



Taken

Kathleen George

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The child was taken in broad daylight, on a warm June morning, in a crowded shopping area in downtown Pittsburgh.

Marina Benedict first saw the baby with his mother. Then, just minutes later, she saw him again, in the arms of a man she was certain was not the child's father. In a single life-altering act, Marina followed them. What happens next will plunge her into a mystery that is both heartbreaking and chilling. Within hours of the abduction, the city is galvanized by the story: a child, the son of a pitcher for the Pirates, is missing. And soon a community begins to unravel...Detective Richard Christie struggles with his own demons as he tries to solve a baffling mystery. And Marina Benedict, pulled from the safety of her ordinary life by a brutal crime, is at the center of the story. Because once, Marina tried to save a life and it changed her forever. Now she will risk her life again--for a child who is still out there somewhere, still in need of saving.

Taken Details

Date : Published June 25th 2002 by Dell (first published May 8th 2001)

ISBN : 9780440236610

Author : Kathleen George

Format : Mass Market Paperback 354 pages

Genre : Mystery, Fiction, Thriller

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From Reader Review Taken for online ebook

Gail says

Loved this! I first heard of the author by finding her latest book in the Mystery Lover's book store in Oakmont. Actually met her at the Women Read/Women Write conference in Carnegie, where I purchased her latest book, Johnstown Girls, and this one. This was her first book. A police drama with flair - Her character development is strong.

Sarah says

Did not live up to reviews, it was not suspenseful or page turning worthy. It was alright but not what I expected.

Jen says

The 4 month old baby of a famous baseball player is kidnapped in an baby kidnapping operation that has been going on for a while but undetected. There is a witness and a woman who tried to stop the kidnapping, and she is now being kept under protective custody. However, there is no sign of the kidnapper or the baby, will Detective Christie ever solve this case?

Cheryl says

1.75

Cathie says

Well, this is just about the dumbest book I've read! Woman sees a baby on a bus that she saw earlier in a shopping mall and "just knows" the baby doesn't belong to the man on the bus. She follows the kidnapper, puts herself right in the middle of a baby buying ring with lots of bad people, gets herself shot, twice. She survives and is put in a police protection program, and separates from her husband, (who starts shagging his assistant because wife isn't home, but feels guilty later when he finds out she was being tied, gagged, shot at, etc). Lady Hero, who is constantly bored with being in police protection, starts an affair with the lead detective (who is married with 2 children) and then sneaks away to track down the baby and save the day, because the police and the FBI can't do it on their own without her "intuition". I kid you not.

Wasn't a one star book because I read to the end (yeah, I'm not listening to any of your "who's the dumb one retorts) to see what happened to everyone. I was more interested in Joe, the bumbling baby napper, then anyone else.

Janet says

This author is from my hometown of Pittsburgh and the story is set there. I like giving local authors a try and it's always a bonus when I like their work. I very much like the main character, Detective Richard Christie, and found this story quite enjoyable. I also like the author's style of writing a mystery. It certainly kept me guessing and interested to find out the outcome.

Maureen says

I decided to read this book b/c the author works at Pitt and the setting is Pittsburgh. The story was a bit slow for me and some of the plot was a stretch.

It focuses on Marina Benedict, who is out of work as an actress and has decided to divorce her abusive husband. While trying to make money by selling her jewelry, she runs into a woman with a baby in the Clark building. As she is walking out, she sees a man getting on a bus with a child that looks like the baby she saw with the woman in the Clark building. Something seems off to Marina, so she follows this guy to a bad part of town trying to engage him in conversation. Rather than contact authorities, she follows him to an abandoned aptmt. where she is then kidnapped. (Really? Who does this?)

So, not to ruin the plot for those reading this, the baby was kidnapped and the father is a ballplayer with the Pirates, therefore becoming high profile. The police dept get involved. Marina miraculously is found (again, far fetched) by police and is placed in protection b/c she can identify the kidnappers. She and the police detective, Richard Christie, who's marriage is also in the toilet, fall in love at first sight (outlandish to say the least). The story continues trying to track down kidnappers and Marina continually puts herself in danger. The end leaves room for a continued love story.

I will probably give the next book a try to see if the plot line gets any better.

Nancy says

This was a good mystery. The setting is Pittsburgh with actual streets, restaurants, landmarks -so fascinating to a Pittsburgher. At least 90% of the book is a real page turner, then unfortunately lapses into sometimes predictable and sometimes stretching of the imagination sidelines. But all in all, a good read and I intend to read a few more of George's novels.

Melissa says

So I've been trying to shy away from hiding my reviews for spoilers, basically because I'm trying not to be lazy, and because I used to regard the most basic of plot points as spoilers & that's just silly. The event in this book that I'd not want to ruin for anyone (or have wanted to have ruined for me before I read this) comes up in almost every review that I've read of this book on this site, and is, in my opinion, grossly understated in

every case. I'm kind of torn as a result. I don't want to hide my review since no one else seems to think that this event is such a big deal, but good grief, saying that a certain character gets shot does not do justice to what actually happens at all. I guess I'll just say be aware: I'm going to mention a major plot point about halfway through this. You'll find this same plot point mentioned in every other review you'd read here, I just see what happened a little differently from everyone else. My ass = covered now, right?

After leaving a couple's counseling session wherein she has announced that she wants to separate from her husband, plucky heroine Marina Benedict spies a baby in a stroller. The baby smiles & seems captivated by her; turns out all babies act this way when she's around. A short time later, she gets on a bus & sees this same baby in the arms of a strange man - but fear not, courageous Marina follows the man to an abandoned building, where she is captured by three bad guys, who have bungled their usual nefarious scheme and have resorted to dabbling in other criminal business.

