



Unpunished

Lisa Black

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Maggie Gardiner, a forensic expert who studies the dead, and Jack Renner, a homicide cop who stalks the living, form an uneasy partnership to solve a series of murders in this powerful new thriller by the bestselling author of *That Darkness*.

It begins with the kind of bizarre death that makes headlines—literally. A copy editor at the *Cleveland Herald* is found hanging above the grinding wheels of the newspaper assembly line, a wide strap wrapped around his throat. Forensic investigator Maggie Gardiner has her suspicions about this apparent suicide inside the tsunami of tensions that is the news industry today—and when the evidence suggests murder, Maggie has no choice but to place her trust in the one person she doesn't trust at all . . .

Jack Renner is a killer with a conscience, a vigilante with his own code of honor. In the past, Jack has used his skills and connections as a homicide detective to take the law into his own hands, all in the name of justice. He has only one problem: Maggie knows his secret. She insists he enforce the law, not subvert it. But when more newspaper employees are slain, Jack may be the only person who can help Maggie unmask the killer-- even if Jack is still checking names off his own private murder list.

Unpunished Details

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From Reader Review Unpunished for online ebook

Kristine says

** I received an advanced readers copy from Kensington via NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.** I struggled with this book and ended up giving up on it part way through. I don't know if it was the fact that I was sick when I tried to read it or if it was because it was the second book in a series. Something just wasn't working for me. It didn't read well as a stand alone because I kept feeling like I was suppose to know the characters but I didn't and it made it confusing. They felt grossly under developed to me because I didn't know them before this book.

Cindy Burnett says

4.5 stars

Lisa Black's second installment in her Gardiner and Renner series is every bit as good as her initial one. I loved *That Darkness*, and *Unpunished* is a great addition to the series. Maggie Gardiner, a forensic expert, and Jack Renner, a homicide detective, are thrown together again when a series of bizarre murders occur at the *Cleveland Herald*. The two work to solve the murders while Maggie also struggles to come to terms with her knowledge that Jack operates as a hero vigilante ridding the city of criminals that have eluded punishment for their crimes. The two have reached an uneasy truce that is constantly threatened by a variety of outside factors.

The mystery in *Unpunished* was highly entertaining to me and is very relevant to today's world. The *Cleveland Herald* is struggling to stay afloat as newspapers are dying a slow death. Black spent countless hours immersing herself in the newspaper business even touring one to accurately depict the ins and outs of that industry and the difficulties currently facing the newspaper world. She manages to relay very detailed information in an engaging and interesting manner so I learned a lot without feeling like it was hard to wade through the story. Black also addresses the age old issue created by new inventions - the loss of jobs (sometimes entire professions) in certain fields, but the creation of entirely new fields and jobs that are created as a result. I found her reminder helpful as I was bemoaning the projected loss of printed newspapers as I read *Unpunished*.

I really enjoyed reading this book and love the originality of the series. Thanks to Kensington and NetGalley for the chance to read this ARC in exchange for an honest review.

Linda Strong says

Maggie Gardiner and Jack Renner were first introduced in *THAT DARKNESS*. I highly recommend reading *THAT DARKNESS* before starting this one.

Maggie is a forensic expert while Jack is a homicide detective. Jack is a serial killer -- but he only kills the bad guys ... the ones who have never paid for their crimes. Maggie knows this, but she's keeping quite because she also has secrets .. and Jack knows what they are. They've managed to form a truce ... and only pray that no one else discovers what's really going on.

A copy editor at the local newspaper is found hanging at work. When Maggie is called in to work her CSI magic, she finds that this is really murder. And because it is murder, she's going to have to deal with Jack, as he is a homicide detective.

And then there's another death at the newspaper ... another hanging, another murder. As more bodies fall, Maggie and Jack have to work together to find out why ... and who's next?

What ties them all together?

I really have enjoyed both books in this series. Jack, although a killer, has his own personal moral and ethical codes. Other than his penchant for vigilante killings, he's quite likeable. Maggie is very proficient in her job, which is how she discovered Jack's "hobby". She doesn't quite trust him, but in this case, she has no other alternative.

I've learned everything I would ever want or need to know about the newspaper business. So much of what was written is very contemporary. If you're a fan of forensics, this will be a dream book for you. The author has certainly done her research well.

I've been reading Lisa Black for several years ... she just gets better and better.

My rating --- 5 for the book, another 5 for the series.

Adrian Dooley says

Well what a satisfying read that was. Good story well told with two fascinating central characters that make me want to seek out the previous book to feature them - That Darkness.

