



The Breakdown

B.A. Paris

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THE NEW CHILLING, PROPULSIVE NOVEL FROM THE AUTHOR OF THE INSTANT *NEW YORK TIMES* AND *USA TODAY* BESTSELLING *BEHIND CLOSED DOORS*.

If you can't trust yourself, who can you trust?

Cass is having a hard time since the night she saw the car in the woods, on the winding rural road, in the middle of a downpour, with the woman sitting inside—the woman who was killed. She's been trying to put the crime out of her mind; what could she have done, really? It's a dangerous road to be on in the middle of a storm. Her husband would be furious if he knew she'd broken her promise not to take that shortcut home. And she probably would only have been hurt herself if she'd stopped.

But since then, she's been forgetting every little thing: where she left the car, if she took her pills, the alarm code, why she ordered a pram when she doesn't have a baby.

The only thing she can't forget is that woman, the woman she might have saved, and the terrible nagging guilt.

Or the silent calls she's receiving, or the feeling that someone's watching her...

The Breakdown Details

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From Reader Review *The Breakdown* for online ebook

Larry H says

As Kermit the Frog is fond of saying, it's not easy being green. It's also not easy being a voracious yet all-too-human of a reader, who tries desperately not to let the hype of all of my Goodreads' friends five-star reviews creep in and color my expectations of a book. Sometimes immovable Robot Larry wins, and sometimes the flawed mess more commonly known as Larry does. Apologies in advance.

Cass seems to have it all—a loving husband, a job she enjoys, a secure financial position, and good friends. One night in the middle of a huge rainstorm, she takes a shortcut home through the woods (in her car, not with her picnic basket), even though she promised her husband she would avoid that route. When she's nearly home she comes upon a car on the side of the road, in the midst of the storm, and she sees a woman sitting in the car.

Cass should stop and see if the woman needs help, right? But the woman doesn't have her flashers on, and didn't honk her horn—wouldn't she do that if she needed help? Then Cass realizes this could be a scam of some sort, one which might leave her vulnerable in the middle of the woods on a rainy night, with no mobile service to call for help. Since the woman must already be waiting for help, Cass decides to drive home and alert the authorities afterward, but when she arrives home she forgets about it.

The next morning, Cass is distraught to find out a woman was found murdered in her car in the woods the previous night, the woman she saw. But she was fine when she drove by, wasn't she? Or was the killer still in the woods, waiting to see if Cass would stop so he could kill her, too? Cass is utterly wracked by guilt, but she can't admit to her husband that she took the shortcut. As the days following the murder pass, Cass is barely able to function—she's consumed by the thought that she could have helped the victim, and she's growing increasingly more afraid that the murderer saw her stop that night, and is planning to silence her.

Cass' days are spent feeling convinced she's being watched, worrying that someone is trying to break into her house, and someone keeps calling her house but not saying anything. She's coming utterly unglued, and to make matters worse, she's starting to forget things—plans she's made, occasions she's planned—even whether she took her pills or activated the burglar alarm. The only way she can seem to cope is by taking pills to calm her anxiety, but they leave her in a drugged stupor, much to the chagrin of her husband.

Why can't she get past the murder? What is happening to her that she can't remember anything? Will she wind up alone, unaware of what is going on around her?

The Breakdown took a while to build up speed and tension. Obviously you know something will happen, but you don't know what or when. For a while, Cass' character really started grating on my nerves because she was just a sniveling mess, falling to pieces at the slightest thing, yet taking all sorts of risks. And then...BOOM. B.A. Paris throws in a twist which, while not utterly surprising, really turns the plot on its ear and sends the book careening to its conclusion.

I haven't yet read *Behind Closed Doors* so this was my introduction to Paris' storytelling. Once the book hit its stride, I really enjoyed it, and found myself reading it quicker and quicker, so I could see how everything panned out. While it took a little while for the tension to build, once it started she didn't let up, which is the mark of a good thriller.

I tend to be really hard on thrillers, so I can totally see why others fell so hard for this one. I still have ***Behind Closed Doors*** on my to-read list, and I have little doubt that ***The Breakdown*** will be seen on beaches, airplanes, and e-readers once it is released this summer, and deservedly so.

