



Never Tell

Alafair Burke

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Detective Ellie Hatcher will be forced to uncover the truth behind the apparent suicide of a teenaged girl with intriguing connections to both New York's wealthiest—and its most dispossessed.

This addictive thriller from acclaimed suspense writer Alafair Burke draws its details from the author's own experiences as a criminal law professor and deputy district attorney, creating an exhilarating, true-to-life tale of crime and its consequences that is perfect for fans of Laura Lippman, Harlan Coben, and Burke's breakout standalone thriller *Long Gone*.

Never Tell Details

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Author : Alafair Burke

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From Reader Review Never Tell for online ebook

Patty says

Never Tell

By

Alafair Burke

My Speedy Summary...

Private school disturbed student commits suicide...but is it really suicide?

My Thoughts...

This book pretty much has it all including a reasonably dysfunctional detective who doesn't really believe a crime has been committed. Julia is found not alive in her bathtub with a suicide note nearby. It appears to be a suicide and everyone involved wants to sign it off as one...except for Julia's parents who don't believe she would have done such a thing.

The problem is that the parents are not around much, Julia has questionable friends and there has already been a suicide at Julia's posh private school. And drugs are around...questionable drugs...and a psychiatrist...a questionable psychiatrist.

There is a lot going on from a ton of different areas...there are threats on a blog and questions about Julia's involvement in that. Secrets kept by Julia's friend Ramona's mom...and Julia's involvement in that and a creepy guy released from prison who appears to be stalking Ramona's mom.

So many secrets and intertwined relationships course their way through this complex novel.

And Ellie...Detective Ellie...fraught with her own past and her own issues...

All of the above leads to an engrossing mystery...the unraveling is delicious...the evil will surprise you and you will be shocked at the ending.

I loved this book!

Sent from my iPad2 by Patty Magyar!!!

Mary says

Good read. Characters appear real, believable, and I liked them. Female detective closes a case too soon, and

is put back on it only to dig her teeth in and keep digging until she has solved the case, well almost....

Quillracer says

Another good entry in this series.

The investigation of a teen girl's apparent suicide leads Hatcher into an investigation into threats against a blogger chronicling her childhood abuse. Burke does a good job of tying (if only faintly) both investigations together but the young woman's death fades into the background as the threat investigation takes over. I think she could have done much more with the teen's death storyline; it was strong enough to stand on its own.

Burke keeps the reader guessing the guilty party but plays fair, revealing clues as the story progresses instead of having the answer suddenly pop into view at the end.

The line "They would pore over Bolt's office, home, and car, searching for physical evidence to shore up the affair between him and Julia." appears on page 307 of this book. The word is *pour* not *pore*. An author as well educated as Ms. Burke and a major publisher like HarperCollins should be ashamed they both allowed such a mistake to slip through.

I'll be back for more in this series.

Suzanne says

3.5 stars. This novel was kind of slow starting and took a good while to become engrossing. But, glad I hung with it as it eventually starting twisting and turning like a corkscrew.

Alecia says

I thought it started out OK, but then had too many streams of disjointed storylines running through it. Although some of the characterizations were pretty good, I struggled to finish it and found it a tedious read overall.

Marcia Clark says

Fun and interesting! I always appreciate it when crime fiction authors incorporate real world issues and Alafair Burke has done a really nice job of weaving in prescription drug abuse, corruption, and the unique problems faced by today's teens in an organic, informative way. Protagonist Ellie Hatcher is realistically drawn. It was such a nice change of pace to finally see a detective who occasionally jumps to the wrong conclusion and makes mistakes along the way. It happens, and that realism added a depth seldom seen in thrillers.

Katie says

Absolute drivel. I am flabbergasted (and a little frightened) by the multitude of of high ratings given to this dreadful, poorly written, lowest common denominator, I-Can-Read "novel".

