



## Come Closer

*Sara Gran*

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## **Come Closer Sara Gran**

Amanda is happily married, likes her job, and enjoys life. But if everything is so perfect, then why the sudden violent temper and obscene thoughts? Why the unsettling urge to harm the people she loves? What about the strange tapping in the walls? And who is that woman following her? There must be a perfectly reasonable explanation for what's happening to Amanda. God help her, there *is*...

## **Come Closer Details**

Date : Published (first published 2003)

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Author : Sara Gran

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## From Reader Review Come Closer for online ebook

### Richard says

Many of the popular horror story tropes don't really affect me. Vampires, zombies, slasher killers, monsters. But demonic possession always freaks me out a little. Losing control of myself has always been one of my biggest fears, and the idea that a purely evil spirit is capable of controlling my susceptible body, soul, and thoughts is a little nerve-wracking. This book is a very well-done portrait of one woman as she slowly loses that control.

Author Sara Gran skillfully crafts this perfectly paced descent. How terrifying would it be to lose long lengths of time from your day, not knowing what happened, or what you did during that time? I love the subtlety and control of tone Gran maintains through most of the book. It's not all out horror, but instead it's a great psychological exploration, creepy and hypnotic.

\*By the way, this little book has some great covers. Here's probably the coolest cover:

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### Tfitoby says

For those of you who know Sara Gran for her crime novels and read the quote "*probably this year's scariest novel*" and wondered what was going on, I point you to the other quote that starts "*like Patricia Highsmith*" and hopefully you understand just why this is a scary novel and then continue your enjoyment of Sara Gran as **an interesting new literary voice**.

For those readers who take a look at that nice generic quote from The Charlotte Observer "*It's terrifying*" then combine it with the demonic posession conceit and expect a William Peter Blatty style frightfest I beg of you **STEP AWAY FROM THE BOOK**, you surely will not like it (filter for only the 1 star reviews for confirmation, why don't you.)

Ms Gran first came to my attention with the interesting idea for Claire DeWitt and the City of the Dead, then I discovered that she shares a blogging home with none other than insanely talented noir-pixie Megan Abbott, the stars they were aligning, I felt something in me change, demand to be heard, crying out for a Sara Gran book to read and then along came Kurt in the Pulp Fiction group forums to sing her praises, just to push me over the edge. Then low and behold I'm at work flicking through the new arrival \$2 stock and it was all I could do not to shout "here's Johnny!" but that was from a different book and the demon inside me simply kept spending money on books instead.

I enjoyed the book, it wasn't amazing, it wasn't ground breaking, it wasn't world shattering, my life it was not changed BUT the little grey cells they were exercised non? The face value 'horror' concept of demon posession was interesting on its own, updated for the 21st century and exhibiting none of the cliche schlock that we all know and (in my case at least) roll our eyes at. But the use of demon posession as a metaphor for the **inner struggle** of the individual in contemporary Western Civilisation was a good one; touching on repressed sexual desires, the basest **animal urges**, the power of **consumerism**, the pressures and demands of a **career and the workplace** as well as most notably the effects of a **powerful addiction**.

This is no The Man With The Golden Arm but it approaches a similar subject matter from a different point of view and tells a disturbing tale without the need to make you miserable. Like Jason Starr says "*she has a knack for exposing the terror that lurks beneath our everyday lives*" and not a truer word has been spoken about this book.

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### **Emilie says**

I discovered this book last year at a bookstore and was immediately attracted by the french cover (<http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/76...>) and then the synopsis. But at the time, only the hardcover was available and it was too expensive so I waited for the paperback version... goodness, I did well. No wonder we say "Don't judge a book by its cover".

The good points of this book are that it's short and easy to read... that's all for me. The only thing that comes to mind after the last page (well actually during the whole thing) is boring. I was expecting something scary... it wasn't in the slightest. From the start we know exactly what's happening, then we understand quickly what will happen and can easily guess how it'll end. Moreover, the fact that no "relationship" is built between the reader and the main character doesn't help at all in creating a creepy, disturbing, frightening ambiance. I didn't care about Amanda, I didn't feel anything towards her, I kept reading because I was curious to see how it would end. I don't know how to explain but it felt a bit like observing ants and their routine just out of curiosity and not because you care. I felt utterly indifferent to Amanda and her husband.

I wouldn't say it's a bad book or I wouldn't have finished it but with so many good reviews and such an interesting synopsis, I was expecting much more than that. I guess I'm just not the right reader for this kind of novel because I'm sorry but **Come Closer** is certainly not a scary novel to me.