NetGalley and St. Martin's Press provided me an advance copy of the book in exchange for an unbiased review. Thanks for making this available!

See all of my reviews at <http://itseithersadnessoreuphoria.blo....>

Deanna says

My reviews can also be seen at: <https://deesradreadsandreviews.wordpr...>

4.5 Stars!

To say I was excited for this novel is an understatement. I loved *Behind Closed Doors* so I couldn't wait to see what B.A Paris had in store for me this time.

"If you can't trust yourself, who can you trust?"

The beginning of *The Breakdown* is like a scene out of a horror movie. I could picture it. Cass Anderson is in a rush to get home....it's raining and the weather is only getting worse. She speaks with her husband, Matthew and he cautions her to drive carefully and makes her promise not to take the shortcut through the woods. It's not safe at night. However, at the last second Cass veers off the main road to the shortcut she just promised she wouldn't take. She decides what Matthew doesn't know won't hurt him. She just wants to get home as fast as possible.

As she nears her house she swerves to avoid hitting a car parked at the side of the road. There's a woman inside. Cass stops in front of the car to see if the woman indicates that she needs help. The woman doesn't do anything. All the stories Cass has heard about people tricked into stopping to help someone go through her head. Someone stops thinking they are being a good Samaritan only to end up getting car-jacked.....or worse. Eventually Cass decides the woman must have already called for help, so she continues on her way home.

The next day, Cass is horrified to learn that a woman, Jane Walters was killed in the woods. It was the woman whose car was stopped on the side of the road. What's worse is Cass realizes she knows this woman. She actually had lunch with her the week before. Cass is overcome with guilt over Jane's murder. If she had only got out of the car to check on Jane. Would she still be alive? or would Cass have been killed too?

Cass has been having trouble with her memory and it's gotten worse since the murder. At first it was just little things. She would misplace something or forget she made plans with friends. But forgetting that she agreed to have an alarm installed? How could that be? But she sees the job order is written in her handwriting so she must have agreed to the installation.

Is she going to suffer the same fate as her mother?

Then come the phone calls. Someone is calling every day....over and over. But they NEVER say a word.

Everyone tells her it's just a call center making cold calls. But Cass worries that it's something or someone much worse. When I read about the constant calls a part of me thought, oh come on! Unplug the phone, change your number, OR buy a whistle and blow that suckers ear off!!! But fear can leave you frozen, unable to think straight.

Cass starts to think someone is watching the house, that someone has been in the house. When she goes shopping and is leaving for home she can't find her car. She KNOWS where she parked, so it must have been stolen. Cass and the parking attendant look everywhere, on all the different floors only to eventually find her car.....

Right where she left it.

Her mind feels like it's going to break....everything is spiraling out of control. She's in a constant state of anxiety. The phone calls are amplifying all of her fears. Plus all of the things she's forgetting makes things worse. With everything going on Cass is desperate to know....

WHO KILLED JANE?

But then something happens. Cass gets advice and information from very surprising sources. Things start to click into place.....things that she NEVER would have expected. She tells herself she's lost enough time and she's determined that she's going to figure it all out. She wants to know who is behind the constant phone calls and if it's connected to what happened to Jane. Cass wants answers and now no one is going to stop her. As Cass gets stronger and searches for answers you can't help but cheer for her. The web of lies that she starts to unravel.

Well Ms. Paris....you didn't let me down. I loved this one too.

I know that everyone is different and not everyone will love the same books and that's completely understandable. There were times that I started getting annoyed with Cass, but when I imagined something like this happening to me? I can't imagine how alone and helpless I would feel.

Occasionally I find it really hard to get into a book that requires me to suspend disbelief, but I found with "Behind Closed Doors" and this book that I was able to do that easily. The authors writing style and the suspenseful plot allowed me to let go of reality and really enjoy what I was reading.

"The Breakdown" was intense and gripping, especially the second half. I was shocked. I may have been right about a thing or two but it didn't matter as how everything played out was fantastic to read. This author knows how to pull her readers into her story, not letting go until the final word on the last page is read.

I can't wait for more from this author!

Thank you to Jessica at St. Martin's Press and B.A Paris for providing me with an advanced copy of this book to read in exchange for my honest review.

