



Close To Me

Amanda Reynolds

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What if you couldn't remember the last year of your life? And the people closest to you were lying about what really happened?

Gripping, shocking psychological suspense that fans of Liane Moriarty's *The Husband's Secret*, Clare Mackintosh's *I Let You Go*, and Linda Green's *While My Eyes Were Closed* will love.

She can't remember the last year. Her husband wants to keep it that way.

When Jo Harding falls down the stairs at home, she wakes up in hospital with partial amnesia - she's lost a whole year of memories.

A lot can happen in a year. Was Jo having an affair? Lying to her family? Starting a new life?

She can't remember what she did - or what happened the night she fell.

But she's beginning to realise she might not be as good a wife and mother as she thought.

Close To Me Details

Date : Published March 31st 2017 by Wildfire

ISBN :

Author : Amanda Reynolds

Format : Kindle Edition 384 pages

Genre : Mystery, Suspense, Fiction, Thriller, Psychological Thriller, Mystery Thriller

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From Reader Review Close To Me for online ebook

Joanne Robertson says

Now everyone knows I LOVE a dysfunctional family (rumours that this is because it shows my own family in a slightly better light are of course unfounded!!) so I was totally tempted by the blurb of Close To Me which seemed right up my street, with family secrets lying at the heart of this memory loss suspense.

I wasn't sure if I would take to Jo but as we shared a name and are of a similar age I wanted to give her a chance. Jo is struggling after a fall has left her with amnesia, not a total memory loss though, just of the last year. And it's pretty obvious that her family are all keeping secrets about things that have happened in that year. Jo is having a few flashbacks though and although they seem to be rather erotic in nature, she has always been a faithful and loving wife.....hasn't she? Could her lost year really be hiding THAT much? As the plot unfold in the days following her "accident" we also get glimpses of the life Jo was living leading up to it. And as the plot progressed I actually came to like Jo and felt an empathy with her that came easier than I had thought it would.

One of the things I liked about Close To Me was the family dynamics and the rather realistic dramatic reactions to things that were happening. It came across like a reality show at times, with "looks" between different family members, non communicative children and lots of emotional responses once hidden secrets had been revealed. With Jo being of the age she was, she had to deal with "empty nest syndrome" as well which cruelly often coincides with the menopause which can make women more emotional and sensitive as well as having a dramatic effect on their sex life. Jo thinks she may have had an affair but if so who with? And is that the reason that she feels her fall wasn't an accident? Due to the way the story was set out, sometimes we could see what had lead to events before Jo did but the twists and turns towards the end weren't the ones that I had been expecting! I trusted nobody in this book and that's just the way I like it!

I read a lot of books now that have similar themes so it does take a lot to stand out for me but I did rather enjoy Close To Me and even read it in one session which says it all.

Kelly says

In this very well executed debut thriller, Jo Harding wakes from a head injury with no memory of the past year. Things have changed drastically with her husband and two adult children, and Jo wonders what they are keeping from her. This novel switches between two time periods. The first is the present with Jo slowly remembering parts of the last year. The second starts a year back telling her story from there forward. I thought Amanda Reynolds did a great job marching these two storylines toward each other, building suspense along the way. I really enjoyed the dynamics of Jo's relationships with her family members and her reactions to the memories as they came forth. .

I look forward to reading more from Amanda Reynolds. Thank you to Quercus USA for sending me a review copy.

Jessica says

Jo Harding wakes up on the way to the hospital in an ambulance. Everyone around her is telling her she fell down the stairs. The last thing Jo can remember is taking her son, Fin, to university with her husband, Rob. The problem is that was a year ago.

Jo has no recollection of what happened in the last year of her life. She can't remember the night of her fall, but she has an overwhelming sense of dread and fear towards her husband. Rob seems to have convinced her children to not to mention what has happened over the course of the last year. He is constantly reiterating to Jo how happy they are in their marriage. If all of this is true, why does Rob insist on hiding the last year? Why is Jo feeling this way towards the man she has been married to for the last 24 years? Is it possible that Rob pushed her down the stairs?

Amanda Reynolds does a stunning job of drawing the reader in to Jo Harding's life in *CLOSE TO ME*. Each chapter is broken down between present day and a flashback from the last year of Jo's life. As the novel progresses the reader is inched closer to the day of the fall, until we're finally able to learn what has happened. Reynolds presents the reader not only with an unreliable narrator, but a cast of unreliable secondary characters as well. The reader is never sure who to trust with the information they're revealing to Jo about her life, as each person she talks to has individual motives to spin their stories in their best light. At the end of the novel Reynolds creates a masterful ending where each loose end is neatly tied and the reader is left feeling fulfilled. *CLOSE TO ME* is a slow-burn psychological thriller presented in a unique style with chapters containing both past and present, in which the reader is given a web of lies they must work to untangle while trusting the less than accurate mind of a woman suffering from partial amnesia.

A special thank you to Quercus USA and Amanda Reynolds for providing me a copy of *CLOSE TO ME* in exchange for my honest and unbiased review.

