



## A Noise Downstairs

*Linwood Barclay*

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**The New York Times** bestselling author of *No Time for Goodbye* returns with a haunting psychological thriller that blends the twists and turns of Gillian Flynn with the driving suspense of Harlan Coben, in which a man is troubled by odd sounds for which there is no rational explanation.

College professor Paul Davis is a normal guy with a normal life. Until, driving along a deserted road late one night, he surprises a murderer disposing of a couple of bodies. That's when Paul's "normal" existence is turned upside down. After nearly losing his own life in that encounter, he finds himself battling PTSD, depression, and severe problems at work. His wife, Charlotte, desperate to cheer him up, brings home a vintage typewriter—complete with ink ribbons and heavy round keys—to encourage him to get started on that novel he's always intended to write.

However, the typewriter itself is a problem. Paul swears it's possessed and types by itself at night. But only Paul can hear the noise coming from downstairs; Charlotte doesn't hear a thing. And she worries he's going off the rails.

Paul believes the typewriter is somehow connected to the murderer he discovered nearly a year ago. The killer had made his victims type apologies to him before ending their lives. Has another sick twist of fate entwined his life with the killer—could this be the same machine? Increasingly tormented but determined to discover the truth and confront his nightmare, Paul begins investigating the deaths himself.

But that may not be the best thing to do. Maybe Paul should just take the typewriter back to where his wife found it. Maybe he should stop asking questions and simply walk away while he can. . . .

## A Noise Downstairs Details

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## From Reader Review A Noise Downstairs for online ebook

### Zoeytron says

Shhhh . . . can you hear that noise coming from downstairs? '*Chit chit. Chit chit chit. Chit.*' Chit! Recovering from a devastating head injury, Paul seems to be the only one who can hear it. Is he teetering on the edge of madness? Or is there something hideously awry with that old manual-style typewriter? You might want to stifle your "Aha!" for as long as possible, or risk having to repeat yourself.

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### NZLisaM says

Paul Davis and the Case of the Haunted Typewriter!

It's been eight months since Paul was attacked, and left for dead, after inadvertently stumbling across a fellow professor attempting to dispose of two bodies. Plagued by recurring nightmares, and lapses in memory, as well as struggling to process how a person who'd been both mentor and friend to him could murder two women, Paul decides to write down everything relating to the murders, both to try and come to terms with it all, and facilitate his own recovery.

He uses an old manual typewriter (if you don't know what that is, don't worry Paul will explain it to you, along with his son), that his wife found at a yard sale, and almost immediately spooky things start to happen. First, Paul thinks he hears the typewriter keys tapping away at night on their own, and pretty soon he's finding typed messages that appear to be written by the two dead women. Is he going crazy? Is someone trying to make him look like he's crazy? Or, is he actually receiving communication from beyond the grave?

An enjoyable, entertaining read, that had me zipping through the pages, even though it bothered me that the person behind everything seemed really obvious, suspicious, and unlikeable from page one. I prayed I had it wrong – kept thinking that there must be more to it, and I am happy to report that – yes, yes, yes – there is. So, if you find yourself in the same camp as me, and you think you've guessed correctly, don't panic, that's only the beginning. In fact, I don't think the author ever intended that bit to be a twist. Of course, if you don't guess who, consider it a bonus! The last third of the book, sees surprise after surprise after surprise thrown at you. I mark it at 4.5, as it did drag in places, but that last 30% was mind-blowing, so I implore you to stick with it.

I got a kick out of the descriptions of the typewriter, how it worked, etc, because even though I'm old enough to not only remember one, but also first learned to type on one, I had almost forgotten how it all worked, so that was a nostalgic trip down memory lane for me.

Linwood Barclay, you continue to impress!

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### Chelsea Humphrey says

4.5 STARS

Here it is guys... drum roll please... I present your summer 2018 popcorn thriller-*A Noise Downstairs*! Seriously folks, this one is a must for your TBR if you are looking for a fast-paced story that is easily read in any setting and impossible to put down. I've been a fan of Linwood Barclay's writing for almost a decade now and find I have a Barclay shaped hole that only his books can fill each year. If you're new to his work, then know his writing style is very similar to Harlan Coben's, meaning there are usually many plot lines that start out removed from each other but are slowly brought together toward the end for the big reveal. This is a standalone, and is set away from the area most of his other books take place in, so it felt set apart in more ways than just not taking place in a series. I feel it was the perfect timing for the author to do so, as he's gone through a bit of a rebranding in the past year and clearly means to do so with a clean slate.

