



## **Distortion**

*Terri Blackstock*

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A husband's lies can have deadly consequences.

When Juliet Cole's husband of fifteen years is murdered before her eyes, she thinks it was a random shooting. Devastated and traumatized, she answers hours of questioning, then returns home to break the tragic news to her boys. But a threatening voicemail takes this from a random shooting to a planned, deliberate attack.

Juliet realizes that she and her children are in danger too, unless she meets the killers' demands. But as she and her sisters untangle the clues, her husband's dark secrets come to light. The more she learns, the more of her life is dismantled. Was her husband an innocent victim or a hardened criminal?

## **Distortion Details**

Date : Published March 11th 2014 by Zondervan (first published March 1st 2014)

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Author : Terri Blackstock

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## From Reader Review Distortion for online ebook

### Virginia Pillars says

Jumped right into Book 2 in this group of books. I don't want to call it a series because I could read one book and feel it had a conclusion. The stories tell more about the characters introduced in the first book, Truth Stained Lies. I downloaded these mp3 files from my local library.

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### Jennifer Taylor says

Great book. Suspenseful. Some people aren't who you think. HmMMM

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### Christian Fiction Addiction says

One ordinary day while helping her sister move, Juliet witnesses a man gunned down in a dark parking lot. That man is Bob, her husband of 15 years, and though at first she believes it is a random shooting, she quickly discovers that the attack was no random event but a planned attack on her husband. Juliet soon finds her own life threatened, and she fears for the safety of her children as well. Juliet and her sisters team up with PI Michael Hogan to discover the truth of just who exactly Bob was. Every clue she unearths reveals another layer of deception until Juliet doesn't even know what's real anymore - except that she'll do anything to keep her family safe.

Action-packed and featuring Blackstock's signature suspense, "Distortion" is a thrilling read from beginning to end. Readers who enjoyed the first novel in the Moonlight Series, entitled "Truth Stained Lies", will quickly become reacquainted with the characters they grew to care about in the first book, including the sisters Cathy, Juliet, and Holly. Blackstock does an admirable job at getting into her character's heads and minds, and as such I found myself grieving alongside Juliet and her children as not only do they have to deal with the loss of their husband and father, but they also have to choose to face a web of deceit that unfolds one layer at a time. By the time you put down this book, you may be looking at your own spouse askance and wondering if there are any secrets they are hiding from you! As with Blackstock's other books, I love that she makes no hesitation in celebrating faith with a clear, accessible gospel message, even in the midst of hypocrisy. Deep themes of betrayal are woven into the story alongside of the power of forgiveness, confession, and accepting the consequences of ones actions. As such, not only will "Distortion" provide you with an entertaining read, but you will find yourself taking a look at your own faith and wondering if you would be able to respond to the hard-ache with the strength that these characters do.

I will leave you with one warning - while much is resolved in this second story, you are left hanging wondering if ultimate justice will be visited upon the family. Like me, you will be eagerly waiting for the next installment! 4.5 out of 5 stars.

Book has been provided courtesy of the publisher for the purposes of this unbiased review.

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### Victor Gentile says

Terri Blackstock in her new book, "Distortion" Book Two in the Moonlighters Series published by Zondervan takes us into the life of Juliet Cole.

From the back cover: A husband's lies can have deadly consequences.

When Juliet Cole's husband of fifteen years is murdered before her eyes, she thinks it was a random shooting. Devastated and traumatized, she answers hours of questioning, then returns home to break the tragic news to her boys. But a threatening voicemail takes this from a random shooting to a planned, deliberate attack.

Juliet realizes that she and her children are in danger too, unless she meets the killers' demands. But as she and her sisters untangle the clues, her husband's dark secrets come to light. The more she learns, the more of her life is dismantled. Was her husband an innocent victim or a hardened criminal?

When someone speaks of distortion they are generally speaking about a sound or something visual that changes the what they are listening to or watching. Juliet has that problem after her husband dies. It seems his life is not what Juliet believed and he has lied multiple times to her. This not only puts her in an awkward position but puts her life and those of her children at risk. Now it is up to her and her Private Investigator sisters to find out why and who shot her husband because the police think she did it. Ms. Blackstock has provided us a first-rate mystery. "Distortion" is a thriller in that the lives of Juliet and her children are put in deadly danger through the course of their investigations. I think this is Ms. Blackstock's best work yet and her characters are well-defined. Once the action gets going Ms. Blackstock revs up the thriller quotient considerably which will have you reading and flipping pages as fast as you can. Don't start this book late at night because it will be very difficult to put it down or stop thinking about it. I recommend this book highly and am greatly looking forward to the next book in the series.