Emily May says

Last year, I read and enjoyed Paris's Behind Closed Doors. I made it clear in my review that it wasn't a

clever, twisty thriller of the Gone Girl-variety. In fact, the book quickly gave up all its secrets and was more about what happened to the characters after that. And yet, it was very compelling.

The Breakdown is **more of a traditional mystery** and, in my opinion, it is **less compelling**. I feel like the author simply didn't play to her strengths. Paris is fantastic at creating dramatic scenes filled with horror. She can even master the villainous psychopath with a fucked up agenda. But creating mysteries that keep you guessing? Here, she fails.

The story begins with Cass taking a shortcut home down a dark, rural road, against her husband's advice. She sees a car by the side of the road and sees a woman sat in it. After briefly considering asking if the woman needs any help, Cass drives on and goes home. Then the woman turns up dead.

Cass feels guilty, but there's more than that. Because soon she starts receiving calls from someone who doesn't say anything, and seeing a man watching her from outside her house. And what's more, she's having trouble remembering certain things. She goes somewhere without her purse, or makes a purchase she can't remember making. As her mother died of early-onset Alzheimer's, Cass becomes more and more concerned that her problems may extend beyond the physical.

It sounds interesting, but the story puts all its weight on the reveal... **and it is too easy to guess**. And I don't mean just guess who is responsible, but also guess the entire reasoning behind it. The pool of suspects is too small; there are so few characters in the book, and many readers will be immediately suspicious of the culprit (honestly, they seem shady as hell).

Also, because everything is built up around solving the mystery, the getting there wasn't that interesting. The repetitive scenes of Cass being afraid to answer the phone and forgetting something else irrelevant to the main plot quickly made the story slow and boring.

It was one of those situations where I thought I knew what was going on, but I kept pushing through the tedious chapters and hoping I was wrong and that the ending would surprise me. It didn't. It's way too easy to work out. You might even be starting to suspect the answers before beginning if you (view spoiler).

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Mary Beth *Traveling Sister* says

3.5 stars

Yep! I know, so many four and five star reviews and this one sort of disappointed me. I think I might of had to high expectations. I wanted so bad to love this book. I did enjoy it but found the ending to be very predictable.

Driving home in the rain, Cass decides to take a short cut through the woods against her husband wishes that she stick to the main roads. She sees the headlights of a car, stopped on the side of the road, and barely notices a woman sitting in it, she does not stop to help her. The next morning she is horrified to learn that the woman was murdered, and worse, she knew her. She feels so guilty that she didn't stop.

She starts struggling to remember things. Knowing her mother had been diagnosed with early onset dementia

made all of her forgetfulness convince her that she too had the disease. Mysterious parcels arrive, silent phone calls, she is doubting her own sanity.

Is she actually losing her mind or is something or someone else to blame. If you can't trust yourself, who can you trust?

This book did not grab me. Also let's talk about the character development, there was not one character that I liked, they were all dislikeable characters to me.

Now let's talk about what I liked about the book. It kept me intrigued, I couldn't put it down. I kept turning the pages till the end, curious to find out what was going on. I found it to be a simple fast read. It kept me intrigued from the beginning to the end.

I want to thank NetGalley, B.A. Paris, and the publisher for a copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

karen says

oooh, goodreads choice awards semifinalist for best mystery! what will happen?

well, that was fast...

i can't remember the last time i blitzed through a book as quickly as i did this one (*EDIT - yes, i can - it was Gemina). i had about fifty pages to go in the book i was reading (The Three Heretics) which i knew would not be enough to last me my whole day, and i didn't want to carry TWO books into the city like some donkey, so i grabbed this one on my way out the door, and by the time i went to bed that evening, i had finished it with time to spare, and with time to finish those final 50 pages. ordinarily, on my way to work in that sleepy time of the morning when the sun's not even up yet, i use my subway time to doze a little over my book, but with this one, i was too sucked in to nap, which is pretty remarkable.

