



# After Life

*Rhian Ellis*

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) ➔

# After Life

*Rhian Ellis*

## After Life Rhian Ellis

"First, I had to get his body into the boat". This ominous opening begins a tale of secrets and lies, visions, and hovering spirits. At its center is Naomi Ash, a young woman who has come of age on the frigid banks of a western New York lake community called Train Line. Here she grows up and falls in love in a town where mediums, spiritualists, and professional clairvoyants hold "psychic fairs" to help make ends meet. When the skeleton of Peter, Naomi's ex-lover, surfaces, the mystery of his death must be uncovered. In the process, Naomi, now a clairvoyant herself, unveils a world where the secrets of the dead cannot stay buried and where her past must confront her precarious present.

## After Life Details

Date : Published July 17th 2000 by Viking Adult

ISBN : 9780670892426

Author : Rhian Ellis

Format : Hardcover 288 pages

Genre : Fiction, Mystery, Fantasy, Paranormal, Thriller, Mystery Thriller, Ghosts, Contemporary, Literary  
Fiction, Magic, Magical Realism

 [Download After Life ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online After Life ...pdf](#)

**Download and Read Free Online After Life Rhian Ellis**

---

# From Reader Review After Life for online ebook

## Nancy says

I absolutely loved this book. It takes place in a small upstate NY town, where Naomi works as a medium (as does her mother and many of the residents) in a spiritualistic community. We learn on page 1 that Naomi is trying to secretly bury the body of her dead lover, Peter. As the book unfolds, it becomes so suspenseful...how did Peter die? We learn slowly, in bits and pieces. The psychics and mediums...are they fake, real, or a little of both? Will Naomi's secret remain a secret? I couldn't turn the pages fast enough!

Naomi's loving yet contradictory relationship with her mother is very realistic. The nostalgia that Naomi has for her childhood in New Orleans, her relationship with the little girl she babysits for, her struggle with loneliness while at the same time preferring to be alone...all of these were written about with such great detail that I felt I was right there with her.

There was just enough magical realism throughout to balance out the story, plus, a perfect ending! What more could I ask for?!

---

## Shane says

With this book, I decided to try keeping a reader's journal, because I never write down as much as I should whilst reading; and why is that? Ah well, enough about me: here is the first reader's journal entry I made whilst reading this book:

*As of this writing, I am up to page 124 of "After Life," and it is an intriguing read that has raised a bunch of questions, because the first chapter "What I Did" starts off with narrator, Naomi Ash, saying: "First I had to get his body into the boat." Thus, although we know that Naomi has killed Peter, whose body she is trying to dispose of, we have no idea why she did it, and thus far there isn't really much to clue us in on the nature of their relationship and what would lead her to commit murder.*

*Naomi is the daughter of a clairvoyant, who becomes one herself - and the way she describes the supernatural is along the lines of how Naomi sums up how she felt after early experiences in developing her abilities: "I never doubted the validity of what I heard. Whether it was strictly true or not didn't matter, because truth, I knew, could be interpreted a thousand ways."*

*I think that might sum up what this book is about, which is the blurred lines between truth and lies, and while I think Naomi believes in the supernatural, it is not clear if she is delusional or not. Regardless, she is a hard nut to crack, because on one hand she confides some of her deepest secrets, yet she doesn't actually seem to reveal much about herself.*

*So now: the author has created a nice sense of mystery and intrigue and this is the type of book seems as it will hinge on the ending; and as of now I can't figure out how it's going to end, or why Naomi killed Peter. So fingers crossed that Ellis can pull off a doozy of an ending.*

Unfortunately, that was also the last journal entree - I need to be a tad more consistent. Nonetheless, I think what stood about this book is how the author crafted the narrator in such a way that she seems like someone that is left undefined in many respects. And I think the narrator is one of those 'water-reflective' characters in which one's reaction to her says more about oneself than the character.

Overall, the key attractions: a beautifully written character and setting driven novel that is rather haunting, and I will be interested to see if this one has what I think of as 'stickiness' ~ which is kinda the same thing as being memorable, but I like the term 'stickiness' more than 'memorable' for whatevs reason.

---

## **Don says**

The second of the Nancy Pearl Book Lust Rediscovery series, *After Life* is an unexpected and unique read. The book is well written and the perspective of the main character is more than just interesting. Nancy Pearl writes in the forward that she has saved some of the lines in her personal notebooks and she quotes one or two. I like the way the author puts her words and thoughts together. I especially liked, "My empty heart was collapsing in on itself. A lonely life is a crime without witnesses, it is a movie played in a locked theater; can you ever really be sure what happens in it? Can you be sure it happened at all?"