While it was wholly compulsive and difficult to put down, *A Noise Downstairs* doesn't become an action driven plot for the first 30-40% of the novel; we take our time in a slow burning suspense while becoming acquainted with the characters, which is a style of writing I'm quite partial to. *Ok, except for that first section, which perfectly hooked my attention.* You get a lot of the set up from the synopsis, but initially we find our main narrator Paul caught in an unexpected exchange with co-worker Kenneth. Unfortunately, Paul has decided to follow Ken to inform him that he has a tail light out, things escalate, and Ken attempts to murder Paul. We are then thrust forward 8 months after the incident, where Ken is in prison, Paul is spending time recovering with the help of his therapist Anna and his second wife Charlotte, and things are tense. Paul thinks it will be cathartic to write about his experiences in hopes of working through his PTSD, so Charlotte surprises him with an old Underwood typewriter she found at a yard sale. The thing is, Paul starts hearing the typewriter in the middle of the night, and what unfolds is a tale of "Is he delusional or is someone out to get him?" in the most suspenseful format.

Ok, about the story itself. The plot is told mostly through three points of view: Paul's, Anna's (the psychiatrist), and Charlotte's (Paul's current wife). Also sprinkled throughout the story we learn about Paul's ex-wife, her new husband, Paul's son, Anna's father, and Kenneth and his family. Everything pretty much branches off from these particular head points, and there are side plots galore. Maybe a few people will find it unnecessarily confusing, but I thought it was tastefully done and added to the intrigue. *Which side plots would turn out to be connected to the main? Which were red herrings? Which were unrelated but still vital to the story's characterization?* This was all present and kept me, a seasoned mystery fanatic, busy, preoccupied, and flustered in the best way possible.

**Here's what I loved most about this book-** I thought I had it all figured out, and I was both right and wrong. I LOVE IT WHEN THIS HAPPENS! Let me explain (minus the spoilers). If you are an expert detective while reading novels of suspense, or if you've even simply read a few, you'll probably think you know where this is going. And you'd be right, EXCEPT... Here's the thing, I had the who, the why, and some of the how figured out. There are only so many options to what's going on with the dang typewriter, so naturally many readers will come to that conclusion on their own. What I loved was that the author gives us all this, and it's a red herring in and of itself. I won't tell you exactly when this happens, because I don't want you to be expecting it, but it's not at the very end. And then come the waves of reveals my friends... WAVES! How exciting is it to keep receiving twists, both big and small, time after time until the last page is turned? The first twist that I hadn't personally figured out knocked me completely off balance when it happened. It's been awhile since I've read a book where the author chose to use this particular plot element and it was beautifully done. If you want to know more than that sloppy paragraph above, you'll just have to pick up the book for yourself.

I hope I've done a halfway decent job of convincing you to pick up *A Noise Downstairs* this summer; most of you know it's rare for me to read/review a book so far ahead of publication date, but I did this on a whim and I'm so glad that I did. If you like to compile your seasonal TBRs ahead of time like I do, you'll certainly want

to add this to your list. Also, it has a fancy new cover that is not featured in my Instagram photo, so there's that too. Highly recommended for a lightning fast read. I can't wait to hear everyone else's thoughts because I NEED TO TALK ABOUT THIS BOOK Y'ALL!

**\*Review copy furnished by the publisher.**

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### **Dennis says**

Linwood Barclay, you have found yourself a new fan! While I've never read any of Mr. Barclay's works, I've certainly heard all about him! *A Noise Downstairs* is impressive, beautifully-tragic, and darkly-painted. It is narrated so expertly, at times I felt like I was envisioning the next big blockbuster movie in my head while I was turning the pages ;). Paul Davis, college professor at West Haven College, is driving along a quiet road one night when he accidentally gets involved in the midst of a double homicide. Without thinking, Paul tries to stop the culprit from escaping, but the result almost leads to his demise. Flash-forward to Paul's recovery, he is coping with severe PTSD, physical and mental trauma, and interpersonal relationship problems with his wife and son. Paul seeks out the help of Dr. Anna White in hopes of getting his life back on track. He wants to be better for his family, but also for his mental health.