quickplot - cass is a teacher living in a lovely, but isolated, house in a small english town with her devoted husband matthew. one violently rainy night, driving home to matthew after an end-of-year party, cass takes the shortcut home, despite matthew's insistence that the path through the woods, with no mobile signal, would be too dangerous in the storm. she is nearly home when she sees a car pulled over on the side of the road with a woman inside. the rain makes it too blurry to see much, but cass is concerned that the woman might need help, so she pulls over. she waits for the woman to take advantage of her good samaritanism, but as the minutes tick by with no action or signal from the woman, cass becomes increasingly paranoid, imagining all the urban legend scenarios of a hitchhiker in the backseat of the woman's car, and she bounces. the next day, it is all over the news: the woman she saw was found murdered in her car right where cass left her. even worse, it was a woman with whom she was acquainted, and she feels guilty for having left her the way she did. however, not wanting to admit to matthew that she took the shortcut he warned her against, she suffers her guilt in secret. she is also hiding another secret from her husband; her recently-deceased mother suffered from early onset dementia, and cass has herself been experiencing episodes of memory loss, which the stress of the murder intensifies. between the weight of her secrets and the fear that she will end up as helpless as her mother, cass' mental state worsens as the long empty days of summer stretch on; she's preoccupied, forgetful, paranoid, and she begins to suspect she was seen by the killer that night, and is his next target.

it's one of those books that, once it starts, just never lets up, and cass' unraveling is a wonderful trainwreck. apart from one necessarily exposition-heavy chapter at the beginning, the chapters are wicked short, which speeds up the pacing, and with threats both internal and external, killer and mental breakdown (because the book's title is doing two jobs, yeah?), it's my favorite combination: suspense and an unreliable narrator.

although only one star separates this from *Behind Closed Doors* in my gr ratings, i liked this one considerably more. it's much more plausible, although it does rely on a genre-standard that i've come to accept as par for the course in psychological suspense, even as it irritates my common sense. (view spoiler)

but, from a thriller standpoint, it definitely delivers.

i recently read *Gone Without a Trace*, which delivered a similarly claustrophobic reading experience, as you get immersed in the perspective of a character whose world seems to be disintegrating and can no longer trust their own mental faculties. which would be horrifying in real life, but delivers a chillingly pleasant intensity when you're safely reading.

more like this, please!

come to my blog!

Kristin (KC) - Traveling Sister says

***4.5 Stars...because I would not, COULD NOT, put this down!**

There are no profound reasons as to why this book was so much fun for me. It certainly doesn't shatter any psychological-thriller molds, and to be quite honest, there wasn't much shock value in its pages. There were some seemingly mundane moments that some could even call repetitive.

So why, oh why then, could I Not. Stop. Reading?

It boils down to an exhilarating execution: The quick pacing; the heavy buildup of anticipation; the spark of mistrust in everyone, and the growing fragility of the main protagonist...

Cass

Cass is *literally* having a mental breakdown after the murder of a local woman is discovered...a woman she could *possibly* have helped.

As the guilt eats away at her conscience, Cass's emotional distress quickly spirals into hysteria. Add the growing forgetfulness and constant paranoia to her heaping pile of anguish, and suddenly Cass doesn't recognize the lunatic she's become.

She's almost certain she's suffering from early onset dementia—the condition that has stole her mother's life—and no one, not even her husband, will believe that someone is out to get her.

Cass's continual highs and lows will cause you whiplash, and you will FEEL her frustration as she grasps at straws (tongs, and cans of hairspray) to keep her crumbling life together!

It is exhausting for **her**.

It will be exhausting for *you*.

And that is the genius of it.

Because, like it or not, you're sitting shotgun on the roller coaster of Cass's emotions.

And then there is the final 25%...packed with action and epiphanies, and decisions that will make you want to high-five your fictional friends.

From beginning to end, this read was addictive. I gobbled it whole, and even though some of the logic in this plot may not hold up under the heavy scrutiny of the savvy thriller-reader—I cannot recommend this one enough to fans of the genre!

My only problem is what to read after this...

Arc provided by publisher via NetGalley in exchange for an honest review

Arianna♦*SteamyReadsBlog*♦ says

3.75 Stars!!

If you read and enjoyed this author's debut novel, '*Behind Closed Doors*', you might consider trying this one as well, because this one was just as fantastically written and gripping. Since I enjoyed B.A. Paris's first novel, I was eagerly looking forward to read this one ever since I've heard about it. '*The Breakdown*' is a psychological thriller that really sucked me in from the very beginning.