I won't attempt to describe this book, much better descriptions may be found elsewhere, particularly read what Ms. Pearl writes, but I will say it is a great read for a lazy summer weekend.

---

## **Charlie says**

### **3.5 stars**

*After Life* holds the promise of a mystery delving into the world of spiritualism. If you're looking for a philosophical journey and deeply poignant read, this book will please. Set in a unique town where secrets are kept, insight into the future occurs, and regrets of the past lurk in an interesting tale about a girl lost, longing for what she believes before finding and facing her reality. Are her abilities and those around her truly psychic or just a highly developed sense of observation mix with chance prediction? The book opens with the death of Peter and travels backwards in order to move forward. What *After Life* lacks is the anticipation usually found in a mystery, death novel. I was longing for a twist. Although, the story is character driven, and rich in detail, the mystery is a little dry due to the amount of introspective examination by the narrator. What the book does well is thematically weave the belief of death, what the after life is, what it is to live and die and transcend on various levels. Without giving away the ending, I thought Naomi's awakening and life after her emotional death was clever and touching.

---

## **Lisa says**

I could not put this down once I started reading. It had me rooting for the main character and hoping no one would discover her crime. I also found the spiritualism aspect fascinating.

---

## Angela says

I think I would give this 3.5 stars. High marks for very interesting, very unusual compelling characters. I don't usually like murder stories at all but that part along with the unique angle kept me reading and enjoying this. The negative part is I was left wanting more of a story, there is not a whole lot of action, it's a lot of flashing back and forward which paints a picture of the characters and the murder.

---

## Nicole says

I picked up this book randomly because the cover caught my eye and when I read the description about a spiritual community of mediums, I thought it would be interesting. I think it could have been interesting, except for nothing happened in this book! Most of the book just seemed to have no point. How can a book with mediums, a murder, and a hidden body be so boring? I kept reading expecting it to get better or at least have an exciting ending, but the whole book just fell flat.

---

## Book of Secrets says

I'm not sure where I first heard about AFTER LIFE, but when I saw it at the library, I snatched it up. It's a unique murder mystery in that we know from the first page that the protagonist Naomi Ash has killed her boyfriend Peter, and the mystery is discovering how and why she did it. After his bones are unearthed a decade later, Naomi begins to tell us about it. The story alternates between present day events and Naomi's memories of past events leading up to Peter's death.

Naomi is a medium, just like her mother. They moved to a spiritualist colony in Train Line, New York, when she was young. Spiritualism is a religious belief that there is an alternate world where spirits of the dead live and certain people (mediums) can communicate with them. One theme that plays back and forth throughout the book is fake versus real. Naomi herself didn't believe in it as a child as she watched how her mother "fudged" spiritual readings to make it more believable to her clients. Whether her mother was a true medium or not, I don't know, but Naomi seemed like the real deal to me.

"...and we need each other, the dead and the living. Our lives are meaningless without the afterlife, and well, their lives are meaningless without the...antedeath."

Naomi is one of the most lost and lonely heroines I've read. After finishing the book, I'm still not sure how I feel about her. I don't dislike her in spite of what she did. I mostly feel sad for her and for Peter.

The story was well written, and I enjoyed the rich descriptions the author used for the sights, smells, and characters.

"On the lake, I rowed hard, my feet braced somewhat awkwardly on either side of Peter. Mist still hung over the surface, and droplets clung to my eyelashes and hair. The lake had been carved by glaciers; it was long and slender as a crooked finger."

It's hard to say what, exactly, AFTER LIFE was about. It was many things. Peter's death. Naomi's life. Her relationship with her eccentric mother. Spiritualism. What's real and what we hope is real.

I enjoyed the author's engaging writing style. It felt like I was in the story listening to Naomi tell me about her life, and I was hanging on every word. The plot was slow-paced in spots, because she did go into a lot of detail about everyday events, some of them didn't seem to move the story along, but maybe they would have meaning to another reader.

AFTER LIFE was a haunting tale to say the least, one that left me with lots to think about. I'm glad I read it, and I wouldn't hesitate to read more from this author. Recommended!

---

## Christie says

*After Life* was a delight to read from beginning to end. The novel opens with the compelling line: "First I had to get his body into the boat." The narrator is Naomi Ash, a woman in her early 30s who lives in Train Line, a whole town owned by The Church of Spiritualist Studies in Upstate New York.

