



Ultimate Fear

Kristine Mason

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When a deranged mother's grief drives her to replace her dead son over and over, obsession leads to murder...

Chicago detective Jessica Donovan will never stop looking for her missing daughter. Her obsession has destroyed her marriage, but the search is the only thing that helps keep her sane and her mind off of everything she's lost—her husband and her baby girl. When she uncovers a string of unsolved disappearances and reappearances of a number of baby boys, Jessica turns to her soon to be ex, Dante Russo, a former Navy SEAL turned investigator for the private agency, CORE, to help her fit together the pieces in this perplexing puzzle. But as Dante helps her, she realizes just how much she still craves his support—and his touch.

Dante is still in love with his wife and would do anything to have her back in his life again. He's been miserable since she left him to deal with the grief over their daughter's abduction, never understanding how much he grieves as well. When Jessica tells him about the case she's working, he jumps at the chance to take part in her investigation. He's hoping not only to save their marriage and ease his personal pain over the loss of their daughter, but to stop a serial kidnapper from taking another victim.

As Jessica and Dante work side by side, pregnant women begin to turn up missing or dead, and they start to uncover the consequences of another woman's unfathomable grief. The childless mother doesn't just want a baby. She wants a newborn straight from the womb.

And when forced to confront the dark and twisted perversion of a mother's obsession, can Jessica and Dante find their lives again...or merely more death?

Ultimate Fear Details

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From Reader Review Ultimate Fear for online ebook

SB Morales says

This was such a terrifying story. From the first page I was faced with one of my greatest fears, complications in childbirth. The details had my heart fluttering and gave me nightmares. Mason writes her story from two different directions converging into one heart stopping moment. Both couples are searching for children. Although the loss was different for both couples they both had the loss of a child. The scariest part of the book for me was that this can actually happen. It is so well written and I can not wait to read more from Mason. If you're looking for an amazing suspense thriller you need to grab this book!

Cindy ~ says

Another chilling suspense from a writer who writes the creepiest killers but this time it has to do with a parent's worst nightmare.

The two main characters this time are an estranged married couple whose daughter was taken from them when she was 10 months old. Jessica Donovan is a homicide detective who couldn't get over the pain of losing her daughter and left her husband because he was just a reminder of what she had lost. Dante Russo is an investigator for the private agency, CORE and is still in love with his wife and wants nothing more than to get back the woman he's loved since he first met her but they have a lot of issues to work through. They are brought together again with what has been the obsession of Jessica's since her daughter was taken. She constantly checks the missing children database and happens to come across something interesting. Someone is taking infant boys, keeping them for 2 years and then suddenly they turn up unharmed. When the fourth one is recently found Jessica, with the help of Dante, realizes there is a pattern and starts a profile to try and find who is taking them.

One of the biggest differences in a Kristine Mason book is we always know who the killer/bad guys are. In her books it's not just the main leads we get the POV from – we also get the killer/bad guys and sometimes the victims. Since children are involved in this one it defiantly tugs at your heartstrings and the reasoning behind the abductions at first make you feel sorry for the bad guys but it's not long you see they are a bit psychotic and eventually it escalates into one of the sickest scenes I've read.

Sparkymom says

Wonderful series

I loved this book just like I have loved all the CORE books. The subject matter in this story was difficult to deal with, the kidnapping of children. The couple in the story, Jessica and Dante, had lost their daughter years earlier to a kidnapping. Through Jessica's obsession with research child abductions, the estranged couple comes across a seeming pattern of infant boy abductions. As the investigation progresses, the couple must also deal with their relationship to each other and their very different ways of coping with guilt and grief. Jessica had to overcome a lot of self-centeredness, but Dante was always there for her. In the end, the couple must confront a psychopathic killer in order to reunite a young mother with her child.

Peggy says

~~RECEIVED FOR HONEST REVIEW~~

A book that will blow your mind! A seat gripping on the edge read! Not something you would expect seems to keep happening! You have got to read this to see what all happens behind the cover of this book! Loved it!

Sherry Fundin says

The doll on the cover is pretty creepy, spine tingling. I found out, Kristine plans all her covers ahead of time. I love them all. They are simple and uncluttered, speaking loudly to me – danger, Will Robinson, danger.

I am very bad. As soon as my copy hit my Kindle, I dropped everything to begin reading! Kristine's writing keeps me on the edge of my seat, hardly able to contain myself.

Blood – the very first word in the book. This is why I love Kristine Mason's writing. I know it's going to be bad, but I am loving the bad.....and the good I know will come. I am riveted from the very first word and it never lets me go.

My notes are so long, I don't know how I am going to condense them down into a coherent review. I want so much to let you know the horror, heartache, anger and rage that someone goes through when the worst thing a parent can imagine happens. Some people isolate themselves, while others need the comfort of those close to them.

The POV shifts back and forth and I love being able to see through each characters eyes.