Nicki says

Jo Harding wakes up in a hospital with partial amnesia, she has lost a whole year of her life. She is informed that she fell down the stairs but she has no memory of what happened on that night.

Jo begins a frantic quest to unlock her lost memories and discover the truth gradually uncovering secrets that some people especially her husband Rob would prefer remained hidden, at the same time discovering things about herself that make her start to wonder if she is the perfect wife and mother that she thought she was.

This engrossing story of lies, families, secrets and betrayals is voiced entirely by Jo in the third person pov. It unfolds in chapters that alternate between before and after the fall, the chapters are clearly headed and the story flows along nicely. The characters are well developed and realistic but mostly unlikable apart from Jo's son Fin and Rose who works in the drop out centre where Jo volunteers. It must be absolutely terrifying to lose a whole chunk of your life and the author's portrayal of Jo's fear, frustration and confusion was believable and realistic but I found it hard to feel any sympathy for her because of some of her thoughts and actions as the story unfolded.

It's an enjoyable debut mystery that had me hooked from the opening prologue right through to the shocking but not totally unexpected conclusion. I thoroughly enjoyed reading this book and look forward to reading more books by this author in the future.

Many thanks to Headline/wildfire for an arc of this book via Netgalley in exchange for a honest review.

Amanda - Mrs B's Book Reviews says

*Review to come.

Kacey - Traveling Sister says

2.5*

After a fall down a flight of stairs, Jo is slowly regaining consciousness in a local hospital. Battered and bruised, she tries desperately to recall why she fell. Could her husband be to blame? She quickly realizes she has virtually no recollection of the fall itself or the entire year leading up to the fall. To make matters worse, her husband Rob and her two children are less than eager to fill in the blanks either. Why not? What don't they want her to remember?

The story-line is told from Jo's POV from before and after the fall as she tries to regain her memories from the last year. As the 2 timelines converge, the facts surrounding what occurred before vs after the fall became very confusing.

I had a great difficulty connecting with Jo. She wasn't a likable character at all. Truth is, I had a hard time finding any likable character in the book. I found the dialogue frustrating at times. Everyone talking but with no urgency to fill in the gaps of her memory! With this same behavior repeated over and over with very little progress, the book seemed to slow to a crawl.

This one just wasn't for me. There are many great reviews out there so please judge for yourself, this is just my opinion.

Thank you to NetGalley, Quercus (US) And Amanda Reynolds for a copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

Selene says

Jo and Rob have been married for twenty-four years and have two adult children. Jo doesn't remember the last year of her life and the text goes back and forth between the past and the present, before and after Jo's accident.

This was an okay read, but it didn't fully hold my interest and my mind wandered a lot while reading this book. The suspense built to a climax that had me rolling my eyes, as it was reminiscent of other stories I'd already read this year.

You know those characters whose thoughts you don't mind fishing around in? Well, I was kind of bored with Jo's and didn't really connect with her. Her thoughts were on a loop that I couldn't wait to exit from and the conclusion was unsurprising.

? This book is perfect for domestic thriller lovers and fans of unlikable characters.

** NetGalley copy generously provided by Quercus in exchange for an honest review.*

Louise Wilson says

3.5 stars. When Jo Harding fell down the stairs at her home, she wakes up in hospital with partial amnesia. She can't remember anything that's happened in the last year and her husband wants to keep it that way. Was Jo having an affair? Lying to her family? Starting a new life's? She can't remember the night she fell.

This is a story of lies, secrets, families and betrayals. The chapters alternate between before and after the fall. The characters are believable but mostly they are unlikable. The book is fast paced, tense and with just the right amount of drama. The twists and turns will keep your attention. The ending for me was not unexpected. All in, it's a really good debut novel.

I would like to thank NetGalley, Headline and the author Amanda Reynolds for my ARC in exchange for an honest review.

Bex (Beckie Bookworm) says

Reviewed By Beckie Bookworm
<https://www.beckiebookworm.com>

Really enjoyed Close To Me by Amanda Reynolds, wasn't sure what to expect this being a debut author but I certainly wasn't disappointed.

Close To Me tells the story of Jo Harding after she falls down stairs hitting her head and losing her memory of the past year.

On coming home things feel different and disjointed, Jo feels there is an undercurrent of deceit, secrets being kept from her by her husband and children and as she unravels the mysteries of the past year things escalate to a shocking conclusion.

So this was a great psychological read, it kept my interest and pulled me in, the writing was superb, and the storyline very easy to follow.

Close to me is told in two parts, real-time and snippets of the past year, though it has a slow build this is not a bad thing as you get to understand Jo's life and how she is the person she is.

The characters here felt real and human, some you could sympathise with others not so much.

If I had to pick my least favourite person in this, it would have to be the daughter I found her very self-centred and immature, but she's a product of her overindulged upbringing.

I myself have grown up children there is no way on this planet I would be paying for their accommodation. what a right spoilt brat Sash is.