Paul's wife Charlotte and his son Josh end up surprising him with a vintage typewriter of his dreams. Paul wants to capture his story in hopes that he could close the chapter on this traumatic experience and move on. As Paul begins to craft his story, he also begins to lose sight of reality—he hears a noise downstairs and it sounds like it's the typewriter! **The only problem is, nobody is using it.** Paul initially believes it's his mind playing tricks on him, but soon finds himself trying to uncover the secrets of this typewriter and its connection to the victims in the double homicide that he was involved with. As Paul tries to discover the truth behind the crime, it begins to unravel into a web of deception, lies, and betrayal. Maybe Paul should have just left the past settle as it is before it catches up with him.

*A Noise Downstairs* really caught me off-guard, folks! It was a light-thriller, but rich in suspense and mystery. I did not figure the story out until Linwood Barclay helped me out with his narration, but if you pay attention closely, you may be able to spot it! The two main attributes that make this story such a success for me was it's atmospheric content and the expert characterization provided. I felt that all the characters in *A Noise Downstairs* were crafted so masterfully—all of them were unique and flawed in the most exciting and diverse way. Usually when a story features multiple characters, the author tends to forget that by personifying them differently, it allows for the reader to remember them and relate to them. Linwood Barclay does not forget to portray his story this way! The best part of reading *A Noise Downstairs* was learning and resonating some the cast of characters. I related to the strifes of relationship nurturing and protecting, the family dynamic struggle, issues with coping with troubled pasts, *and others that I will keep secret until you read this story!* #NoSpoilers I really enjoyed *A Noise Downstairs* and I think you will too!

**Thank you William Morrow Books for my advanced copy in exchange for an honest review. *A Noise Downstairs* will be released on July 24, 2018.**

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### **Magdalena aka A Bookaholic Swede says**

A NOISE DOWNSTAIRS is a book that just didn't work completely for me. I usually love reading Linwood

Barcley's books and I'm not saying that this isn't well written. It's just the story didn't convince me. If it had been an author like Stephen King might I have bought the haunted typewriter, but in this case, I just waited for the truth to come out. The logical explanation. And, that kind of made the reading experience just not as enjoyable as with his previous books.

On the plus side did I enjoy Barclay's writing, I always do. He has such a grew flow, even as with this case the story isn't rocking my boat. I just breezed through the pages. Alas, I missed the suspense from his previous books.

Then comes the last part, here Barclay both surprise me and at the same time disappoint me. Yeah, I'm a bit on the fence about the ending. In one way it's WAY TOO typical on the other hand there is a twist that I did not see coming that made me go WOW. That's the way to go, Barclay, chock the reader. So, I'm a bit on the fence when it comes to the ending, I loved part of it, but not the whole deal.

*A NOISE DOWNSTAIRS is a book that has an interesting premise. The writing is top-notch. But, ultimately I just couldn't find myself loving the story. However, I did like it and I would recommend the book.*

*I want to thank William Morrow for providing me with a free copy through Edelweiss for an honest review!*

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### **Brenda says**

The brutal attack on Paul Davis was meant to end his life – instead the injuries and PTSD, along with depression were dragging him down. The person who attacked him was in prison for murder while Paul struggled to move forward with his life. His psychologist, Dr Anna White was a positive influence, but the night time was his enemy. Paul's nightmares were frightening his wife Charlotte, and during the day his memory was sporadic; he wondered if he was going crazy.

But when Charlotte brought a vintage typewriter home for Paul – so he could record all the events in a cathartic way, perhaps turning it into a book – his problems became much worse. The noises from downstairs were coming from his think room, where the typewriter had been put – but there was no one there. Charlotte didn't hear a thing. As Paul formed ideas, then discarded them, then formed more, he decided he would talk to people involved, to see if he could make any sense of what was happening to him. There had to be a rational explanation – didn't there?