I'll come back, and detail my disgust for this "book" by example - but first: It isn't a beach book; it isn't trashy fun; it's a cobbled together, poorly researched, cliché ridden, brain cell sucking, misguided, if only the pages were softer I'd use it for toilet paper, misinformed, Fox news meets US Weekly, stack of paper, bound and covered.

This is the kind of bestseller that makes me worry about the United Brains of America. I'm also pissed off at myself for reading it, and continuing to think about it, but it got under my skin. More to come...

Melissa says

3.5 stars--pretty good crime/mystery novel. I wasn't overly enamored by the way the ends were wrapped up, but overall a quick read.

Nia Forrester says

It's been a long while since I read a book in this genre, but I decided to give it a try because the ebook was reasonably-priced, at \$1.99, the author is female, is the daughter of the great James Lee Burke (author of **'Heaven's Prisoners'** and the other Dave Robicheaux novels), and writes with a backdrop of a city (NYC) that I love.

But once I started reading, I found there was so much more. The main protagonist in this series of novels is police detective Ellie Hatcher. Ellie is somewhat of a bombshell; a very pretty blonde who works on cases with less-than-pretty circumstances.

The un-pretty circumstance at the heart of **'Never Tell'**, is the death of a wealthy Upper West Side teenager, found with slit wrists in the bathtub of her tony townhouse by her absentee mother. There was a note left behind and the case seems open-and-shut. But for the influence of the guilt-ridden parents of the teenager, Ellie and her partner would not have bothered pursuing it as anything other than the case of a disaffected rich kid ending it all. Ellie's reluctance to treat the case as anything other than what it appears to be is informed by much more than what she saw at the scene, but we only learn that later.

Apart from the mystery of the apparent suicide of a wealthy, private school girl, I enjoyed the snippets of information about Ellie's private life. She's in a relationship with an Assistant District Attorney who thinks she may be "The One". Ellie shares that feeling about him, but they find that beyond that, they may want very different things. The interpersonal drama was just enough to make her human and relatable, but not so much that it overshadowed the central drama of whether an apparent suicide was just a cover-up of something much more sinister.

The layers that were unraveled as Ellie and her partner, an older Black man named Rogan (with whom she enjoys very witty repartee that uses their cultural, gender and age difference to highest effect)set about finding out what happened to this privileged young woman are never predictable, and the conclusion, just short of astonishing. Once this book was done, I immediately went back to Amazon to see what else I'd been

missing. I discovered three other books in the Ellie Hatcher series, and several others by this author. All of which feature strong female leads -- yay! So little by little, I intend to consume them all.

Nia Forrester

Glenda Bixler says

Finding a new author that has given me a whodunit mystery that is so complex and interwoven that I'm still stumped until the very end, is a rare gift. I knew as soon as I started never tell that the author had that undefinable "edgy" feel to her writing that makes me tense, excited, knowing that I've picked a suspenseful winner to read!

Before I begin about the story, I want to highlight that there are a number of important issues about teens, drugs, sexuality, parenting, and schools that are at the basis of this story. Be alert to the interaction among each as you read and make sure you understand what is actually happening. In my opinion, if the story line is fiction, the reality of what is being introduced has been established to a small or greater extent. I applaud this author for choosing topics that are so attuned to what we must consider for the future of our children!

Ellie Hatcher is a cop with a past that sometimes interferes with her handling of a new case. All people would do this, but she had a partner who was willing to challenge her on it--and the guts to evaluate her own actions and willingness to work harder to be more open. But finding Julia Whitmire, a rich 16-year-old girl who initially presented as having committed suicide, even to leaving a message on her bed, was, to Ellie, an open-and-shut case. And she was ready to move on to other work...

Except that the girl's mother didn't believe she would kill herself. And the parents knew the right people to call to ensure that the case was handled as more than suicide... I thought one of the ironic points was that the parents had willingly left their daughter live alone, but then (guiltily?) were adamant that a murder investigation be held.

