

THE SURFACING by Claire Ackroyd

Published by Lake Union Publishing

My latest book recommendation is ‘*The Surfacing*’ by Claire Ackroyd. It is an intense crime thriller about family secrets and the damage they cause by keeping them.

THE PLOTLINE

12 years ago, Stephanie, her mother and her sister Aurelie were camping on the shores of Loch Ness when teenager Peter Ferguson was reported missing, presumed drowned in the loch. Although the family tell the police they were all together that night and know nothing of the incident, they each know they are lying – a decision that ultimately tears the family apart, to the extent that Stephanie and Aurelie no longer speak, and the truth remains buried in the mists of time.

Now Aurelie is getting married, and Stephanie has been invited. Initially not wanting to attend, Stephanie is about to decline the invitation when she realises, being together for the first time since the incident occurred, it would be a golden opportunity to discover what really happened that night.

As the wedding celebrations progress and the alcohol begins to flow, tongues start to loosen. Determined to finally uncover the truth, Stephanie confronts each suspicion and accusation she hears. However, she is unaware of the carnage about to be unleashed due to her ruthless questioning and that the truth is about to change all their lives forever.

MY REVIEW

Taking place over the course of a single day, ‘*The Surfacing*’ is a very clever crime mystery which keeps you guessing until the very end. With detailed descriptions of the venue and the wedding itself as it progresses throughout the day, the author skilfully invokes memories of weddings we have all attended at some point in our lives. It is therefore easy to feel like one of the guests, overhearing Stephanie’s vigorous attempts to unlock the secrets of that fatal night 12 years ago.

As each revelation is revealed, it is aided by flashbacks of the past until all the gaps are filled in and the truth is at last revealed. Although some people might find the story a tad slow for their liking, given it takes place over a day, I found it moved at a realistic pace, exactly as it would have done in real life. I really enjoyed ‘*The Surfacing*’ and can totally recommend it. The surprise ending is well worth the wait.

THE AUTHOR

Born in Washington DC and raised in Derbyshire and Oxfordshire in the UK, Claire studied at Cambridge University and LSE before working for many years as an economist. The quiet of lockdown provided an opportunity to rekindle her passion for creative writing.

When not cold-water swimming or planning her next overseas adventure, Claire is partial to lots of coffee and a good cryptic crossword. She lives in Bedfordshire with her husband and two children.

‘The Surfacing’ is published by Lake Union Publishing and is available in ebook, paperback and audiobook format from Amazon.