Wow! Linwood Barclay always astounds me with the depth of his stories. I was pretty sure I knew the "who" very early in the piece but had no idea on the "why". But the twist at the end blew that all away! *A Noise Downstairs* is a chilling psychological thriller that was absolutely unputdownable. Highly recommended.

With thanks to Hachette AU for my ARC to read and review.

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### **Elizabeth of Silver's Reviews says**

Typewriter sounds are almost non-existent today, but they kept recurring in Paul's home and seemed to be coming from the typewriter that his wife had bought him.??

After Paul followed his friend because he was driving erratically, he found something horrific and unbelievable.??

Paul saw dead bodies in his colleague's trunk and when Kenneth struck him to silence him, he thought it was all over. Thankfully Paul didn't die, and Kenneth was imprisoned. ??

Another thing happened as Paul was following Kenneth. He saw Kenneth dispose of a typewriter in a dumpster. Could that be the same typewriter that Kenneth forced his victims to use to type an apology before he killed them and the typewriter that Paul's wife bought for him at a yard sale?

When we do "meet" this, typewriter, bizarre things begin to happen.

THE NOISE DOWNSTAIRS has us following Paul as he is recovering from his physical injury caused by the strike with the shovel as well as the emotional trauma.??

Mr. Barclay keeps the tension high and the story line is intriguing. The ending twists were well hidden from the reader.??

The introduction of the typewriter was very clever, and the typewriter seemed to be included as another character. ??

This was my first book by Mr. Barclay, and I thoroughly enjoyed it.??

If you have enjoyed Mr. Barclay's books, you won't want to miss his newest. 5/5

This book was given to me as ARC by the publisher and NetGalley. All opinions are my own.

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### **Louise Wilson says**

College Professor Paul Davis is a normal guy with a normal life. Until, driving along a deserted road late one night, he surprises a murderer trying to dispose of a couple of bodies. That's when Paul's "normal" existence is turned upside down. After nearly loosing his own life in that encounter, he finds himself battling with PTSD, depression and severe problems at work.

Wow. Where do I start? We learn all about the murderer, who he is and why Paul followed him that night at the beginning of this eerie, creepy book. How the event has left him traumatised, with issues and nightmares, and how he is seeing a therapist to help him get through this tough time. Trying to cheer him up and help his with his recovery, his wife Charlotte buys him a vintage typewriter. But then Paul thinks he hears the typewriter typing messages by itself. This story is told through Paul, Charlotte and Anna's (his therapist) points of view. Don't think, like me, that you will know who the culprit is from early on as you will be wrong, so wrong. Another fantastic read from the also fantastic writer, Linwood Barclay.

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## **Linda Strong says**

Several months ago, Paul Davis was attacked by a killer with a shovel. Somehow he survived the massive head wound he received. The killer was a friend ... a colleague ... and it was just happenstance that he saw two women's bodies in his friend's trunk before they were hidden and buried.

Now Paul suffers severe panic attacks, short term memory loss. But the most terrifying are the noises he hears that no one else does. Most recently, his wife bought him an old typewriter. At night, he swears he can hear it typing .. by itself. It is suggested that he insert a sheet of paper and see what happens. And what he finds sends him into a massive spin.

The women that his friend killed were made to type out an apology to the killer. Those apologies are now being typed on his typewriter with no one around. Is this the actual typewriter that the killer owned?

Are the messages from beyond the grave? Is Paul hallucinating? Is he paranoid?

Either he's losing his mind - or someone wants him to think he is.

His therapist is firm in her belief that he is not going crazy ... on the other hand, she doesn't believe that dead women are contacting him through type written messages. But who would want to torture this man .. and to what end?

This one goes to the top of my favorite books this year! It's a well-written psychological thriller that is riveting in its edginess and features standout characters. Expect fast paced action with this one. The twist at the end is one that will knock you off your feet.

Many thanks to the author / William Morrow Books / Edelweiss for the advanced digital copy of this psychological thriller. Opinions expressed here are unbiased and entirely my own.