Those characters are Maggie Smith, a forensic expert, and homicide cop Jack Renner, a man whom we soon discover takes the law into his own hands dishing out fatal justice, a secret that Maggie knows about.

Maggie is called out to a newspaper - The Cleveland Herald, where the copy editor is found hanging in the building in an apparent suicide. Upon investigation Maggie suspects this apparent suicide may be a murder and has to call in Detective Jack Renner to investigate.

It becomes clear quite quickly that they are looking at a murder and as more employees are murdered Maggie relies on Jack to help find the killer, while knowing herself that Jack himself is a killer, murdering known criminals that have evaded justice.

Unpunished is an excellent read as much about the decline of printed media as it is about a murder whodunit story. The pacing throughout is even and very well paced to the story. Slowly but surely things are figured out, which I really enjoyed. The two central characters are well written and very interesting. I'm only sorry I didn't read the novel that they previously appeared in - That Darkness (which I fully intend to now) as there is plenty of reference to their back story in this and it sounds both fascinating and intriguing.

The level of detail the author goes into about the process of printing a paper and the descriptive detail of the newspaper building and the mechanics were mostly very interesting although at times a little long winded.

The story though is great. Beautifully paced novel. Although only 320 pages the novel never felt rushed at any point. The story is fleshed out at its own pace, with time to breath and explain. The final act was very

well done and in keeping with the rest of the novel played out in its own time.

I was drawn in from the start with this one. I wouldn't describe it as a page turner as such but it had some sort of hold on me as I managed to finish it in about half the time I usually take for a similar sized novel. It's the story and the story teller that always draw you in and that's what happened here. A really enjoyable and satisfying read, I shall be seeking out *That Darkness*, the other previous novel in this series.

I would like to thank Net Galley, Kensington Books and the author Lisa Black for an ARC in exchange for an honest and unbiased review.

Joni Dee says

I've been given the chance from NetGalley to review *Unpunished* - Lisa Black's second book in the Maggie Gardiner series. I have not read the first book, so this review may benefit people who are looking at the novel as a whole, rather than part of a series.

The plot is one of a classic detective novel, only the hero is a rather grey police worker and not an all mighty DC or DCI: Gardiner is a forensic expert who studies the crime scene and handles the post death technicalities. The other main character is Jack Renner, a homicide cop who's a vigilante serial killer "at night", but one with an ethical code of disposing only of the bad guys. If you had read "*That Darkness*" you would have known this by now as well as the fact that Gardiner is the only living soul who shares Jack's secret.

The mystery revolves around the murder of a copy editor at the Cleveland Herald, who is found hanging above the grinding wheels of the newspaper assembly line. When more newspaper employees are killed, Maggie and Jack continue their unholy partnership, in an effort to uncover the eluding killer.

I liked "*Unpunished*". It has the elements of a classic thriller, and Albeit it is secretly an exaggerated editorial advocating for the dying American news industry, it was still fun to see murders taking place above and under the printing press wheels. Sure, the journalistic facts (told mainly by the suspects) were tedious and all too lecture-y, but the story is well written and like any good thriller you'll find it nearly impossible to guess who is the culprit.

The one thing that I thought the book had lacked, and that's something I tend to look for in a series within the crime detective genre, is whether the novel can stand alone or not. And to be honest, it can't. I immediately wanted to find out more about the incident that entangled Maggie Gardiner with Jack Renner - and even though on its own that's not a bad thing - it still goes to show that if we take the element of their relationship out of "*Unpunished*", it might have been a bit boring and one dimensional.

Having said that, the killer and now accomplice crime fighters are there, and "*Unpunished*" is interesting and gripping. I especially liked Gardiner as a CSI grey-worker who is the centre of things, and would have loved to see her character evolve a bit more... Luckily it's a series :-)) 3 stars .. 3.5 on a better day.

Karen says

I received this ARC from netgalley.com in exchange for a review.

Book 2 in the Gardiner and Renner series. Maggie is a forensics 'tech' and tasked to find a killer in the work place of the Cleveland Herald, Renner is a detective on the police force who has taken the law in his own

hands. Insert image of 'Dexter'.

This book was not as interesting as the first one in the series. The beginning of the book was crammed full of data about the newspaper industry and the printing press machines. I'm still not sure how that information actually related to the story. I got bogged down in the minutia and considered ditching the book a couple times. The tension between Maggie and Jack that was in the first book was mostly absent in this book.

2.5 stars rounded up to 3 ?

Pia says

Book 2 in the Gardiner & Renner series.

This time, Maggie Gardiner, a forensic scientist is called to a crime scene: A body has been found in a newspaper office, an apparent suicide.

Jack Renner is part of the investigation team.

