



# I Invited Her In

*Adele Parks*

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**I Invited Her In** Adele Parks

**A gripping story of friendship and betrayal from international best-selling author Adele Parks**

*'I invited her in... and she took everything.'*

When Mel hears from a long-lost friend in need of help, she doesn't hesitate to invite her to stay. Mel and Abi were best friends back in the day, sharing the highs and lows of student life, until Mel's unplanned pregnancy made her drop out of her studies.

Now, seventeen years later, Mel and Abi's lives couldn't be more different. Mel is happily married, having raised her son on her own before meeting her husband, Ben. Now they share gorgeous girls and have a chaotic but happy family home, with three children.

Abi, meanwhile, followed her lover to LA for a glamorous life of parties, celebrity and indulgence. Everything was perfect, until she discovered her partner had been cheating on her. Seventeen years wasted, and nothing to show for it. So what Abi needs now is a true friend to lean on, to share her grief over a glass of wine, and to have some time to heal. And what better place than Mel's house, with her lovely kids, and supportive husband...

This dark, unsettling tale of the reunion of long-lost friends is thoroughly gripping exploration of wanting what you can't have, jealousy and revenge from *Sunday Times* bestseller Adele Parks.

## I Invited Her In Details

Date : Published September 20th 2018 by HQ

ISBN :

Author : Adele Parks

Format : Kindle Edition 384 pages

Genre : Thriller, Suspense, Mystery, Fiction

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## **From Reader Review I Invited Her In for online ebook**

### **Kendall says**

Hmmm well... where do I start with I Invited Her In?

With having read MANY thrillers.... it takes a lot to impress this girl right here :). I have read some amazing thrillers this genre but unfortunately this one fell super flat for me.

The premise sounded promising with inviting a long lost girlfriend into your home and her taking everything. But, I was hoping that the author would take a fun spin with this on that tagline. In my opinion, these stories have to have twists, edginess, and keeping you on your toes and then leave you picking up your jaw due to that bang of an ending. This book had ZERO of this.

For starters, the story was WAY too long and dragged on. I keep seeing this pattern of having authors write these long ass books and the story just doesn't hold up? I don't get it? Are they thinking the longer the length... the better the story? Well.. that definitely isn't the case... you either have the charm or you don't.

The story was predictable and I knew what happened before it happened. I think the author could have taken such a thrilling ride with this one and she missed the mark completely on this one. The characters were too cliché and come on Abi? You need to add some umph to this character... if the story was supposed to play out as it did.

After I finishing this book... realized I didn't like it at all. I would not recommend this... and figures I see all these high reviews and I always tend to be the outlier. But, did you expect anything different ;).

2 stars

Huge thank you to Netgalley and Harlequin Mira for the arc in exchange for my honest review.

Publication date: 2/5/19

Published to GR: 12/13/18

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### **Laura Rash says**

What a ripper of a page turner! This was engrossing from the first chapter until the very end with a unique story that changed so often it had me rereading to be sure I read what I did. This was a first for this author for me but I'm definitely backtracking to see what else she has.

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## **Lydia Bailey says**

Wow! I've loved & devoured all of Adele Park's books so far & this was no exception. I'd read a couple of reviews saying this one has a slow start but if you're familiar with her writing you know it's a setting of a scene & you can just feel the tension simmering under the surface. I was waiting with baited breath for lives to start unravelling & unravel they certainly did! Whilst the first twist is fairly easy to predict what follows after that certainly isn't. I found it 'unputdownable' & I just kept reading until I'd finished in the wee small hours. The characters AP creates are so very real & having a 17 yr old son myself I almost cried when reading the 'wedding morning' scenario & really felt Mel's pain. My only gripe is that the publishers shouldn't describe it as a thriller as it does the book an injustice especially if readers are expecting blood & mystery. It's clever & gritty in its own right but it's not a thriller.

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## **Mandy White says**

Loved loved loved Joanne Froggatt as the narrator. The story... meh... I found it predictable and a bit long. Heard such good things about it but I was disappointed

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## **Nicola Gipson says**

I Invited Her In ...And She Took Everything ...