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## **Meredith says**

*3.5 stars*

***“Jesus, Paul, it’s not the clown from It. It’s not going to break out and attack us.”***

***This quote above is in reference to an old typewriter which the protagonist from A Noise Downstairs believes is possessed by the spirits of murder victims. It might sound a little crazy, but the premise makes for an entertaining psychological thriller with some surprising twists!***

Paul Davis was nearly murdered. While he has recovered physically, he is suffering from PTSD. He is in counseling and determines the best way to face his fears is to research Kenneth Hoffman, the man who tried to kill him. When his wife, Charlotte, gifts him with an old typewriter, Paul begins to hear typing in the middle of the night. He starts to wonder if he is going crazy. Then when typed messages begin to appear, Paul believes he is being contacted by Hoffman's murder victims. Soon. Paul's life begins to spin out of

control, leading him into serious danger.

*A Noise Downstairs* gets off to a slow start, but Paul's story kept me interested. I also was intrigued by Gavin, a creepy patient of Paul's therapist. The more and more I read, the more I got sucked into what was happening. Chapters are split between Paul and Anna (Paul's therapist). I liked Anna's character, but I wasn't really sure of her purpose until much later on in the book.

**This is supposed to be a creepy read, but I felt that it could have been creepier. I had a theory early on about what was happening, and I was right, which might have detracted from the creepiness. However, this is one of those cases where I thought that I was a smart reader and had everything figured out, but there were a couple of twists that I didn't see coming.**

*A Noise Downstairs* is an easy, quick read. The chapters are short, the plot has some layers, and there's some dark humor woven in, which makes for fun reading!

Thank you to William Morrow publishers for sending me an ARC of this book!

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### **Matt says**

Linwood Barclay can always be relied upon to put forth exciting novels that creep up the spine, leaving the reader questioning what they've just read. His ability to develop a psychological thriller puts him in league with some of the top in the genre, thereby strengthening his fan base. Paul Davis is a college professor who was out on a late evening drive. After coming upon the vehicle of his colleague, Paul stops to help, only to be attacked and almost killed. Eight months later, Paul is trying to come to terms with the head injury he suffered that night, while his wife, Charlotte, must try to acclimate to her husband's constant forgetfulness. She purchases an old typewriter for him, in hopes that it will help him process some of the feelings and thoughts that came from the attack. Paul has also engaged the services of a therapist, Dr. Anna White, who is helping him come to terms with the entire ordeal. When Paul wakes in the night, hearing a clacking sound that could be no other than the typewriter, he rushes to see, but there is nothing there. Worried, Charlotte tries to help her husband come to terms with what must be his subconscious brain playing tricks on him. Dr. White goes so far as to concur, hoping that her patient will find solace rather than constant distress with this new form of therapeutic release. Meanwhile, Dr. White has another patient whose past is indicative of severe and inexplicable revenge tendencies, seeking to topple the apple carts of many others for his own peace of mind. The more she tries to help, the less it appears to work. With Paul's ongoing traumatic situation, now morphed into messages spewing from paper left in the typewriter at night, one can only surmise that there may be something supernatural happening, which is only further supported when it would appear that it was the same typewriter as the man who attacked Paul; someone who had forced previous victims to write letters of apology before he killed them. With all this coming to a head, Paul forges on to make sense of it all, while Charlotte becomes increasingly worried. Has her husband lost all touch with reality? Could his memory loss be responsible for him writing these messages at night, but not remembering? And how can one completely explain that noise of the typewriter clanking in the night? Barclay leaves these and many other questions with the reader, who will likely want to dive in to better understand what is going on. Another brilliant piece by a psychological thriller expert. Recommended for those who enjoy Linwood Barclay's work or the reader who finds solace in a novel that poses multiple mind games.