Cass is a teacher who lives with her husband, Matthew, in a great, but isolated house in a small English town. Cass makes the worst decision of her life one rainy night when she decides to take a shortcut home, despite the fact that her husband told her many times the woods are too dark and dangerous for a woman. Cass is a little scared and she believes no one is as stupid as her to drive in the rain, especially in the woods, so she's surprised to see a car. At first she thinks someone is driving it, but as soon she realizes the car is actually parked and sees a woman in the driver's seat, she stops. Since the rain is pouring, Cass can't tell who the woman is or if she needs help, but she's willing to help with whatever problem she may have. She stays a couple of minutes in her car, waiting for the woman to give her a sign she needs help, but the sign never comes. Cass, wanting to get home as soon as possible, drives off. The next day, Cass finds out from the news the strange woman she "met" was found dead, murdered. She doesn't tell her husband about the woman, feeling more than guilty, believing she could have saved her, even if she doesn't know when or how was she murdered. Everything gets worse for Cass when she realizes she met the deceased woman when she had lunch with her not so long ago.

Stressed and depressed, feeling so guilty with each and every day, Cass's mental state worsens considerably. She starts experiencing episodes of memory loss, forgetting even the most simple and obvious things. The

fact that her mother suffered from dementia before she died doesn't help Cass's mental state since she didn't tell her husband anything about it. Everything changes for Cass when she starts getting "strange" calls from someone, which she suspects to be from the one who killed the woman in the woods.

'The Breakdown' was, most of all, an addictive read. From the moment I started it, I couldn't put it down. With each and every chapter I was more confused and more enthralled with everything. The fact that the story was fast-paced made me devour this thrilling read in one sitting. Cass's story was filled with suspense from the first chapter, so yeah, the book definitely starts with a bang. I liked how the suspense aspect was blended with the psychological one. The suspense was fantastically done and I loved how it grew with each and every chapter. It held me at the edge of my seat as the story unfolded and the fact that our heroine wasn't a reliable narrator made me love this story even more.

Cass was an unreliable heroine so I obviously questioned everything she said and everything she did for a good part of the story. I sympathized with her and, even though I found her to be an interesting and well-developed character, she frustrated the hell out of me. God, at times, I wanted to slap the woman senseless.

The big revelation/twist didn't do anything for me since I saw it coming. However, I enjoyed the twists and turns as the story unfolded and with the outcome of the story in general. I also liked the fact that each one of them plays a role into the story. As *'Behind Closed Doors'*, the other book by this author, this one had a realistic vibe that made me think, keeping me at the edge of my seat the entire time.

If you are looking for a fast-paced, twisted, page-turner psychological thriller, with a captivating plot and interesting characters, look no further and try this awesome read!

Find me on:

Susanne Strong says

Wow - this Knocked my Socks Right Off! What a Crazy Wild Roller Coaster of a Ride. 5 Stars!

This has to be the thriller of the year! There were times when I was holding my breath, gripping the book so intensely I thought I would break my e-reader. It was that crazy. B.A. Paris' "The Breakdown" is an emotional psychological thriller. It grips you from the first sentence and keeps hold till the last.

The main character, Cass is a teacher who, after leaving a party, drives down a poorly lit, wooded road and

sees a car stopped on the side of a road with a woman inside. Cass stops in front of it and tries to get the woman's attention to see if she is alright but decides not to get out of her own car in case it's a trick as she is a woman alone and has always been told not to do so. Fearing for herself, Cass drives off, as most women alone would. I know that I probably would.

The next morning, Cass discovers that this woman was murdered that evening, on that dark wooded road. For fear of being judged, Cass told no one that she saw this young woman, not even her husband Matthew. This woman's name was Jane, and it turns out that Cass knew her. And that triggers a chain of events, leading Cass to fear for her own life. She becomes scared, forgetful, paranoid and begins to show signs of early onset dementia, which what her mother passed away from.