Disclosure of Material Connection: I received this book free from Litfuse Publicity Group. I was not required to write a positive review. The opinions I have expressed are my own. I am disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255 : "Guides Concerning the Use of Endorsements and Testimonials in Advertising."

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## **Judy Collins says**

A special thank you to Zondervan Fiction and NetGalley for an ARC in exchange for an honest review.

DISTORTION was my first book by Terri Blackstock, and definitely look forward to reading more from this talented author; a mixture of a suspense thriller, with a seamless blending of Christian faith elements.

I have not read the first book in the Moonlighters series, Truth Stained Lies; however, have it on my "to read list". I would recommend reading this one first, prior to Distortion, in order to learn more of the background of the characters, and this interesting family.

With a thriller opening, Juliet Cole's husband, Bob is gunned down in a storage U-Haul parking lot, while Juliet and Bob are helping her sister Holly move. What comes afterward is just as shocking. She has no clue this could have been a planned murder, and not just a random shooting.

At home later, this is confirmed when she hears a voice mail which lets her know, this was a deliberate attack, and now the only thing on her mind is protecting her family, in particular her two sons—they are in danger.

Juliet is supposed to be the stable sister in the family with her well known successful physician husband. Little does she know Bob has a secret life full of lies and deception? Did she miss the clues? How could this man be involved in crimes, drugs, and another woman and child? Has her life been a lie? How will she explain this to her sons?

She teams up with her sisters and PI Michael Hogan to dig into the lies and life Bob has been living outside of the one she knew. She is driven to find answers; front and center in the investigation. The more she learns, the worse it gets. A drug trafficking history, a fortune in cash, and a secret family all begin to question Juliet's life and her faith – everything in her life is threatened.

As more deception and clues surface, she is busy with her own PI work with her sister Holly, tracking down anything which will lead them to the killer and solve this mystery. Despite her problems, she remains faithful to God and holds on to her faith through prayer.

I discovered (did not know this previously), In 1994 Terri was writing for publishers such as HarperCollins, Harlequin, Dell and Silhouette, when a spiritual awakening drew her into the Christian market. As she was praying about her transition, she went on a cruise and noticed that almost everyone on the boat (herself included) had a John Grisham novel. It occurred to her that some of Grisham's readers were Christians, and that if she wrote a fast-paced thriller with an added faith element, she might just find her niche.

As God would have it, Christian publishers were showing interest in the suspense genre, so she quickly sold a four-book series to Zondervan. Since that time, she's written over thirty Christian titles, most of them suspense novels. What an inspirational journey. Incredible, what a way to reach a broad audience with a top credible Christian publisher as Zondervan, combined with a strong author!

In the first book, Jay, the brother of Cathy, a former lawyer and now investigative blogger, is falsely accused of murdering his ex-wife, she and her two sisters, Holly and Juliet, team up help their brother and to protect Jackson, their five-year-old nephew. In this novel Holly and Juliet team up to help Juliet find Bob's killer.

I like the fact of using flawed characters, sins and temptation, as Christians are not perfect. Sometimes God uses puts us in situations to stretch our faith and have us grow in His wisdom.

Well done . . highly recommend this riveting fast-paced series!  
<http://judithdcollins.booklikes.com/p...>

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## Hannah says

First, having seven POVs in a 300 page book made the narration feel crowded to me, and in some places things were repeated from two different POVs. Also, the ending was really rushed. Deadline, maybe? Things happened really fast, and yet explanation was at a minimum. It got all tied up in one tight bow, with just one escapee from justice and one good guy taking the fall for something that shouldn't even be against the law. It felt jarring. Like, somehow, I was supposed to read the author's mind to really get what was going on in the last 100 pages (technically, from a bunch of really short chapters, the length of that space was really about 75 pages.)