Wayne and Dimples are some messed up people. After he told her she could no longer have children, he promised her he would do whatever it took to make her happy. The only thing that would make her happy is to 'replace' their Elton. His promise took him so far over the line, he will never find his way back.

Detective Jessica Donovan works murders and suicides, since the kidnapping of her daughter, Sophia. It has been six years, two months and four days. Jessica had let the tragedy drive her and Dante, her husband, apart, instead of closer together. She is stubborn, full of rage and anger, unable to see past it. She seemed real to me. Who knows how we would react. Would we be able to see past our own pain and be able to help our mate cope?

Dante has gone from a badass SEAL to a Ghandi wannabe.

I love Dante. He is so patient with Jessica, taking her abuse and rage in stride, hoping they will find their way back to each other. He bends over backwards to show her that she is his world. Dante had been the first recruit into CORE – which is second only to the FBI and CIA. He always finishes what he starts.

Jessica had left the house. The memories were so bad, she couldn't cope with them. She refuses to accept that, even though she can't live with Dante, she can't live without him either.

Jessica would call to remind Dante to water the garden. Was that her excuse to stay in touch? I love the fact that Dante had put a timer on the sprinkler system for the garden, but he kept it a secret and used it to lure Jessica home, at least long enough to check on the garden.

Even though they live separately, Jessica kept in touch with another CORE employee, Rachel, their resident computer guru. Rachel kept her updated on missing children.

Dante thinks she is in deep psychological trouble, until he discovers she spends all her extra time, not just, looking for Sophia, but hunting down other missing children. She had been saving some, telling no one. She couldn't hug her child, so she was determined to enable others with get their lost kids back. She has discovered a serial kidnapper. They will work together to chase him down.

I am already seeing their future. All the CORE men are sexy and deliciously yummy, all you want in an easy to love man package.

I loved the shower scene, each on different sides of the curtain. It seemed real. Their need to protect themselves, made it impossible for them to let down their defenses and communicate. Sometimes it is easier to if you are not face to face. Of course, we knew they will get back together, it is a romance suspense after all. The way Kristine has them work past their insecurities seems so real.

Kristine describes Jessica's brown/green eyes to a Matuka fishing fly. Now that is some descriptive writing that enables us to visualize them. Funny Kristine, a fishing fly? LOL

Kristine can segue from a deep passionate kiss in the here and now, to a gruesome crime scene they had visited earlier, seamlessly. It is writing like this that keeps even a lengthy book, so hard to put down. I can only read for so many hours before my eyes start crossing or my hubby says "Is that all you're gonna do all day? Read? Life is too short, so let's go out to the beach for dinner and a sunset." Well, I can't say no to that.

When the stories converge, an urgency comes with it. A woman and her child's life hang in the balance. The kidnappers have Chloe. I have good feelings about the drug addicted pregnant prostitute. Sometimes we can walk through the Gates of Hell and come out better than we entered.

I should have seen the ending coming sooner, but I was so into what I was currently reading to look very far ahead. I was totally absorbed in this horrific story.

Ultimate Prey, Book Three of the Ultimate Core Trilogy is Lola's story. Lola, is Dante's partner and he is supposed to be training her. He is a bit neglectful, because he is spending so much time helping Jessica locate the serial kidnappers. I am eagerly awaiting the opportunity to read what's up with her.

Sometimes we have to lose something to find what it is we've been really looking for.

"Always...and forever?"

How could she not realize she was his everything.

"Until the day I die."

I received Ultimate Fear from Kristine Mason in return for an honest and unbiased review.

Ellen says

Kristine Mason really writes some disturbing stuff, but she does it in such a way that you can empathise with the story and also you just want more of her books. I read the first book but this one really touches your heart. Wayne and Dimples have tried unsuccessfully to have a child, Dimples has already had seven miscarriages so what can they do now to have their heart's desire a child of their own. It started with babies going missing when the child reached a certain age Dimples couldn't handle them when they became a little independent so had her husband dispose of them but then things changed horribly to another way of acquiring a baby. This is another above average great read.

Charlotte Lynn says

the series and enjoy them on their own. That is exactly what the Ultimate CORE series is. I luckily have read the first book and did not hesitate to read the second book when asked. A good murder/mystery always satisfies me.

The first night all I read was the prologue and had goose bumps. The next day I woke up knowing that I would be starting and finishing this book in a short time frame. I was kept on the edge of my seat, not able to get anything else accomplished while reading Ultimate Fear. I knew that this story would send chills down my spine, pull at my heart, and have me hoping for the best available outcome.

The story of Dante and Jessica was absolutely heart breaking. The horror and heartache that they had to go through after their young daughter is kidnapped would cause nightmares for any parent. Then as they search for clues to their daughter, then discover a serial kidnapper. I cannot even imagine how Dante and Jessica were able to deal with it all.

I absolutely recommend this series, including this book, to everyone. This is a great series for all mystery lovers.