After the murder, Cass is terrorized and spends every second looking over her shoulder. And we do too. My heart was in my throat throughout most of this book, petrified for Cass, wondering if she was in danger or if she was imagining everything. B.A. Paris did an incredible job keeping the readers on the edge of their seats. I wanted to tear through the book as fast as possible but didn't want to miss a second of it.

This is the best emotional psychological thriller I have read in years. I can't recommend it highly enough. If you want to read a book you can't put down, that will keep you on the edge of your seat from the second you pick it up, till the moment you put it down, this is it.

I did not read B.A. Paris's debut "Behind Closed Doors" - however, "The Breakdown" was so fantastic that I just ordered it on Amazon and am planning to read it next as this was amazing and I can't wait to read her debut.

Thank you to NetGalley, St. Martin's Press and B.A. Paris for an ARC of this novel in exchange for an honest review.

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*Will be published on Amazon on 6/20/17.

Linda says

Okay, here's "The Breakdown":

1. I was a huge fan of P. A. Paris' debut novel, "Behind Closed Doors," and I was eagerly awaiting her next book.
2. One of my top genres is psychological thrillers.
3. When it comes to clues in any book, I usually don't have a clue--always seem to be surprised with most twists and never guess the endings. Maybe this is why I tend to enjoy these books.
4. After a few short chapters, I started becoming irritated with the main character's stressing over her guilt. The first half of the book was so repetitive, it became boring, and I was considering not finishing it. The only character I found likable throughout the book was the deceased.

5. There were so few characters that figuring out the culprit was easy for me. For you unpaid detectives out there in Goodreads land, you'd have this mystery solved and wrapped up very quickly.

6. I believe if 'you can't say something nice, don't say anything at all,' so I thought Ms. Paris had a great idea for a storyline. I can't go into details, without spoilers, but she added a new twist I've not seen used before that I found quite clever, and like her previous novel, "The Breakdown" was also a very fast read.

I would put this book into the same category that I put Paula Hawkins' "Into The Water." I'm creating a new shelf on my profile page called 'the terrible twos.' This shelf is for best selling authors' second books which I felt were rushed to publishing too quickly to capitalize on their previous successes. Had the authors been given more creative time and the editors done a more extensive job, I'm sure both of these books would have seen consistently higher ratings. Even though this book did not work for me, I would definitely read the author's next book. She deserves another chance.

2.5 stars

Linda says

Yikes!

When those ol' marbles start rollin' around inside your head and they seem to shift and move back and forth as if on cue.....you know you're in trouble.....big trouble.

Cass Anderson feels that crazy rotation. Battling a torrential downpour late one night, she takes the shortcut home. Her headlights are cast upon a car parked to the side with what appears to be a blonde woman behind the wheel. Stalled? Cass pulls ahead of her and waits for a few brief seconds. The woman never indicates that she needs help. Cass promised her husband earlier that she would stay only on the main highway. Instinct tells her to get home quickly.

The next morning Cass finds out that a woman had been murdered on that same road the night before. The marbles begin to collide from intense guilt and fear. Could she have prevented what happened on that dark, lonely road? Would going to the police now make any difference? And would the murderer recognize her car and pay her a little visit?

Consumed by terrifying thoughts, Cass is blanketed in paranoia. She begins to hear unaccustomed sounds within her house, misplacement of items, phantom phone calls, and the dreaded presence of someone watching her. Her greatest fear seems to be coming true. Her mother was diagnosed at the young age of forty-four with early on-set dementia. Is this what awaits Cass or something far more menacing?

B.A. Paris does it again with The Breakdown. If you read, Behind Closed Doors, you know that Paris has both hands tightly on the wheel taking you on some mighty slippery slopes. This one proves, in another go-round, that she has an uncanny knowledge of what makes those marbles roll and spin in staccato motion. As the character of Cass becomes unglued, you feel the trigger of instability happening a bit too close.

Many Sherlocks out there may fit the pieces together early on. But what eventually develops within this glass jar will cleverly put the lid on in the finale. This is a fast read and a satisfying one for all B.A. Paris fans, and certainly, those new to this talented author's game table. Looking forward to the next round, Ms. Paris.

I received a copy of The Breakdown through NetGalley for an honest review. My thanks to St. Martin's Press and to B.A. Paris for the opportunity.