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### **Angel Geliique says**

It started with a strange tapping sound. And then small, subtle changes in personality. More fights with her husband. Bizarre impulses. Before long, Amanda feels her life spiraling out of control. She suspects something is terribly wrong. But when she tries to take action to get her life back on track, she finds her choices overrun by someone--or rather, *something*--else usurping her will.

This story is not scary, but it is pretty unsettling with some disturbing scenes and eerie undertones. It's no surprise what's happening to Amanda, but to experience it with her as the story progresses and the entity within her grows stronger definitely renews that sense of dread and suspense, giving the story a genuinely creepy feeling.

Very well-written and immersing, this would be the perfect story for a chilly, dark, stormy night!

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### **Lou says**

Shocking how an ordinary persons life can be turned upside down and life destroyed, if you are unlucky enough to be possessed by a Demon then this will happen. This happens to Amanda, the main protagonist, and she tries eventually once aware of the possession to rid herself from it.

The story is interesting and I like the way the author has used some Jewish folklore in the story. The story could have been more deeper sometimes the writing jumps to situations or days at start of chapters but concept was thrilling sort of movie type story. This a one sitting read novel quite short but good. This novel has got me interested in researching demons and folklore. The demons name is Naamah in wikipedia i found this info.

*Naamah appears in the Zohar as one of the four angels of sacred prostitution, the mates of the archangel Samael. Her fellow succubi are Lilith, Eisheth Zenunim, and Agrat Bat Mahlat. They are the original four queens of the demons. According to Zohar she is a succubus and fallen angel, and is generally regarded as an aspect or relation of Lilith. After Cain killed Abel, Adam separated from Eve for 130 years. During this time, two female spirits, Lilith and Naamah would visit Adam and bear his children, who became the Plagues of Mankind. (Zohar 3:76b-77a)*

In the novel there is a reference to interesting info on possession.

"Possession usually begins with a preliminary stage called "obsession" the obsession of the demon with the victim. In this stage the victim is still alone in his body but all five senses, and in addition the memory and mind, can be manipulated and disturbed by the Entity. The victim may feel lust, envy, greed or urges towards any of the sins with stronger force than ever before. It is common for the victim to hear the demon in the form of rapping, tapping, or scratching that seems to follow them around; also common is for the victim to have their dreams infiltrated by the Possessing Entity."

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### **Alisha Marie says**

I read "Come Closer" in one day (it was an exceptionally short read) and in broad daylight. And while I was reading it, I was thinking "yeah, good story, interesting, creepy, but not downright scary." All along I was thinking that it wouldn't affect me the way other books/movies about possession would (The Exorcist traumatized me severely as a kid. I kept thinking that if I slept in my bed it would start shaking and I would be possessed. Yes, yes, I had an extremely active imagination like most eleven year olds, not much has changed now that I'm twenty). So, I went to bed without fear thinking that I was going to be fine.

Cut to me at 2:00 am terrified because I kept hearing taps in my room that were extremely loud and were apparently coming from absolutely nowhere (Amanda kept hearing taps in her house as she was slowly getting possessed), so naturally, I got up, turned on my light, to examine this new development in my room. It ended up being my heater.

The point of this review is to tell anyone who likes horror stories to pick this up even if it isn't gory or Stephen-King-like-horror. It's still a freaky little novel that creeps up on you. And to those who don't like horror, you should check this out because it's not really out-and-out horror. But just creepy enough to give you a taste of it.

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## **Reid says**

Come Closer is a demon possession story and a story of a disintegrating marriage, kicked off on Valentine's Day, no less, with a certain lack of intimacy and trust between husband and wife (Amanda) after six years of marriage. Gran manages to write a creepy and humorous story in the beginning, but the second half wasn't quite as interesting, except to sort of finish what she (Gran, Amanda, the demon) started.

One possibly notable aside is that Gran mentions, in one line only, a doctor who died of a stroke, named Jeff Winston, which is the name of the protagonist in Ken Grimwood's *Replay* - a Groundhog Day story where the character dies over and over with a heart attack. <http://www.goodreads.com/review/show/...>

Also, this doomed marriage/possession story very much parallels Tolstoy's doomed marriage/obsession story, *The Kreutzer Sonata*. Maybe that character was possessed by a demon, too!  
<http://www.goodreads.com/review/show/...>

This novel is good enough to recommend, if the plot or themes interest you. It's a very quick read.