Close to me delves into the dynamics of family and the resulting aftermath when things ultimately implode. I did kind of guess where this was going but it didn't detract from my overall enjoyment reading this. Would I recommend this? Hell Yeah!!!
It was an engaging read.
Thank you to NetGalley, publisher and the author for providing me with an arc of Close to me
This is my own honest unbiased opinion.

Reviewed By Beckie Bookworm

<https://www.beckiebookworm.com/>

<https://www.facebook.com/beckiebookworm/>

i. says

The idea for the plot is good: a memory loss is always intriguing and the story goes back and forth adding more tension to the drama. However, I had a hard time finishing this book and felt truly sad after reading it.

This is novel about a dysfunctional family whose members don't love each other the way they should. We don't really know why or if they ever had a good relationship except for in their holiday pictures. We only know that they seemingly ignore this fact and they keep on interacting with each other until the situation becomes unbearable.

If you are looking for an entertaining novel about the ups and downs of a happy family with a positive outcome, this novel may not appeal to you . On the other hand, if you enjoy reading about troubled families and unloving relationships with a little bit of mystery and twisted characters, this may be a good book for you.

www.theleisurediaries.blogspot.com

Holly B says

2.5 stars

Jo Harding has amnesia. She has been told by her husband Rob that she has fallen down the stairs. He keeps repeating this to her! As snippets of memory begin to come back, she questions the circumstances of her fall.

She is having flashbacks of a certain bedroom scene! Rob and her two adult children don't seem to want to fill in the blanks for her, but why?

Who is the man with the featureless face in her flashback? Was she having an affair? Why does she feel afraid of Rob?

While the story line is good/intriguing, I was confused by the timeline that switched between Before the fall

(with different increments of the months) and After the fall. I felt like I was reading different versions of the same events over and over. I also felt the story was being told by Jo, but I wasn't experiencing it. I was never pulled in or interested in finding out the truth.

Fans of domestic dysfunctional families will probably really enjoy this one! It just lacked the "gripping" factor for me!

Thanks to Netgalley, the author, and Quercus publishers
Published July 27,2017

Liz Barnsley says

I quite liked Close To Me, read it fast, but I have to say these are all becoming a little bit samey.

That's not to say this was without its charms - I was engaged by the relationship between this couple, that had been married for years the dynamic when Jo loses a year of memory and begins to become aware that perhaps her marriage during that time became less than rock solid is intriguing and kept me turning the pages.

I liked the family drama portions much more than the mystery element (did she fall or was she pushed) especially the relationship Rob and Jo have with their two children, growing pains for everyone as they leave home and make questionable choices.

Amanda Reynolds writes beautifully and whilst I can't say that this is unique, or even particularly different to other books in this genre you might read this year - I CAN say that it has that addictive quality and is a story well told so for that reason I would definitely recommend it if you like stories that fall under the psychological thriller umbrella.

Bookread2day says

I love reading about a problem within a fictional married couple. After a fall down the stairs Jo has lost a year of her life. Her husband has given her a new mobile phone, as her other one got ruined in her fall. The conclusion Jo has come to is was she having an affair with a man before her fall and if so who is he? Without her old mobile phone Jo now has no way of finding out what happened before her fall. Although I liked this story a lot but I did however feel that situation was repeating itself at times. I do recommend reading Close To Me by Amanda Reynolds and I will at some point read the authors new book that is out now.

Rachael says

Ugh.

Another amnesia trope, every character dangerously unlikeable.

I'm sorry to downmark, the authors writing is fine, but the storyline has been done so many times before and so much better.

Please stop writing all men as one-dimensional, evil, cheating, lying predators and all women as helpless, naive, wilfully ignorant victims, it does both sexes a huge disservice.

Chandra Claypool (wherethereadergrows) says

What would you do if you woke up after a fall and can't remember the last year of your life, find yourself apprehensive about a husband you think you love and everyone is tip toeing around you?

Traveling from the days after she wakes up from her accident, to the past year as she starts to remember... the author gives us a full on, in depth peek inside Jo's mind. She does a great job transversing in time as we get peeks into what everyone is hoping she won't remember. Her children seem different, her husband is too attentive and the only person who seems to be honest with her, a co-worker, is telling her things that don't make much sense. No one is as they should be and as the memories start coming back, she confronts a reality she didn't expect.

I struggled through the first 200 pages of this book. This is definitely a slow burner of a book but I was intrigued to see exactly what we were going to learn about Jo and her family. As much as I love to dislike characters, I really just couldn't find myself empathizing or feeling bad for Jo on any level. The last 100 pages or so picked up in speed and we finally get some answers... however, by this point, my interest had pretty much waned. I still needed to know what happened but nothing was all that surprising.

Don't get me wrong, the book is a solid debut. I'm intrigued to see what else Amanda Reynolds will bring to the table as I'll surely check out her next book. This one just didn't quite work for me. However, her writing is solid, her character build is on point and I think those who love the slow burn suspense will really enjoy this story line.

Huge thank you to Quercus Books for this copy in return for my honest review.