Maureen says

Cass is about to make the worst decision of her life when she decides to take a shortcut home on a dark and stormy night. The drive home takes her on a rural road through the woods during a torrential rainstorm. She passes a car parked near the woods with a woman inside, and she stops the car momentarily, thinking the woman will approach her if she needs help. The woman doesn't get out so Cass drives off. The next morning she discovers that the woman was later found dead in the car - and had been brutally murdered!

Cass is beside herself with guilt, could she have saved this woman? or would she herself have been murdered if she'd stopped to help?

Her decision that night has impacted badly on her health and she becomes really forgetful, forgetting even the simplest of things. This causes her extreme anxiety as she believes she's suffering from early onset dementia, just as her mother had. Then she starts receiving silent phone calls and believes whoever murdered the woman must have seen her that night, and is now watching her!

Oh Boy! I thought the author did a good job with her last book 'Behind Closed Doors', but she's excelled herself with this one. The characters are well formed, the plot is intricate but extremely clever, and the anxiety and fear jump out from every page - you've no choice but to be pulled helplessly along, yearning to discover what's coming next.

As is usual for me, I had a suspect lined up for the murder immediately- had them questioned, charged, and locked away. Well I was wrong! And that's what happens when I pit my wits against someone as adept at her craft as B.A.Paris is.

Do yourself a favour and don't miss out on this one - you'll be missing a treat if you do!

Thank you to Netgalley & Harlequin (UK) Ltd for my ARC, for which I have given an honest and unbiased review

Norma * Traveling Sister says

4.5 stars rounded up! What an absolutely thrilling and emotional ride this book took me on!

This book totally consumed me and I couldn't think of anything else but this book. I was reading it everywhere and anywhere which was annoying the heck out of my husband.

THE BREAKDOWN by B.A. PARIS is an interesting, thrilling, suspenseful, and cleverly written psychological thriller that takes you on a very emotional and apprehensive tale here questioning the psyche of our main protagonist, Cass. Is she really having a breakdown, early onset dementia, or is there something more sinister at work here?

B.A. PARIS delivers an impressive, tense, and mind-blowing story here that was executed at breakneck speed grabbing my attention from the very first page and didn't let go until the very last word. I could really feel Cass's emotional distress, guilt, anguish, and frustration throughout the novel and questioning her mental health right along with her. I didn't know what the heck was going on and I loved it!

Okay, while I found this story to be really fun and exciting for the most part I must say that I did find some of it to be a little predictable and tedious in parts but it sure made up for it though with its heavy buildup of anticipation, the thrilling climax, and the unexpected and surprising conclusion to make this an extremely good read.

To sum it all up it was an entertaining, gripping, fast-paced, and an easy read with an unexpected and exciting ending. Highly recommend!!

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Thank you so much to NetGalley, B.A. Paris, and St. Martin's Press for the opportunity to read an advance copy of this book for a fair and honest review.

All of Brenda & my reviews can be found on our Sister Blog:
<http://www.twogirlslostinacouleereadi...>

Melissa says

Let me preface my review by saying, I was not one of those readers that was over the moon for this author's first book, *Behind Closed Doors*. While I liked the characters, especially memorable Millie, and found myself engrossed in the storyline, the execution didn't wow me; in fact, I felt there was something *major* missing.

Against my better judgment, I let my twitchy and often overeager ARC requesting finger take charge where this book was concerned (will I ever learn self-control?), resulting in a potent dose of regret and a pinch of dread when it came time to pick it up. I tried to pacify myself with the thought that *Behind Closed Doors* was only my first encounter with B.A. Paris' storytelling, and even though they say first impressions are everything, I figured I should check my skepticism at the door and give the author the benefit of the doubt. Why not sit back and let her try and win me over on our second go-round; it could happen, right? Well, turns out, I liked this one even less than her debut. Sad to say, this author's writing and this reader's sensibilities aren't a great mix. I wish Ms. Paris luck, but it's probably best if we part ways here.