Mel Harrison hasn't seen her old University pal Abi in years. So when she gets in touch by email out of the blue. Mel decides to invite Abi for a visit .. she is excited to catch up with her and relive their old uni days.

Mel had to drop out of uni in her second year due to an unplanned pregnancy while Abi has gone on to be a successful tv presenter in the US.

Mel is now married to Ben. Ben is kind and understanding he met Mel as a single mum to Liam ...married her.. took on the role of Dad to Liam ... and now Mel and Ben have a busy life with two girls of their own. Mel has a job in a shop and life although a little humdrum is good ... until that email arrives.

Life is not so good at present for Abi. Her husband has cheated on her. She has no children due to his choice but Abi knows the very person who does have all that and she's about to embark on a course of action to take EVERYTHING....then some.

'I Invited Her In' is told entirely from Mel's POV with occasional chapters focusing on other characters. It does take a little while to get into the story as the first couple of chapters introduce you to the main characters and their lives.

Once you become psychologically invested in just how manipulative Abi can be it soon becomes an addictive read to discover just how the chaos Abi causes is going to play out.

I would warn some readers this story does contain some fairly graphic sexual descriptions which may not be for everyone.

This is my first Adele Parks novel it was an enjoyable read one that makes you evaluate your own life and appreciate all that is good as you never know when someone might try to take all you hold dear for themselves when you least expect it.

I look forward to reading some more of Adele Parks work in the future.

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## Dee says

It is blatantly obvious what is going on within the first few chapters of this book, but it goes on and on and on with tedious padding in an attempt to drag out the non-existent tension. Terrible story, terrible characters, terribly written. Avoid.

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## Mairead Hearne (swirlandthread.com) says

*‘I INVITED HER IN... and she took everything.....’*

**I Invited Her In** is the latest novel from best selling author Adele Parks.

Published on 20th September by HQ Stories, it is described as *‘a gripping story of friendship and betrayal’*

Mel is happily married to Ben, working in a high-street clothes shop and living in suburbia. With two little girls and a teenage son, life for Mel is good. Having left college before she completed her degree, due to an unplanned pregnancy, Mel had experienced tough years as a single mum to Liam. Those early years created a very strong bond between Mel and Liam. making her quite protective of him. Very slow to bring a man into their lives, Mel was surprised when she met Ben and fell in love. Ben treated Liam as his own from the beginning and the family muddled on with life in their own haphazard but happy manner.

Out of the blue, Mel receives an email from a very old college buddy, Abi. Currently living in the US, Abi is in the throes of a marriage breakup. She had married a college boyfriend and together had lived a successful, but not so happy life in America. Reeling from discovering her husband with another woman, Abi needs a break away and hopes to rebuild her friendship with Mel. With plans to arrive in the UK, Mel invites Abi to stay with them for a few days while she figures out her next move.

Mel and Abi had a great friendship in university but it had fizzled out after Mel gave birth to Liam. Mel never got to fully experience those years after college when first salaries are earned and blown on the fun stuff, the social life, the clothes. Mel is really excited that Abi has come back into her life and relishes the prospect of some girlie fun with her college bestie. Mel’s life has become rather mundane, as the daily chores pile up on her, and Abi is just the tonic she needs to reinvigorate her daily routine and shake things up a little.

But Mel gets a little more than she bargains for, when the full impact of her decisions comes home to her....

Now here’s the thing with this book, one minute I was riveted by the story-line and next thing I was almost shouting at the characters, feeling very frustrated with their behaviour. As Abi settles into her life in Mel and Ben’s home, it’s all very sweet and fun at the beginning but as time passes, things unravel and the truth is

slowly revealed. Mel seems blinded by what's going on, caught up in reliving her youth with Abi. Ben, on the other hand, seems more rational at times, yet at other times I felt his reactions were bizarre....

