined into this story and found a lot of it heartbreaking and frustrating, much like Bess. I could really relate to her anger and bewilderment. Another significant character was Susannah, who again is not likeable and is highly unreliable. But she made you feel a lot of different feelings and I really like when a character can bring that out. She was super complex and I quite enjoyed the rollercoaster of a tale she told.

I really enjoyed Lewis's writing here. There were a lot of heated moments in the dialogue and I find sometimes these moments come off cheesy and not quite realistic, but it was totally believable without any extra drama and I had no problem seeing the natural progression build between these characters.

As the secrets unraveled, a few were expected, but I did not see the ending coming and I enjoyed learning the surprising secrets about the people in this town and how holding on to those secrets have shaped them and their lives. This really was a portrait of the townsfolk, who in one way or another, were all interconnected with each others' histories.

Liz Fenton says

Incredibly intriguing, *Half of What You Hear* is a must-read that artfully delves its way through the layers of gossip, secrets and lies of the small and seemingly charming town of Greybill, where everyone knows your name, and oh so much more. Buckle up for a fun ride and one thing is for sure: you won't know who to believe until the very end.

Jen says

Probably 2.5 stars for me. It felt like the story was kind of drug out in places and didn't move forward