The author relies heavily on the frantic pacing, which I'll give her, is a tad addicting, but for me, substance is key. Establishing some type of feelings or connection with the characters whose lives I'm wrapping myself up in is major. Without that I'm pretty much checked-out, just going through the motions. The complete lack of character development, overused plot devices, dramatic tone, **very short list of suspects** and the **predictability** of it all, led me down that dreadful road of discontent. On the larger scale, this story is all too forgettable.

Maybe I'm jaded, suspicious by nature or too cynical because it didn't take much guesswork for me to figure out what was going on; I'm talking within the first few chapters. It's not even worth getting into the nitty-gritty of the plot here, in the off chance I might spoil it for someone else. What it all boils down to is

preference and subjectively what makes a story great in your eyes; unfortunately for me, this wasn't my cup of tea.

**Thank you to St. Martin's Press and NetGalley for an ARC in exchange for an honest review.*

j e w e l s [Books Bejeweled] says

I know, I'm picky. But, c'mon people! This book features the most irritating, frustratingly whiney main character in all of the domestic suspense books I've ever read. Not to mention she's so gullible and trusting of her smart ass husband. I just couldn't stand it any more.

And the plot? B-O-R-I-N-G.

So disappointed in this. I really don't understand the 4 or 5 star ratings this one received. Thank goodness I saw some people felt as I do.

ICK. Don't waste your time.

Debbie says

Did you ever have a main character that you just couldn't stand? I'm leaning over my desk, raising my hand high and wiggling it madly—me me me! Cass, a young schoolteacher wife, sniveled her way through the whole book. She was beyond annoying, with her constant over-the-top worry about a murder, memory loss, and a fear of being stalked. Monotonous, boring, a stuck record. Her anxiety made her seem sickeningly weak, and the way she kowtowed to her husband made her seem unliberated and outdated. I wanted to stick a sock in her mouth, give her a giant chill pill. In fact, when she was given pills to treat her stress, I was elated, relieved, like magically, finally, I had gotten a fussy baby to quiet the eff down. Now I know people who like dear little Cass are going to get their hackles up because I'm bad-mouthing her, but I'm sorry, I just wanted her to shut up. Couldn't she find something else to do? Like read a book, polish the silver, binge on a Netflix series? Anything but sit there endlessly worrying in her plaintiff 5-year-old voice. But wait. We all, myself included, have to remember that she is make-believe. Obviously, I'm doing a terrible job of this if I get so mad!

I was really excited to read this one. I had loved Paris's first book, *Behind Closed Doors*. How does it work that I loved one of her books but basically hated the other? I hear of reviewers loving both or hating both, but I don't seem to have many others in my one-love, one-hate club.

I'll go straight to my Complaint Board because frankly, my Joy Jar is empty.

Complaint Board

Stop the sniveling. And please say something interesting. No need to add much here; you already know what I think about the main character, Cass. I will say that the other few characters weren't snivelers, but they weren't interesting either. The dialogue was super boring, like: Hi, when did you get up? Oh, around 8. Okay. See you later.

I knew it! It's not at all fun when you right away figure out what's going on. I wanted to race to the end so that I could pat myself on the back. And during the whole trek to the end, I was huffy-annoyed that the plot was so predictable. Well, I had to humble myself a little, because I only had it half-right. The surprise part was what made me give this book 2 stars instead of 1.

Where's the tension? I need some! I guess I couldn't feel any tension because little miss smarty pants here thought she knew exactly what was happening (it's only fitting that I had half a comeuppance). But whatever the reason, feeling no tension when you're reading a thriller is a total bummer.

Nope. I just don't buy it. There are lots of things that just weren't believable to me. They are spoilers, though, so I'll hide them.(view spoiler)

Where's my car? There's a ridiculous scene in a parking garage, ridiculous because it is a logistical mess. I had to reread the scene many times and in the end it still didn't make sense. Where oh where did the editor go?

Stop over-explaining. Show me, don't tell me. I thought the author broke that rule at the end. It's like she was afraid maybe we wouldn't understand it all. We did. (view spoiler)

I'm really bummed (and surprised) that I didn't like this book. Negative reviews are no fun to write, but I always feel compelled to give my honest reaction. Be sure to check out other reviews, because most of them are positive. I'm sort of the Lone Ranger here.

Thanks to NetGalley for the advance copy.