I can usually be assured of a top-notch novel when Barclay publishes something and this piece was nothing

short of stellar. The mix of well-developed characters, a plausible plot, and just a touch of King-esque paranormal activity (so much so that the characters actually refer to what is going on as having come from a King novel), leaves the reader wanting to push onwards as things get even more complicated. Paul Davis is a wonderfully relatable character who has been through a great ordeal and is only now able to pick up the pieces. He straddles the line between recovery and deeper psychological issues, though there is little doubt that current events with his new gift have pushed him further away from sanity. He struggles to understand it all, though has been able to turn to Anna White to help him. While this does not always work, the reader can see glimpses of sanity in his sporadic activities and memory-debilitating daily life. Anna White proves to be another key character, juggling her own personal issues alongside those of a handful of clients, all of whom pose different risks to themselves and others. The reader will likely find the White character to be very grounded, though also a bit standoffish, as is usually the case when processed through the eyes of a patient. Paul and Anna find themselves in an odd dance to better understand the former's mental state and while outward signs point to issues, there is surely something else at play. A handful of other characters prop things up and thicken an already strong plot, adding questions and intrigue while riding the narrative's easy flow. The story is one that might not be entirely unique—an inanimate object takes over and causes a protagonist angst—but the way it is presented in Barclay style leaves the reader to wonder how it all comes together. Things flow well and the story does not get too out of hand, though the reader need keep an open mind until the final chapters to understand what is going on. Barclay has mastered his craft again and it is up to the reader to decide if they are prepared to accept what is on offer.

Kudos, Mr. Barclay, for another wonderful novel. I can only hope your ideas continue to flow, as I have eagerly anticipated many of the pieces you've presented in the last numbers of years.

Love/hate the review? An ever-growing collection of others appears at:  
<http://pecheyponderings.wordpress.com/>

A Book for All Seasons, a different sort of Book Challenge: <https://www.goodreads.com/group/show/...>

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## **Sue says**

A Noise Downstairs by bestselling author Linwood Barclay is a standalone psychological thriller and one of my favourites books for 2018.

This story is about a man who is troubled by odd sounds for which there is no rational explanation.

College professor Paul Davis is a normal guy with a normal life. Until, driving along a deserted road late one night, he surprises a murderer disposing of a couple of bodies. That's when Paul's "normal" existence is turned upside down. After nearly losing his own life in that encounter, he finds himself battling PTSD, depression, and severe problems at work. His wife, Charlotte, desperate to cheer him up, brings home a vintage typewriter—complete with ink ribbons and heavy round keys—to encourage him to get started on that novel he's always intended to write.

But the typewriter seems to have a mind of its' own. Paul swears it's possessed and types by itself at night. But only Paul can hear the noise ("Chit chit chit.Chit chit." ) coming from downstairs; Charlotte doesn't hear a thing. And she worries he's losing it. Time to add paper and see what it says!

Paul believes the typewriter is somehow connected to the murderer he discovered nearly a year ago. The

killer had made his victims type apologies to him before ending their lives. Could this be the same machine? Paul is on a mission to discover the truth and confront his nightmare, by investigating the deaths himself.

And so begins the long journey of research and obtaining all the facts, and solving this puzzle...but most of all obtaining the truth.

Maybe Paul should just get rid of the typewriter and stop asking questions and simply walk away while he still can.

This novel is definitely a novel that you will not be able to put down until you reach the end. It is woven so delicately, and the pieces of the jigsaw are only disclosed on a need to know basis.

Did I figure it all out? Yes...No Some that I thought, but the twist at the end will blow you away!

Many thanks to the author, William Morrow Books and Edelweiss for the advanced digital copy of this psychological thriller. It was a pleasure to read.

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### **Debra says**

3.5 stars

College Professor Paul Davis is driving home one night when he observes a colleague driving strangely. He decides to follow, not quite sure if the man is drunk or looking for something. When his co-worker pulls over so does Paul and that is when Paul makes the shocking discovery that he has just walked into a murderer disposing of two female bodies. Paul tries to intervene and is almost killed himself.

After the incident, Paul has been having nightmares and experiencing PTSD. He begins to see Anna, a psychologist to work through his issues. His wife, Charlotte, also tries to help and buys him a vintage type writer so that he can write that novel he has always dreamed about. Paul is open to the idea, that is until he begins to hear noises in the night. Noises which sound as if the typewriter is being used. But everyone is asleep, who could possibly be typing on the typewriter? Why is Paul the only one who can hear the noise?

As Paul continues to work on his issues in therapy, the reader is also introduced to his therapist, her father and one of her other clients - a young man who enjoys playing sick and vicious pranks on others. Could he be to blame? Is he even involved? If not him, then who? Is the type writer possessed? Is the type writer typing messages all by itself? Are the messages related to the deaths of the two women? Paul continues to be tormented and struggles with what is really happening and what he believes is happening.