Some of the decisions made by both Ben and Mel are quite incredible but also so very different. Their reactions to quite disconcerting scenarios are so contrasting that I began to wonder is this just a gender issue. Do men and women have such diverging views about certain scenarios? Does Adele Parks capture these differences accurately?

I'm strangely on the fence with this book. I thought the story-line was brilliantly twisted and sinister, yet I just could not warm to any of the characters. I had to keep asking myself how plausible was the plot-line and how much was I willing to suspend belief for.....

**I Invited Her In** is a novel that reveals the dangers of keeping secrets buried and of revenge and regret. Someone somewhere will ALWAYS uncover the truth and when this happens are you prepared to deal with the consequences?

**I Invited Her In** is an entertaining and interesting read, with plenty of themes to be chewed over and discussed. I am delighted to have read it, even though I am still shouting at Mel, which is a credit to Adele Park's writing!!

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### **Ova - Excuse My Reading says**

This was an okay read. The plot isn't bad. But I really disliked the flat, cliché characters. Also the tension on the psychological side unfortunately falls short to impress.

There are a few things in the book that made me roll my eyes, and one is the single mum reflection by Mel. First of all: come on Adele Parks. It's year 2018 and no one blames single mums, and excludes them from playgroups. I have raised one son here in the UK and always had single mums in playgroups and never seen any discrimination towards them. Does it really help portraying Mel moaning like this? Why not a moaning single dad, but a mum? Why? So I found Mel's complaints about lack of friends a bit far stretched.

Secondly, I really couldn't stand the way she compares everything Abi says automatically with herself. she is supposed to be the 'good girl' of the story but it's so pathetic. She's also a very calculating person, i.e. decorating the house before her arrival to impress her. When Abi was telling how her husband cheated, she's expecting Abi to stop talking as her precious girls are in the room. Come on, I have children as well. you'd just ask your child to go to their room, or move yourself to listen to your clearly upset friend, when she's telling

you how her husband cheated on her. Instead Mel gets annoyed that Abi speaks walking on her cheating husband near her children. Is that supposed to be a good person? Just selfish, sorry!

Cannot relate or sympathise with someone like Mel and found her portrayal for survival quite sexist.

Overall didn't like this book. Sorry!

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### **Adele Shea says**

Wow!!!!!! What a book!!!! This is definitely a must read.

Abi calls upon her university friend Mel for help after finding her husband in bed with another woman. She packs up and flies from her home in LA to Mel's home in England.

Mel has the most happiest of families. That is until Abi steps into their home and blows the lives apart.

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## **Amanda - Mrs B's Book Reviews says**

\*<https://mrsbbookreviews.wordpress.com>

British novelist Adele Parks, is the author of almost twenty titles. Her latest is a domestic thriller, titled *I Invited Her In*. It is a tale of the difficulties of female friendship, envy, revenge and explosive secrets. This was a tantalising read, that I devoured in a short space of time, despite the fact that the book was almost 500 pages!

It is hard to visualise the worst possible thing a friend could do. There are a few options that come to mind, but the scenario Adele Parks presents in her new novel *I Invited Her In* completely shocked me! At the crux of this story is the friendship between two women that formed in university that splinters over a time frame of seventeen years and picks up again when one of the women reconnects to ask for help. Each woman has led a very different life path. For Mel, a now happily married mother of three, her life journey was determined by a shock pregnancy in university that forced her to make the decision to quit her studies and devote her life to her baby. For Abi, life has delivered a world of luxury and glamour, with plenty of schmoozing with celebrities, but it has recently come crashing down. When Abi seeks Mel out, despite the time that has separated them, Mel cannot deny her friend help she calls out for. However, as Abi nestles into Mel's life, things are about the change, big time!

A quick perusal of the books I have read, revealed strangely that I have not read one single book by Adele Parks. For such a prolific writer with a good selection of back list titles to her name, this really shocked me! However, I do aim to rectify this by seeking out some older titles by Adele Parks over the upcoming holidays. My understanding of Adele Parks is that she is a very well known women's fiction author. Her recent switch in direction genre wise to domestic psychological fiction seems to be a successful one. *I Invited Her In* offered plenty of entertainment and shock value!