Again there are questions about God's providence that are raised but not resolved, and this time around it seemed to really stick out at me that nouns referring to God were not capitalized. That's like referring to the President of one's country as president. Weird editing choice, especially when there were multiple hes in one

paragraph and simple capitalization of He would make it easy to distinguish which one is God. Juliet asks, "God, why are You doing this to me? I have been faithful. Why must I be punished?" It is never made clear that we "deserve" nothing from God, or that earth is never meant to be heaven. Instead of being grateful for the blessings they have (each other, safety despite some of their harebrained risks), they instead focus on/complain about what God has not done for them. Really...

Here's to hoping book three clears up the sisters' ungrateful attitude toward God.

Also, Juliet somehow gets a death certificate with two days or so of her husband's death. Wow, the government sure acted fast for her. Death certificates are generally not issued for a couple of weeks at best.

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### **Erika Hayes says**

I seriously love that each book I read of Blackstock's is a fantastic story, consistently great characters. I enjoyed this book as well and now I'm reading her next in the If I series. I love that she never loses focus on the real story she is sharing. I can only hope to one day turn out books like these.

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### **Faith says**

Three sisters: Cathy, Holly, and Juliet. All of them are trained Private Investigators, and all of them are smack in the middle of real life.

The trial they went through together in book one, Truth Stained Lies, feels like it is finally behind them. Cathy has found herself falling in love with former-cop-turned-PI Michael, and Holly is expecting her first child. They are happy and nervous all at the same time as they take these steps toward wholeness. Juliet's life always seems like the most stable of the three, what with two wonderful sons and a successful spine surgeon for a husband.

And then, in the midst of an ordinary day when all the siblings were rallied together trying to get Holly moved into her new place, a nightmare begins.

Juliet's husband Bob is shot and killed in a U-Haul rental parking lot.

Like a powerful river current flowing over sediment, the ensuing swirl of law-enforcement activity begins to uncover buried secrets from Bob's life.

On top of her grief, Juliet is suddenly a suspect. The only way to prove her own innocence and save her sons is to co-operate with the officers of the law in their investigation... an investigation they shouldn't need to undertake.

Bob was such a good man! His son's refuse to think otherwise. His wife would swear to it! Except, as time goes on, and the four PI's dig into the evidence themselves, Juliet isn't so sure anymore. Perhaps she'd been the one with clouded judgement. Perhaps her marriage had all been a lie just waiting to implode. Perhaps the man she had given her heart to and made a home with had operated under a false front all along.

Juliet's journey is full of questions and doubt and bravery as she picks herself up from the ruins of her life and strives to keep her sons safe. Her mother love and the strength that fills her when her boys are at risk endeared her to me immediately.

The finally 100+ pages are especially riveting, as discoveries are made and attacks are unleashed. It's nearly impossible to discern the motives of several characters at this point, and Juliet needs to know who's on her

side.

For a mystery with plenty of action that features a unique trio of savvy ladies, head for The Moonlighter's Series by Terri Blackstock.

The mission statement for her fiction is really great: she writes stories about "flawed Christians in crisis and God's provisions for their mistakes and wrong choices" Juliet and Cathy and Holly, brothers Michael and Max... I love they way their personal lives and their own revelations and healing were brought into the story. I'll be looking for more from her!

Thank you Litfuse for my review copy!

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### **Lori L (She Treads Softly) says**

Distortion by Terri Blackstock is a highly recommended faith based thriller.

After Juliet Cole witnesses the murder of her husband, it becomes clear that after 15 years of marriage she really didn't know him. Bob Cole was a successful doctor but what else and who else was he involved with and how is his secret life going to affect grieving Juliet and her two sons, 12 year old Zach and 9 year old Abe. Juliet turns to her two sisters, Holly and Cathy, as well as her brother Jay, and PI Michael Hogan to investigate what Bob was really doing and why he was murdered.

The plot is action packed and based right on today's headlines. While Blackstock is well known as a successful Christian writer, truth be told, she's simply a good writer. She knows how to execute a plot full of action and intrigue and how to carry that plot on to the end. Her Christian values insure readers that while there might be some harsh, cruel actions taking place (sin happens), there won't be swearing or gratuitous sex scenes. That is refreshing. The characters will struggle but will turn to their faith.

"Lord," she said through her teeth, "I believe Romans 8:28 is true. But I can't imagine how all of this is going to work for good, because all I see is tragedy and heartache, and shock after shock. We need some real miracles here."

