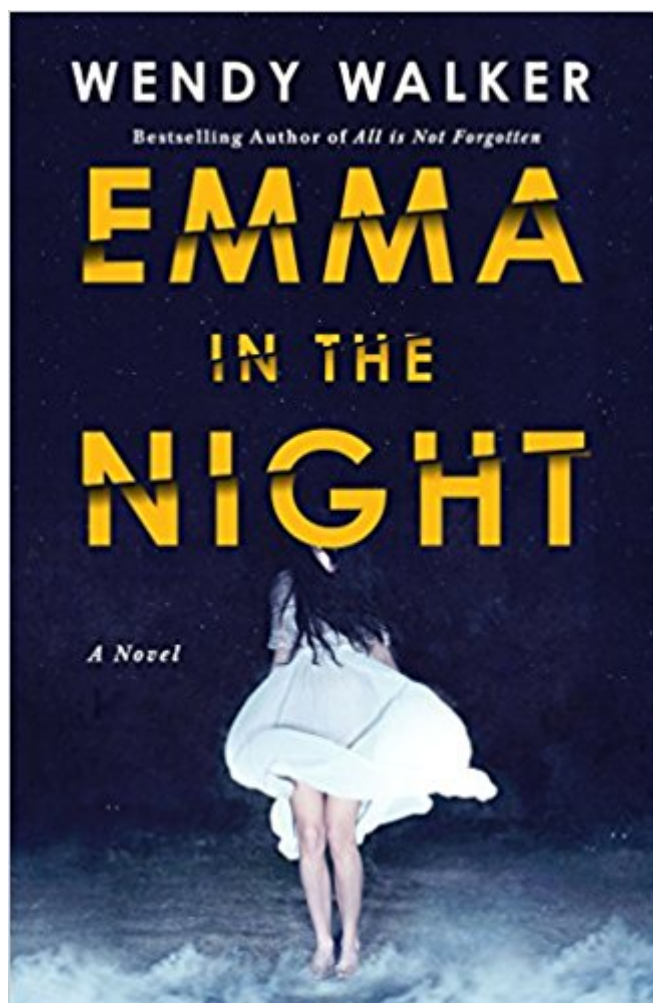


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Emma In The Night: A Novel



Synopsis

"Both twisted and twisty, this smart psychological thriller sets a new standard for unreliable narrators." —Booklist, Starred Review
One night three years ago, the Tanner sisters disappeared: fifteen-year-old Cass and seventeen-year-old Emma. Three years later, Cass returns, without her sister Emma. Her story is one of kidnapping and betrayal, of a mysterious island where the two were held. But to forensic psychiatrist Dr. Abby Winter, something doesn't add up. Looking deep within this dysfunctional family Dr. Winter uncovers a life where boundaries were violated and a narcissistic parent held sway. And where one sister's return might just be the beginning of the crime.
Bestselling author Wendy Walker returns with another winning thriller, *Emma in the Night*.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

An Best Book of August 2017: Wendy Walker's last novel, *All Is Not Forgotten* was a gritty psychological thriller that put readers on edge with intermittent flashes of brutality. In *Emma in the Night*, Walker has forsworn any cringe-inducing violence and instead brought her A-game of cat and mouse. Sisters Emma and Cass disappeared one night and, three years later, Cass shows up on her mother's doorstep with an incredible story of where they'd been and how to find her older sister. The reader very quickly realizes that the mother is as narcissistic as they come and that there is something extremely distorted and ugly going on in this family. When the detective and forensic psychiatrist who first worked the case of the girls' disappearance are brought back to the scene, more secrets are revealed. Each chapter adds another warped layer to the story,

and just when you think you've sorted out the villains and the victims, Walker forces you to reconsider. A memorable and highly satisfying thriller. --Seira Wilson, Book Review

Praise for *Emma in the Night*: "Twisty...a thriller that keeps readers guessing." *The New York Times* "In this searing psychological thriller...Walker's portrayal of the ways in which a narcissistic, self-involved mother can affect her children deepens the plot as it builds to a shocking finale." *Publishers Weekly, Starred Review* "A tense thriller explores the bond between sisters and family dynamics that give new meaning to the term 'dysfunctional'...This thriller aims right for the heart and never lets go." *Kirkus, Starred Review* "Both twisted and twisty, this smart psychological thriller sets a new standard for unreliable narrators." *Booklist, Starred Review*

Told from several points of view, The story of two missing sisters rolls out slowly, at times too slowly. It's a gripping tale of family dysfunction with the main character struggling to piece together a plausible backstory that will aid investigators, including the psychologically tormented Dr. Abby Winter, to solve the sisters' mysterious disappearance. Lots of twists and turns.