"My first impression of the town was of clutter. Cars were parked nearly on the front steps, cats jumped from porch roofs and windowsills, hanging plants and wind chimes and mobiles dangled by every door. Winnie Sandox – said one painted wooden sign – Reader. And another: Mrs. Lawrence, Medium, is out. I couldn't believe it: a town made just for us."

It really is a town for Naomi and her mother, Madame Galina, who is a medium.

*After Ellis* is Naomi's story. It's the story of her relationship with her mother, the story of her relationship with the quirky little town and its odd assortment of characters and her relationship with Peter.

It is also about Naomi's relationship with the dead. Although she grew up helping her mother augment her readings with sounds and voices, Naomi doesn't really believe in any of it or as she says: "I sort of believed. I pretended to. I enjoyed the attention I got when I worked message services and sat for seances, and sometimes I felt the thrill of connection, but part of me held back."

When Naomi hears her first voice, everything changes.

*After Life* is a wonderful novel. Naomi is a terrific character: flawed and odd and vulnerable. The novel's mystery – who is this 'body' she has to get in the boat and why – propels the story along at a thriller-like clip, but ultimately *After Life* is really about a woman trying to make her way in the world, which just happens to include a few ghosts.

Loved it.

---

## Linda says

Strange story of a young woman's guilt over accidentally killing her boyfriend. The guilt and fear are exacerbated when ten years later, his bones are excavated. The setting is based on Lily Dale a community in NY limited to Spiritualists - two of which are the narrator and her mother. Fascinating read - couldn't put it down. Read on trip west.

---

### **Agnes says**

This book hooked me in from the very first sentence and kept me hooked to the very end. I will not describe the plot as that has already been done much better than I could ever begin to do. What I will try to do is tell you why I enjoyed this book so much. I could see, smell, and taste this story. The author somehow transported me into Naomi Ash's mind. I read this book in two sittings (unusual for me) because I simply found it hard to put it down. I certainly hope Ellis will write another novel. Her characters in this one are so vividly drawn that I felt as though I had known them myself.

---

### **Leigh Podgorski says**

#### **Slow with an Unlikable Heroine**

AFTER LIFE is the hardest book for me to rate since I've begun reading and reviewing books on Amazon Kindle.

Brian Ellis is a sumptuous writer: her descriptions are luscious and full and evocative; her analogies stunning. But there is much more to novel-making than gorgeous writing, and that's called story, and to a lesser extent, character. There really is no story here. Ellis starts us off with a bang, then leaves us hanging for most of the rest of the book- dying of boredom amidst her beautiful prose.

And what about character? No one really to root much for here- not even the dead guy. The mother- daughter relationship, to me, simply never develops. And as for Naomi...oh, my. Perhaps a spoiler alert, but some of her actions toward Peter, the boyfriend she accidentally- yes, it was an accident, kills are horrendous- arguably far worse than the so-called crime itself as that was, in fact as stated, an accident in the middle of a fight. Naomi messes with the guys head; and then her actions afterward- the cover-up are truly inexcusable. And inexplicable. She has no arc. And why, in God's name does not ONE of all these psychics pick up on this in TEN years! Are they all protecting her? All fakes? Ellis can't seem to make up her line-up especially about the Mom, which leaves the whole book wobbly.

But there is that writing!

For that reason alone, I will certainly search out this author for other work.

Her writing is something you can feast on. I hope she developed her storytelling after this one.

---

### **ObiWan Canubi says**

I really don't know where to begin, so maybe we start with a few facts. The title and description captivated me, the unknown is intriguing interesting almost intoxicating. This book took me 3 weeks to read, for some people who may be average, but 300 pages should take a few days tops for me. It wasn't because I was busy or distracted. After Life read like Average Joe Workingman's Biography: The Accounting Firm Employment Years. If that sounds like a harsh criticism well, it is what it is intended. The story read on and on how this happened, and this person went to dinner with this person, and someone made a Halloween costume.

Nothing ever happens to progress the story from the opening paragraph when Naomi drags the dead body of her lover down the stairs, into the boat and buries him to be forgotten forever.

For the next 290 pages the book stumbles to tell you a story of a self-centered mother who never shows affection to a daughter dying to be loved and a town who filled with hundreds of psychics, mediums, clairvoyants and fortune tellers allows a murder to happen under their nose but never notice the act... but at the same time convincing you that "hey, all this hocus pocus it true." Really? Everyone in the town can communicate with the dead and no one knew poor Peter lied buried and murdered for a decade. Now if you believe in mediums or psychics I am not insulting your beliefs, I believe in aliens, who am I to judge. But don't tell me someone, a whole community is gifted and communicates daily with the dead who walk amongst us and no one was tipped off by these events.