Stacey Coyer says

Loved it!

I can't get enough of this author! She takes each story and wraps me into a whole other world! I can't wait for each new book!

Danielle Gypsy Soul says

3.5 Stars. This is a hard book for me to review because I did enjoy it but I had a hard time liking Jessica. I could sympathize with her character and all that she was dealing with and I also realize that everyone handles grief differently and I have no idea how I would handle something so horrible happening to me but it was hard to like someone who was pretty darn selfish. Dante never gave up on Jessica even though most

people would have. You couldn't help but love him and want things to work out for him. The suspense plot was terrifying and the villain was creepy and psychotic. The reader is aware of who the villains are and actually gets to read their POV which added to the book. The author did a great job of having Dante and Jessica work through their issues and face the reality of their missing child. Parts of this book were heartbreaking and parts were uplifting. Overall an intense and yet satisfying read.

Christine Therese says

Spoiler.. This was a story that had such a level of intensity it was difficult to read in one sitting. Any mother could relate to the fears of losing a child during pregnancy and then the story preys on your fears of child abduction. I would love for the author to finish Jessica and Dante's story about their daughter.

JadeShea says

Ultimate Fear begins with Jessica a police detective being called on a case. We learn she and her husband are currently separated and have been for a couple of years now. Jessica and her husband Dante have a lot of issues, one of them is the fact that their daughter is missing and has been for a while as well. They have no idea where she is or what has happened to her, and no leads either. But when Jessica's obsession for finding missing children leads her and Dante to work together to find out what is going on, things start changing between them again. And old hurts and old love come back to the surface.

This book was very good! It had lots of mystery and suspense, as well as romance. But it also had a beautiful heartbreaking story that I wish had ended a little differently. Not to say that it didn't have an HEA, because it did in a way, but I was still sad with the way it ended.

I loved Jessica and Dante. Both of them were dealing with grief in their own way and still trying not to hate the other while also loving the other. Jessica was strong in her own way, but she was a mother who lost her child and that was a very horrible and sad thing to look through her eyes even for the short time I spent reading this book. It really opens your eyes to the people who go through living with a missing child everyday. I do not envy them, and I have much respect for the fact they are still standing today.

Dante on the other hand, handled his grief a little differently. But as we learn in this story it affected him just as deeply as it did Jessica. I also loved how he never gave up on his wife no matter how much she pushed him away.

Their relationship was actually spectacular even with all of the ups and downs. To me that just made it even better! And I was happy for them for the most part in the end. Now I look forward to reading more in this series, I just hope in one book we get a few questions from Dante and Jessica's story answered.

KyBunnies says

Originally posted at Bunny's Review

Starting out I knew this book was the second in a series but reading the first was not required. What I did not

know was how much this book would touch my heart. A story and plot that is a parent's nightmare while learning how to go one is something so unique that makes this whole series a must read.

The story starts out very strong with a murder / suicide. Here I wish the author took the story with the detective's going to the families. This was a little teaser provided by the author for everything to come. When I got deeper into the book I realized it was a teaser, the author was just wetting readers brains for the full story. A story that I loved on one hand and hated on the other I hope down the road the author would provide even a short novella with part of this story being solved. Thankfully there is hope at the end of the book, hope for a future, for more than just a life looking at what might have been even with everything that was lost.

The relationship between Dante and Jessica needs help. I wonder why neither thought to look into counseling after losing a child. Losing a child naturally or in an accident would be hard but to have a child kidnapped would be something beyond understanding. Not knowing what happened, is the child dead, alive, is the child safe, being abused, the questions are endless with no answers. Knowing that even though I was a detective and not able to find my missing child I wonder if I could still go on. How to cope is not something a friend or loved one would be able to provide. Trying to have hope that the child is still alive but not knowing. That would be the hardest part, not knowing.

There were several areas in the book where the author repeats information already given. An example is when 'Dimples' repeats that she told Wayne that she was working a second shift and on weekends. This was repeated within a page of each other. I do not know if the author or editor missed this but felt it did not need repeating so close or thought, by the character, in the same way. If the author wanted this repeated then I feel a different thought should be used.

Okay really the above about repeat information was my only problem with the book. I admit I was really wondering about Wayne at the beginning. He may be a villain in the story but half-way redeemed himself by some of his actions. As for Dimple, aka Heather, that is just beyond sick. I honestly wonder how many people actually feel like her after losing a child. A sad emotional part of being pregnant but to think she actually believes she is normal. Being locked up in prison or a mental hospital for anyone like this was be too nice of a sentence.

Thanks for a great read Kristine. The bunnies and I give this book carrots.

I was given this book in exchange for an honest review. All views are my own and do not reflect those of the author, my clients or tour companies I work with. This is not a paid review. To form your own opinion please support the author and acquire your own legal copy of the book.

Mei says

This one was even better than Ultimate Kill, because the heroine, Jessica, is much stronger one!
Really, really good!