I have to say that I wasn't entirely invested in the relationship between Mel and Abi in their university days. They didn't seem quite as tight as they could have been. While all my sympathies were directed towards Mel, her life situation really got to me. Abi on the other hand was absolutely awful, despicable and incredibly ungrateful. I think we are directed towards these ill feelings for Abi, thanks to the characterisation skills of Adele Parks. Likewise, I detested Abi's ex husband Rob, but I found much to love in Ben, Mel's husband. Mel's family, her daughters and son Liam play a dramatic role in the book and I felt they were well drawn by the author. I think credit is due to Adele Parks for making me feel so much for these characters. I wanted to cry for them, hug them, but also throw things at them! This set of characters that will be sure to get right under your skin!

The atmosphere and strained tension is built up from the very opening of the novel. The front cover tagline 'I invited her in... and she took everything' gives the reader a very good indication of what is going to befall the lead of the story, Mel. Parks manages to maintain this ominous and suffocating atmosphere throughout the novel. The plot was easy to follow, characterised by plenty of twists, turns, emotional confrontations, earth shattering shocks and explosive secrets. Parks has structured the novel in a shifting style of points of view. As a result, we get right inside the heads of leading ladies Mel and Abi, along with Mel's husband Ben and an additional outside character. This works well to build the intrigue of the novel and enhance the

psychological features of *I Invited Her In*. Parks works hard to establish a good grounding for her novel in the first half, but when a life changing event occurs around the half way mark, the book really takes full flight and spirals towards an unexpected conclusion!

With an intriguing and diverting plot, full of challenging characters, *I Invited Her In* proved to be one mind-boggling and messy read of a friendship gone terribly wrong! I know it made me think twice about letting old friends back into my life, you can never be too sure!

\*Please note that a free copy of this book was provided to me for review purposes through Beauty & Lace and Harlequin – HQ Fiction. To read the original review on the Beauty & Lace website please visit here: <http://bookgirl.beautyandlace.net/boo...>

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### ??? Shelley ??? says

**Sometimes, Abi thought that Mel didn't deserve everything she had, everything she took for granted.**

I loved *The Stranger In My Home* and couldn't wait to read this. The book was a bit of a rollercoaster. It's an interesting and enjoyable read without dull or boring moments. I can't remember reading a thriller with that many turns and lies. As a reader you sit and stare at the pages and wonder what to believe. Adele Parks managed the navigation through this turbulence very well.

Ms. Parks is a master at creating tension and writing excellent characters, and *I Invited Her In* is no exception. So much creepiness, so many themes to talk about, so many well-written (some unlikeable) characters. The two narratives worked well for me, I loved delving into the psyche of each woman.

The author did amazing job of drip feeding the important information and the clues to the big reveal throughout the story through mini reveals and through characters revealing things to one another and I am just in awe of the way she writes and the way she structures her novels. So clever and just so gripping. Just like her last novel, this one had me holding my breath and gasping at regular intervals throughout the book.

We have some classic unreliable narrators but we also have some characters who are much more difficult to work out and keep you intrigued right up until the last page. I wouldn't say I particularly warmed to any of the characters, but boy was I obsessed with finding out more about every single one of these characters, what made them tick and how they fitted into the story. They are people you know, people you recognise from everyday life, they are your neighbours! Characters we can all relate to is just something else which this author excels at!

To say this book was a thriller, there isn't a lot of gore or violence in it, there are definitely moments that make the reader uncomfortable and moments that lead you down a path you never saw coming. This is definitely a slow burn but the short chapters will mean you will continue to turn those pages way past your bedtime. Some of the ways things that seem trivial are connected to the story are just mind-blowing and I am just in awe of how cleverly written this novel is. It was refreshing to read a book that focuses on women and conversations two friends might really have.