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## **Chris says**

This book creeped me out. That coming from someone who lives on a steady diet of horror.

If you love horror, you have to read this one.

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## **Gary says**

This was not a bad read. It was a nice, quick, change of pace. It tells the story of demonic possession from the perspective of the victim. It is very atmospheric in the beginning and the author selected an excellent, abandoned setting with the correct number of stray dogs and empty apartments for the story.

The narrator's thoughts and actions become increasingly disturbing as the plot progresses. The story does become predictable fairly early on and the reader will probably guess the ending long before they finish the book. The book is not intended to read like a mystery novel, however.

The dramatic irony created by the foreshadowing, and the sense of impending catastrophe (and tension created by our knowing what is happening and will probably happen), is what the author excels at. The themes are not new; however, this book has a unique spin that makes for an entertaining but depressing, read.

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## **Rachel (TheShadesofOrange) says**

### **4.5 Stars**

This is an incredibly short novel that manages to pack a punch in a limited number of pages. The details of the story are vivid and memorable, creating a sense of unease.

Told in the first person perspective, most of the horror of this book resides within the mind of protagonist.

This unique choice blends together elements of traditional horror with psychological suspense. The story itself is fairly quiet and slow paced with minimal action. This story is more contemplative than scary.

The strength of the story should come from the unreliable nature of the main character. Unfortunately, the narrator gives away too much of the plot upfront, which takes away much of the mystery surrounding. While not perfect, this is still a compelling and clever little novel.

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### **Bandit says**

I wasn't sure what to expect with this one and its front cover praise, proclaiming it to be the year's scariest book. I don't know if it was, but then again I don't know/probably haven't read all the scary books that came out that year. But...this book was very very good. It dealt with the subject of demonic possession in a very matter of fact first person narrative that I found to be very effective. If it was all an elaborate metaphor, it clearly went right over my head, but as a straight-up possession story it definitely worked on every unsettling level. This was a short very quick read, but it stays with you, makes you think. I definitely recommend this one.

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### **Richard Thomas says**

Wow. Re-read this book, sat down last night, just meaning to take a peek, and then two hours later, DONE. Such an amazing book, not at all what you'd think a book about demon possession would be like. Terrifying, subtle, and stylish. Fantastic.

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### **Brandon Petry says**

That was such a knock-out gut-punch of a short read. Reminds me that even the horror genre tropes I don't love (possession in this case), if in the right hands, can surprise and decimate me. That ending, hot damn, I'm still reeling from it. I highly recommend checking it out. Not since Paul Tremblay's *A Head Full of Ghosts* have I been blindsided and fallen so in love with a book about (or maybe not about...) demonic possession. I will have to check out *My Best Friend's Exorcism* next to see how it stacks up against these two powerhouse novels.

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### **Tressa says**

Great literary horror is few and far between, so when my friends at Goodreads\* started raving about a book called *Come Closer*, I had to read it.

Sara Gran has written more than a dark fiction about demon possession, she wrote a book about the female psyche, about the impulse of civilized people to do harm to those we love and those we don't know, and she gave her story a shot of the old "turn of the screw" by having a pretty, confident architect inadvertently invite the spirit Naamah from Jewish lore to take over her mind and whittle the world away until there is nothing left but these two.

Amanda lives in Manhattan with her husband, Edward, and theirs is a solid marriage. Trendy restaurants and flea-market weekends make up their complacent existence. But the tapping in the walls of their small apartment follow them to their dream loft, and one day Amanda receives a book she didn't order on how to tell if you're possessed by a demon—complete with quizzes—and she starts wondering about puzzling urges that have overtaken her daily life, such as the urge to steal small items from stores or burn her husband with her cigarette or drown the young daughter of a friend. At night she dreams of lying on a red beach next to a woman with crazy hair and pointy teeth who hugs her so fiercely she can barely breathe. Then come the blackouts and the coming to consciousness in hotel rooms with strange men. She starts scoring higher on the quizzes, but is she really possessed, or is it a case of a woman on a downward spiral into insanity?

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### **Gatorman says**

Excellent little horror story about a woman's slow descent from normal, working, married life into madness. Gran does a superb job of describing Amanda's change as one that appears to be the result of demonic possession but may just be the result of an overpowering mental illness. It's a fascinating, powerful tale that grabs you from the first page and never lets go even after the story ends. Sad and horrifying, this is not a book for the feint of heart. Highly recommended.

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