There's a complicated relationship between them, as Renner not only a policeman, but a vigilante, a cop that takes justice in his own hands, and Maggie is the only one that knows it.

As more murders happen, they must find a way to work together without compromising the investigation.

I don't recommend reading this book alone, as there are many references to the first one in the series: "That Darkness".

While I found this a very good book, it took me a long time to "get" into it, and I think I prefer book 1, as I found this one to be on the slow side. There was too much talk about the newspaper industry and how it's slowly dying.

I received an ARC of this book in exchange for an honest review.

Margitte says

Maggie Gardiner and Jack Renner are in the crime-solving business together. She as forensic scientist and he as a homicide cop in Cleveland. But they also have another partnership going: keeping each other's secrets to both's benefit.

When people start to die at a newspaper business, the duo end up working together again, pretending not to know each other on a social level. They mutually agreed that they were not friends, but did not regard each other as enemies either. The official blurb blasts the secrets of this team way out of the water, yet, I do not want to do the same.

What I do know about this book is that I liked the author's approach to her story. No chick-lit favors being dished out; no melodrama. The situation is embedded in reality as we know it and the events are possible.

The newspaper business are dying, throwing journalistic integrity out with the closing of premises and chasing journalists into oblivion. Unless they cater to the superficial Hollywood craze, publishing stories

about famous people's shoe sizes or private lives, nobody bothers with the news anymore. Democracy is in crises when investigative journalism are nailed into coffins and buried, while internet media, often with profit and greed in mind, and truth positioned in the last place of importance, attend the funeral with ruthless apathy in tow.

I don't want to say more about the plot. It is a high-voltage, informative, entertaining murder mystery. There is a little bit of word dumping taking place in describing the News Business. It left me slightly bored.

It is also not the best whodunit I have ever read, but for various reasons I rate this book five stars. One of them is that there's not chick-lit elements in it. Another one is the absolute fast-paced storyline riddled with ruthless suspense. And a third is that it can be enjoyed as a standalone, even though it is the second book in a series. I haven't read the first one. *That Darkness* is number one. It is obvious in the ending that 'n third book is planned, yet, as a stand-alone it is a powerful ending, allowing the readers to honor the imagination and do with it what we like.

I really enjoyed the experience tremendously. And yes, I hope to read *That Darkness* as well.

Thanks to Kensington Books and Netgalley for the opportunity to get acquainted with this author's work and providing a review copy. It was a delight. I can read this author again, for sure!

*Avonna says

UNPUNISHED is the second book in Lisa Black's Gardiner and Renner series and it really brings Maggie and Jack into focus as fully developed characters to follow. The plot of this book can be read as a standalone, but the first book "That Darkness" should be read before this to understand the complicated history and stand-off between these two.

Forensic investigator, Maggie Gardiner is called to an apparent suicide of the copy editor of the Cleveland Herald, the struggling daily newspaper. Maggie notices an inconsistency and realizes that this suicide is really murder. Jack and his partner, Riley are assigned the case and already at the scene.

Homicide Detective Jack Renner is a serial killer. If the courts cannot keep the worst of the worst locked up and away from innocent citizens, Jack personally takes care of them ---permanently. Maggie is the only one who has been smart enough to figure out his secret. Their truce has held so far, but Maggie still has her doubts about him stopping his personal form of justice.

As another body of a Herald worker is found, Maggie and Jack have to work together to find the killer and figure out what is going on at the Herald.

This book gives a lot of information on the current state of print media in this country. Maggie takes us through the interesting steps of the forensics of the case which I am sure are realistic since that is Ms. Black's specialty. The plot is fast paced and interesting throughout. Ms. Black has really breathed life into Maggie in this book. That was my only problem with the first book in this series and I am very happy with Maggie's character development.

Maggie and Jack are great characters and I am looking forward to many more books in this series!

Thank you very much to Kensington Books and Net Galley for a free eARC of this book in exchange for an honest review. It was great!

Petra says

Unpunished is Lisa Black's second book about forensic expert Maggie Gardener and homicide detective Jack Renner. Although the plot here works as a standalone, I would suggest reading *That Darkness* first in order to fully understand Maggie and Jack's complicated relationship and their shared history.

This case starts off with the apparent suicide of a copy editor at the Cleveland Herald. But soon further deaths follow, all related to the Herald newspaper. Why would anybody target the staff of a struggling newspaper?