Aside from my displeasure with the actual story the novel just had no hook, the reason it took me 3 weeks to finish the tale and liken it to an Average Joe's Biography was just that, it never moved. Page after page the author describes daily mundane activities and history in the character's lives. Like a 2 hour directors cut of a laundry detergent commercial. It wasn't a who-done-it, the murderer is revealed in the opening moments. It wasn't a haunting. It's about a girl who kills a boy and goes about her normal life for ten years, and this is her first-person view of her life.

I kept waiting for a twist, waiting to find out she died and was a ghost among the mediums. No, nothing, just a story about a girl who killed someone ten years prior and did nothing since but work and read a few palms.

In closing a question you may be wondering. Why would you read 300 pages of a book you disliked so much?

Well, first I was hoping the book would kick in and a story for the ages was waiting to blossom, it didn't.

Second, I paid \$4.99 for the Kindle Edition and I owed it to myself to finish this book to warn others of its pitfalls.

Take head, do not read.

---

### **Aaron Mcquiston says**

I was reading this book at work, really delving into it, when a coworker asked the ominous question: "What are you reading?" I tried to explain "After Life" in short sentences. A woman who works as a medium, in a town of mediums, clairvoyants, and charlatans, kills someone and she is trying to keep it a secret after they find the bones of the body that she buried, using the woman's, Naomi's, own mother to help with the investigation. As I'm telling my coworker this, I realize that this is kind of a cheesy description, something of of Montell William's Sylvia Brown episode, so I had to clarify. "It sounds like a dumb book when I describe it like that, and there is a ton of skeptics when it comes to seances, Ouija boards, and talking to the dead, but what makes this compelling is that there is no facade that the mediums are ever really telling the truth. Naomi says that it is mostly parlor tricks in the very beginning of the novel so you think that if she is bold enough to out everyone she knows as shams, then there has to be some sort of truth to the rest of the narrative. This is what makes it interesting." Of course my co-worker did not say much else and did not ask again.

There are things about Ms. Ellis's writing that I like. The biggest one is that she uses a sense of smell to



describe a great amount of her settings. It has been proven that smell is the best sense memory so as I am reading, even though I'm not there, I can envision the rooms and places exactly as they are because I can smell them. She also spends a great amount of time with delicate details, trying to describe the daily lives of people, where they go, what they eat, how they walk. This detail can be boring to some, but to me it really creates a large landscape for the action. She is good at writing in a manner that makes you feel as if you are part of the place, a person in town, hearing the story of Naomi Ash being told in a calculated, thoughtful way.

And this is what "After Life" is about for me. It is how a person can do something that is horrendous, like kill someone and hide it, and have to deal with the consequences by going through each day, step by step, minute by minute, with a tension of hope that she will never get caught. It causes life to real end, and even though it has not ended physically, it has ended in a spiritual sense.

---

### **Linda Lipko says**

I had to think about the impact of this book before trying to write an adequate review. I think the mark of a good book is one that perplexes, challenges and haunts. All three of those are reactions I have to the authors debut novel.

Unlike many mystery books wherein we are introduced to a murder and wonder who did it, After Life begins with a statement by the perpetrator acknowledging her misdeed. The opening line -- "First I had to get his body into the boat" -- sets the tone as throughout the book we learn details of the murder, but it isn't until the end, when the reader learns why it occurred.

Naomi Ash by all accounts should not be a like able character, yet in the authors clear, perceptive writing, one cannot help but grow to feel empathy for Naomi.

Deftly weaving a tale of spiritualism, while tracing the roots of this movement from its beginnings in the US, we are transported to Train Line, NY. Therein, the reader feels as though they are a part of the every day happenings of a small town, filled with eccentric, mystical folk who are not above using a little fakery to assist people in reaching their loved ones who have passed to the other side.

Naomi follows in her mother's footsteps and taps into abilities in the spiritualistic realm. Dabbling with her talents, she is sporadically successful in her endeavors, but as with all things in her life, she lacks a drive, gumption and motivation to take control. She is lazy, rarely bathes and fails to develop social skills. She cares little for her appearance, has no friends and seems incapable of sustaining any depth of feeling.

Peter Morton arrives in her life and takes her by surprise. Finding she is capable of love is a unique revelation. Her joy is short term. The book weaves past with present when we learn that ten years ago, she killed Peter and buried his body in the surrounding woods of Train Life.

When a contractor unearths the body, she prays that Peter is not one of the spirits that can communicate with her.

Slow in pace, this book takes the reader by surprise. The author superbly weaves a story of guilt and redemption, of truth and lies, of black, white and gray.

Recommended.

---