*Thank you NetGalley, HARLEQUIN - MIRA and Adele Parks for the opportunity to read this book in exchange for an impartial review; all opinions are my own.*



#InvitedHerIn #NetGalley

All my reviews can be found on my blog: <https://shelleyann01.blogspot.com>

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### **Cheryl M-M says**

I will start off by saying that unfortunately the greatest opposition and critics of women are often other women. Instead of supporting each other and strengthening a sense of sisterhood we tend to target each other instead.

Not that women can't have spectacular friendships, the kind that last for decades, but perhaps there are women you shouldn't invite into your home. Shouldn't invite them to saunter half-naked in front of your husband and nearly adult son. Perhaps Mel is so blinded by the need to be Abi's friend that she refuses to see her for what she really is.

If you have children there will come a time, and it might possibly shock you, when they reach a certain age and other people view them as potential partners. When you walk down the street with your teenage daughter and you realise the middle aged or young man coming towards you is eyeing her up like an ice-cream needing to be licked on a hot day.

I can remember the first time I realised one of the parents in my youngest son's primary school was eyeballing my eldest son, a 6ft 2in sixteen year old, and attempting to flirt with him. I just wasn't prepared for it, because in my head he will always be the cute curly-haired two year old.

My initial gut reaction to these moments was shock, then anger and now I use a technique I have spent many years cultivating called the stink-eye, also more commonly known as the evil eye.

I found myself wondering what I would do or say in the same situation as Mel. I'm not sure I would be able to contain my inner rage. The betrayal is an intimate one, boundaries are crossed and relationships broken. There are some things that are unforgivable even if you have to resign yourself to a situation you can't change.

Parks really knows how make her readers experience the emotional turmoil of her characters. She does that by keeping her fiction as close to real life scenarios as possible. Real people and real emotions are her forte. It's a drama filled tale of revenge and shocking betrayal, a compelling read about a woman being blindsided by a friend she trusts completely.

This is a read that will fuel discussion. Who is right? Would you forgive your friend? Would you invite your friend in? Yes, it is the kind of story that will make you angry and perhaps even a little frustrated on Mel's behalf.

\*I received a copy via NetGalley\*

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### **Ova - Excuse My Reading says**

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tension on the psychological side unfortunately falls short to impress.

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## **Lou says**

This was a twisted, domestic noir all about friendship and betrayal, jealousy and revenge and wanting what you can't have. Unfortunately, it wasn't a book I cared much for, and I wasn't engaged enough to bother what happened to any of the characters. That said, I always try to read to end of each book, and this honestly wasn't bad enough to DNF it, so I continued despite not enjoying it. It's well written, i'll give it that, but the story was one i've read a gazillion times over using well worn tropes of the genre. I don't mind this if there is something to set it apart from the rest, but it just blurred into forgettable obscurity.

This is a great one to pick up if you're just looking to pass a few hours in a way that won't tax your brain. The characters are strong and realistic, but it was distinctly lacking in unpredictability, and I saw every one of the twisty surprises miles off. I tend to prefer quality over quantity in my stories and wished there had been fewer twists but ones that were much more of a shock to the system. Some of the behaviour of the characters could be deemed as unbelievable and certainly unreasonable. There were many moments where they came across as spoiled brats despite being grown women, and I found this incredibly irritating. I would say that this is either best described as a very tame thriller or womens fiction/chick lit, and fans of those book types will no doubt get along with this superbly. For me though, it just didn't work.

Many thanks to HQ for an ARC. I was not required to post a review, and all thoughts and opinions expressed are my own.

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## **Tasha and Megan Mahoney says**

This book was a hard one to review because there were some things, the plot for example, that were brilliant. The story was well conceived and could have been great.

The stumbling block for me was the way the story was told. It could have been shorter because it felt like a lot of the writing was 'fleshing out' rather than relevant content.

This was one book that for me had a fabulous synopsis and story plan but the actual execution missed the mark for me.

If you are going to do a trope in the suspense/ thriller genre that has already been done many times, then you need to write something pretty special because there have been some outstanding books within this genre.

I received a review copy of I invited her in from HQ and NetGalley. This is my honest review.

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