This book is told through Paul's, Charlotte's and Anna's points of view. This was interesting especially is the last twenty percent of the book. I will be honest, during the beginning of the book, I thought...oh geez, I normally like Linwood Barclay, but I am not sure about this book. All I can say is STICK WITH IT. I say this often in reviews, but it is true, I love when a book fools me. I love when I think I have it all figured out. I have my super sleuth hat on the entire way. I am quite sure I know how the book is going to end and then BOOM, Barclay spun some magic. I did have one theory and that proved to be correct, but I still didn't have the key bit of plot figured out. He pulled it off and beautifully.

The title of the book makes it sound as if this book is going to be both creepy or scary. I didn't find it to be scary at all. A little creepy, perhaps. The one young man who played pranks was the creepiest part of the book for me. Yes, a typewriter that types of messages is creepy but for me only to a small degree. So, if you pick this up thinking it is going to be scary or on the horror spectrum, be warned, it's not.

After a slow start that left me guessing as to whether I was going to enjoy the book, things really did pick up - about half way through for me. But once thing did pick up, the plot kicked into high gear. I found this book to be well-written with a great ending. I do wish it would have been a little faster going in the beginning, but I also know he needed to build his plot and introduce the reader to all the players.

Thank you to William Morrow Publishers and Edelweiss for providing me with a copy of this book in exchange for an honest review. The thoughts and opinions expressed in this review are my own.

Read my reviews at [www.openbookpost.com](http://www.openbookpost.com)

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### **Laura/Mystery in Minutes says**

**A twisty-turny mystery that includes a jaw-dropping about-face**, new-to-Mystery in Minutes author Linwood Barclay's latest standalone novel, *A Noise Downstairs*, manages to be about so much more than its eye-catching cover image and title would imply.

In his book cover quote from a previous Barclay novel, *Trust Your Eyes*, Stephen King wrote, "*My idea of a sweet ride is three days of rain, a fridge filled with snacks, and a new Linwood Barclay.*" Interestingly, much of the style and content of *A Noise Downstairs* reads like a (gore-free) homage to Mr. King.

On the surface, the plot of the book revolves around an old, Underwood typewriter, and how it relates to main character Paul Davis, a Connecticut college professor on sabbatical while recuperating from a near-death experience. But for this reader, the true subject matter of *A Noise Downstairs* is the human brain, and through the book's characters, Mr. Barclay's work examines a variety of brain differences, whether they be the result of traumatic brain injury, degenerative brain disease, or from chemical imbalances, to name just a few. Explored are injuries and ailments of the mind, both subtle and overt, nature versus nurture, as well as ideas such as certain types of psychopathies being treated with revulsion and rejection, while dementia, for instance, can often evoke great pathos and tenderness. Any reader who has dealt with emotional strain in response to behavioral changes within themselves or a loved one, as a result of brain differences, will find *A Noise Downstairs* to be highly relatable.

Is *A Noise Downstairs* entertaining? Yes. But.....readers should know that, other than the prologue, as much as the first seventy percent of this "sweet ride" is a very evenly-paced, becoming-invested-in-the-characters, "slow burn", and the novel doesn't become more action-driven until about the last 25-30 percent, **at which time the reader is presented with a major twist in the tale. And then another! And another!**

***A Noise Downstairs* is a cleverly-plotted, very twisty, and thought-provoking mystery with a resolution both satisfying and poignant, that will surely have this reviewer seeking out more of Canadian writer Linwood Barclay's crime fiction in the future!**

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**Brenda says**

I'm going to be intentionally vague here because I don't want to spoil this book for anyone. Linwood Barclay had me hooked in the first chapter, and it wasn't long before I was feeling the menace surrounding the main character, Paul Davis. While the major players are introduced and history explained, I felt a strong sympathy for Paul. The pace picked up in the second half of the book, and the 90° turns the author took had me pausing to get my bearings. Even though one of the scenarios that occurred to me turned out to be true, there was much more to come that I didn't expect at all. This was a well written, clever story that I thoroughly enjoyed.

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