I enjoyed this book more than the first in the series. Maggie's character, in particular, is far better developed here. Jack's entertaining relationship with his cop partner, Riley, and his strained, ambivalent relationship with Maggie was fun to follow. The only thing that really slowed this down a little too much for me at times was the very detailed information regarding the decline of the print media industry. Ms. Black has obviously put a lot of research into this. I felt properly educated as to the processes of producing a newspaper and the sorry state of the print industry after reading this. Aside from that, this was a solid murder mystery. The vigilante theme is less prominent in this one than in the first book, but the ending leaves plenty of scope for an exciting third book in the future.

I look forward to it.

CL says

Maggie Gardiner and Jack Renner had come to an uneasy alliance due to their past. Maggie is a studies the dead and Jack is a homicide detective on the same police force. Now they are both investigating a series of murders at the local newspaper, the Cleveland Herald. As more and more people from the paper are dropping dead it seems that someone has a vendetta against the employees of the paper. Can they stop the killer before he can murder more employees. Good read. I would like to thank the Publisher and net Galley for the chance to read this ARC.

Louise Wilson says

Maggie Gardiner is a forensic expert and Jack Renner is a homicide cop. Jack has a secret - he is also a serial killer. He only kills the bad guys who escape justice. Maggie knows Jack's secret. Maggie also has secrets - Jack knows what they are.

A body is found hanging above the grinding wheels of a newspapers assembly line. Maggie has been called in to investigate. She thinks that it was murder rather than suicide. Then there is another hanging at the newspaper. Will Jack & Maggie find out who is behind these murders before there are any more.

I have not read *The Darkness* which is the first book in which Maggie & Jack appear. I think you should read it before starting *Unpunished* tho. This is a well written who-did-it novel that's fast pace kept me turning the pages.

I would like to thank NetGalley, Kensington Books and the author Lisa Black for my ARC in exchange for an honest review.

Linda says

"Give light and the people will find their way."

A thought-provoking motto of The Cleveland Herald engraved in stone on the entrance to the tall building. A bit of light cast on the news of the day. But, ironically, "the news" is "the news".

Maggie Gardiner, a forensic investigator, has been called to the scene of a horrendous situation within the walls of The Herald itself. The body of a man is hanging from the high ceiling of the thunderous printing room. Is this a suicide or the result of a grotesque murder?

Maggie is later joined by Jack Renner and his partner, both detectives of the Cleveland PD. Jack has a dark secret in which his previous extracurricular activities include permanently evicting shady characters from the scene. For now, Maggie has kept Jack's secret, especially since a few of those threads may entangle her.

It seems that the first corpse has not been a solo act. When more bodies in the same manner start turning up at The Herald, Maggie and Jack are kept busy trying to find the individual responsible for such heinous crimes. Was it someone within The Herald or an outside job? And what exactly would the motive be?

Lisa Black presents an eye-opening view on the slowly dissolving state of newspapers in America. The average reader of today wants news instantaneously 24/7. The smudge of newsprint on fingertips seems to be a thing of the past. Hand-held devices are king.

Unpunished tells the tale of greed and manipulation. It has received high marks here on Goodreads. I did find areas that were a bit bogged down by explanations and backstories in police procedures and forensics in order to move the storyline on. Although a standalone, it would enhance the reading experience by grabbing the first book in this Gardiner and Renner series. I intend to do that myself because of the early-on character development.

I am looking forward to the next in this series by Lisa Black.

Carrie says

Maggie Gardiner is a forensic investigator who gets a call to a new case where a copy editor from the local newspaper is found hanging above the newspaper assembly line. Maggie has her suspicions about the apparent suicide and soon the evidence begins to point to the death actually being a murder.

Maggie finds herself teamed up to solve the case with Jack Renner, a homicide cop with an enormous secret that Maggie stumbled upon in the past. In the past Jack had taken his skills as a homicide detective and turned into a vigilante taking justice into his own hands until Maggie discovered his secret. Now this duo must team up together to solve the murder before the killer strikes again.

Unpunished is the second book in the Gardiner and Renner series. I actually didn't realize this was an ongoing series when I first picked up the book to read and will say that a bit of my problem with the story came with feeling a bit left out having not read the first book with the history between this pair. Eventually their story is revealed but I think I would have been a lot more invested had I known it going into the book so in the end I decided to rate this one 3.5 stars just due to the slow start for me to become engaged in the story. Otherwise the book is an interesting story to follow along while the detectives try to solve the murders and find their killer.

I received an advance copy from the publisher via NetGalley.

For more reviews please visit <https://carriesbookreviews.wordpress...>

Janet Robel says

I received a free copy of this book from NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.

There isn't much that I can say on this one. Some parts I really enjoyed since the author does a wonderful job on the gory details which kept me reading. However, the pacing was very slow through the rest of the book, and I found myself putting this down quite often and struggled to finish. Not sure if I'll read this author again.