This is not yet another "missing girl" story. This is a tale about a twisted family with a startling conclusion, a well-written story that'll have you questioning everything. Two sisters have been missing for three years. Were they abducted? Did they drown on the beach where the car belonging to the older sister was found? Did they simply run away? No one knows... until the younger sister, Cass, fifteen when she vanished, reappears on her mother's porch as if she'd never been gone at all. Alone. Cass is beside herself. She insists that she's left Emma behind and they need to find her. She tells a story that sounds insane, but eventually there's evidence that backs her up. Apparently she'd been on an island, taken there by an older couple and not permitted to leave. She says that she was both treated as family and like a prisoner, and most disturbingly... Emma is still there. Chapters alternate from the perspective of Cass and the calmer, more mature forensic psychiatrist on the case: Dr. Abby Winter. She'd become borderline obsessed with the case years ago and jumps at the opportunity to speak to the teenager she spent so much time trying to find. She spent a lot of time trying to figure out the family. Having experience with her own narcissistic mother, she's convinced Mrs. Martin, mother to the girls, suffers from the personality disorder as well. She identifies with Cass and Emma, but there's something that's bothering her as interviews with Cass continue. This book features a lot of interesting yet disturbing themes that might still be

rolling around in your head long after you put it down. It was actually a slow read for me, maybe because of that. Still an enjoyable book. I received an ARC of this book from Net Galley and St Martin's Press, thank you! My review is honest and unbiased.

I had to wait a day to try and collect my thoughts on this book. The blurb promised

From the bestselling author of *All Is Not Forgotten* comes a thriller about two missing sisters, a twisted family, and what happens when one girl comes back... One night three years ago, the Tanner sisters disappeared: fifteen-year-old Cass and seventeen-year-old Emma. Three years later, Cass returns, without her sister Emma. Her story is one of kidnapping and betrayal, of a mysterious island where the two were held.

My description of a thriller has to include a tense and gripping plot with some action to keep me turning pages, well developed characters that I want to keep following and a great ending. Here is why this book didn't work for me. I felt like I was reading a psychologist's notes on a case, a patient. If I wanted to read that I would have read non fiction which described narcissism. The story is told "to me" in dialogue and sometimes stream of consciousness. I never felt that great tingle and tense feeling of a well written thriller, I never felt that I was along for a great ride with these characters but rather I was told what happened to them. The book focuses basically on the narcissistic mother and do nothing step father of Emma and Cass. We are told about the things that she did to the girls that definitely would have shaped the people they become and their relationships with others. This was a dysfunctional family for sure. When Cass showed up at the door her mother was shocked to see her, we don't really find out why until the end of the book. The story that Cass tells about where she and Emma were the past three years isn't very believable and Dr. Winters, Abby, isn't convinced that she is telling the truth, but doesn't know why. I didn't really like any of the characters very much. Emma seemed over the top narcissistic as well as her mother. Cass is in awe of her sister and basically does whatever she does, always trying to please her. The father and stepfather both come across as ineffectual parents along with their mother. The team of Dr. Winters, forensic psychologist and Leo Strauss the FBI agent had worked the case when the girls first disappeared three years before. After I read the ending, don't worry I won't spoil this for you, I just felt that they certainly didn't do a very good job in the beginning because there were many signs that pointed to the outcome of this case. I struggled to finish this book and felt that it dragged, there was no action of any kind. I did think that the ending was interesting but also not very believable. If

you like to read deeply psychological books told in dialogue and stream of consciousness then you will probably like this book. There are many positive reviews on this book, it just wasn't for me. I received this ARC from the publisher and Netgalley.

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