The term 'Mary Sue' may not have been coined when this was written in 2001, but rest assured that Marina Benedict certainly fits the criteria. Here's where everyone references the fact that Marina is shot and survives, which does a disservice to what George actually wrote, even as she in turn does a disservice to her reader. "The sound is not so loud. There is fire in her side at the end of her life, lightning in her head, and then blackness." If you write such a thing about your character, who is tied to a chair & shot in the head & chest, should your reader not take that to mean that you've killed that character? Nothing like such a turn of events to make one think, 'damn, mortality & so forth' before reading on, and at first I admired George for her gutsy willingness to create a character & then murder her a scant 40 or so pages into the book. But it turns out that there was very little to admire after all, since Marian somehow lives through her execution with her remarkable beauty unsullied, despite, you know, having a wound in her skull, and goes on to solve the crime more quickly than the actual detectives & FBI agents assigned to the case, all while catching the eye of the married commanding detective, who just can't believe how graceful and hot and awesome and all-around wonderful she is.

How terribly, utterly disappointing.

This book annoyed me to no end. I was certainly enraged by the fact that Marian was apparently shot with amazing take-back bullets that leave her almost entirely uninjured for the rest of the book – and with her perfect photographic memory of what happened completely intact – because lord knows that the ridiculous premise of almost-death has been coming up in so many of the books I've read lately (Nick Cooper, I am still mad at you for being alive) and it's really starting to piss me off. But that combined with the tired device of a married detective who simply must be attracted to & eventually have sex with the victimized woman who is part of his investigation, and how the detective and Marian's sister and her estranged husband and the woman whose baby was kidnapped are constantly reflecting again and again on how beautiful she is and what a wonderful person she is, and the fact that Marian eventually confronts one of the bad guys *again* & she doesn't get shot *again* because he's stymied on her incredible gorgeousness, that elevate this to true throw the book across the room status. Thanks but no thanks, Kathleen George.

Sharyn Hutchens says

Doesn't get better than this

It's a police procedural, a psychological thriller, a child abduction story, a romance, and a suspense drama all at once. The writer's style is simple and gripping and thought-provoking. Characters are realistic and the plot is tight. This is the second book by Kathleen George that I've read, and it's official now: I have a new favorite author.

Steve Payne says

Marena's irresponsible choices wore thin. Christie's relationship with his wife wasn't very interesting. The criminals were interesting. I wonder what happened to Joe?

Katharine Ott says

When the fifth book in author Kathleen George's Commander Christie series, *Hideout*, was recommended by my local library, I clicked back to her first one, *Taken*. I had indicated to the library that I enjoyed police procedurals and this book is that, but a more sensitive approach to the genre. In addition to the investigative particulars, Christie's thoughts and feelings are freely expressed, perhaps a little too often and deeply for me at times. This quote from the book neatly describes the character and his love interest, "They both had absorbent personalities, took on other people's lives." The setting, in my mid-Western territory, was comfortable as were several exclamations of "Cripes" which I fondly remember my father using. George's periodic Shakespeare references are clever but past my rudimentary knowledge – I'd better bone up on the basics for the next in the series, *Fallen*!

Patty says

I guess this is not really a mystery, because we see the action from a lot of different points of view, one of the things I really dislike, so we know who did it. It is more a police procedural...and a romance. Quite enjoyable, kept me awake late last night, although not very believable in some ways.

Michele says

I wanted to read this book because it takes place in Pittsburgh, my favorite city, and the story involves one of the Pittsburgh Pirates - my absolute favorite sports team.

The story itself I had a hard time following... it jumped from one person to another. And it just wasn't all that believable.

The baby of a rookie pitcher for the Pirates is taken in broad daylight from a downtown shopping center.... and nobody saw anything. But then Marina, who had briefly seen the baby with his mother earlier in the day, sees said baby on a bus with a man.... and she thinks that something doesn't seem right.

I'm all about following your intuitions, but the entire story seems a little far fetched.

Although I enjoyed Marina's character (who apparently has super healing powers - I mean, she was shot twice at close range, once in the head and once in the chest/stomach - and she was basically back to normal within a month!), I would have liked to have spent more time with baby Justin's parents. They were kind of an afterthought.

This book really left a lot to be desired. For me, the saving grace was the fact that I could picture most of the places mentioned in and around Pittsburgh, and a brief reference to one of my favorite former Pirates, Jason Kendall. Three stars for the Kendall reference alone.

Carolyn says

One day, Marina Benedict, an actress who is trying to come to terms with the dissolution of her marriage, goes to the Clark Building in downtown Pittsburgh to turn her jewelry, gifts from her husband, into cash to cover living expenses. There in the lobby she sees an adorable baby with his mother. She's aware of studying the baby, even flirting with him, because she longs for a child herself. A short time later, having finished her business in the jewelry shop upstairs, she catches a bus for home. She sees the same baby on the bus, this time with a man whom she is certain is not the child's father. The man has nothing else with him—no diaper bag, no stroller. When Marina tries to talk to him, he avoids her. In a single life-altering act, Marina gets off the bus one stop after the man does and she follows him and the baby to an abandoned house. All she can think of is that the baby is in danger and must be saved. Nobody knows where she is.

This is the first of a series of loosely connected mysteries set in Pittsburgh. Commander Richard Christie is a unifying presence throughout the series, but each focuses and is primarily told through the viewpoint of a different character.

Each of Kathleen George's novels can easily stand alone. You don't have to read them all, but you will want to. Her writing is taut, suspenseful, and filled with gritty details that put you on the inside of each scene, living the story from start to finish.