Distortion continues the story found in Truth Stained Lies. Sometimes a continued story doesn't put the reader at a disadvantage but that isn't the case here. The two stories really are tied together and it might behoove readers to read the first before this second book. There are also some incredible coincidences/backstory that strained my acceptance. I know bad things happen to good people and often seemingly all at once but consider the following excerpt:

"How strange that three of four of these siblings had lost their loved ones to murder. It was too much of a coincidence, but he couldn't make the crimes fit together. His own brother Joe, who'd been engaged to Cathy, had been murdered by a drug dealer he'd been investigating. Leonard Miller had been acquitted by his jury, even though there were eyewitnesses. Jay's wife's murder had been completely unrelated to Joe's. And Bob's seemed unrelated to both of them. A guy driving up in a parking lot and gunning him down. A threat by telephone. Michael's training as a police detective had honed his instincts, but they weren't guiding him now. He had to focus on facts. He just didn't have enough of them. (page 34)

Another fact worth noting is that the story will be continued because it doesn't wrap up at the end. You might want to consider the series aspect of this book and decide if a series is what you are looking to invest your time in or if a stand-alone novel would be a better choice.

Disclosure: My Kindle edition was courtesy of Zondervan via Netgalley for review purposes.

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## **Pamela says**

Fast paced - Suspense thrilling - Controversially thematic and morally relevant!

Distortion: The second installment in Blackstock's P.I. series. A series centered around family values, ethics, and faith; a series with the same intensity as a secular suspense thriller - but without shock-and-awe slash and trash.

For the past fifteen years Juliet has lived a peaceful and prosperous life married to a highly regarded physician. Life, for the most part is wonderful. Yes, their extended family has been touched by tragedy, but nothing laying claim to her personal space.... Until, her husband is gunned down right in front of her eyes! Worse yet, while investigating his murder, evidence reveals that her upstanding husband - the great spine-healing physician - isn't the man she thought he was; at least not in any ethical or moral sense.

When the press gets wind of the shameful and criminal activities he's rumored to have been involved in, can she shelter her sons from the truth? **Should** she shelter them from the truth? Moreover, will she be able to protect her sons, and herself, with a killer still on the loose - threatening to kill again?

FOUR \*\*\*\* Morally Sound and Suspense Thrilling \*\*\*\* STARS

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## **Ruth Hill says**

Generally, I am not an incredible fan of contemporary novels, but with Terri Blackstock, I make a notable exception. I know from the moment I pick up one of her stories that I will read an intensely involving story with strong Christian themes. She is not afraid to talk about drugs, addiction, crime, and even faith doubting. I know I will always read a book that is appropriate (no profanity, bedroom scenes, or a celebration of evil), and I appreciate her take on realism. There are no guaranteed "happily ever afters," and she will not beat you over the head with the salvation message. The message of redemption is woven into the framework of the story in a way that most novelists can only dream. This is one of those books you will not wish to desist in reading, and the ending will take you an emotional roller coaster. My simple review cannot do this book justice, and I believe that both Christians and non-Christians can enjoy this high impact, fast-moving story. Indeed, Terri Blackstock has shown us yet again that you can be a Christian and still write a book that has true validity in today's over-sexed, immodest, anything-goes culture.

I was sent a copy of this book in exchange for my honest review. I was not financially compensated, and all opinions are 100 percent mine.

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## **Aerykah says**

[after he's dead she discovered that he was leading a double life, cheating on her and involved in criminal activities. (hide spoiler)]

### **Becki says**

It was probably more a 2.5 Stars for me this time around. But then the last chapter got me and bumped it to 3.

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### **Pam Chaffin says**

I love the fact that there are Christian authors that can write suspenseful, fast paced fiction, with tough thematic content, and unsavory characters, while still remaining true to their faith. Not only that, but you don't miss the bad language or sexual content at all! In fact, in my opinion, it makes the book so much better! Contrary to what some may think, Terri Blackstock's books never feel slow paced, boring or as if they're missing something. I would put them up against mainstream top writers of this genre. Even if you don't usually prefer Christian fiction because you think it's too sappy, or if you've tried another Christian author and didn't like him/her, you should try Blackstock's work. You won't be disappointed. This novel would be a great place to start!

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### **Nathalie Bakelandt says**

Op naar deel 3, wel benieuwd.

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