As the investigation begun, the normal first thing was to talk with school officials and students. However, the principal of the private school would not permit any type of at-school discussions, claiming that the incident had not happened on school property and they had no responsibility. With parents who knew few of their daughters friends or what she might have been involved with, they began to get some basic information from Ramona, her best friend. From her she learned that Julia was interested in knowing all types of people, so we meet Casey and later several other who lived either on the street or in a homeless shelter. Casey is not only implicated, but is assaulted by private investigators hired by Julia's father, We learn much about his life and is one of the brighter side of the novel's closure.

Each piece of evidence continues to lead the investigation further and further into the private lives of many people, including Ramona's mother who was writing an anonymous blog about her being abused when young and who, during the investigation, begins to receive death threat messages as comments to her articles! More and more individuals are pulled in--but not more than are reasonable based upon the investigation. That is, the twists and turns are relevant! Power, money and corruption strikes often!

The presentation of the characters was interesting in that readers learn in-depth information as presented. However, the story line is so well woven that we meet them based upon how and when they fit--impressive that the author was able to do this so seamlessly! Kudos to Alafair Burke for one of the finest I've read...I'll

be looking for more from her in the future. My first reading of her novels has definitely made her one of my favorite authors... If you've also not read her, I highly recommend this one to begin. There is a series for Ellie Hatcher but the novel stands well on its own... Check it out and let me know if you agree with my feelings!

GABixlerReviews

James Thane says

NYPD Detective Ellie Hatcher is called to a death scene at a plush Manhattan town house. The body is that of a sixteen-year-old girl, Julia Whitmire. Julia was a student at an exclusive prep school, the daughter of influential parents, and a girl with perhaps too much independence. Julia is found in the tub with alcohol and drugs in her system; her wrist has been slit, and she has written an apparent suicide note.

All of the first responders, Ellie included, are ready to sign off on the death as a suicide. But Julia's mother insists that Julia would never take her own life and the family has enough clout to force a fuller investigation. The plot gets increasingly complex when the mother of Julia's best friend, a blogger, begins receiving threats. Ellie realizes that the two cases may be connected and that she may have jumped too quickly to a conclusion about Julia's death.

This is a very interesting tale that introduces a plot line involving prep school students under enormous pressure to succeed, abusing prescription drugs to gain an edge. It's an interesting subject, but Burke doesn't really do much with it. Also, there might be one or two too many surprising plot twists at the end, but still, it's a fun read and Ellie's fans should certainly enjoy it.

Michael says

Called to look into the death of sixteen-year old Julie Whitmire, NYPD Detective Ellie Hatcher is quick to dismiss the death as a suicide. But after political pressure is placed on the department by Julie's high profile, wealthy and politically connected parents, Hatcher and her partner are forced to dig a bit deeper and quickly discover that things aren't necessarily as black and white as they originally assumed.

The theme of "never assume" is prevalent in Alafair Burke's newest installment in the Ellie Hatcher series, *Never Tell*. Filled with a variety of suspects, this procedural suspense thriller has it's moments but Burke ultimately falls short of the other pantheon of mystery novelists today like Elizabeth George, Michael Connelly or Laura Lippman.

Part of this is the way in which clues are disseminated in the context of the story. Whereas Lippman, George and Connelly pepper in clues that may or may not pay off later, Burke only throws in clues as each red herring in the novel is revealed. It makes the revelations and their impact on the novel less interesting than they could be and denies the reader the opportunity to fully play along with Hatcher in solving the central mystery.

That's not to say that *Never Tell* is a terrible novel. It's a well done, enjoyable enough procedural thriller. But it's not quite the substantial mystery meal I was hoping for, based on my reading of other novels by Burke.

Ed says

#4 in the Ellie Hatcher series. This book was almost impossible to get into. If I had not read, and enjoyed, Burke's 7 previous books, including the first three of this series, I would have given up within the first 200 pages. For the first 200 pages, the only spark of life is the dialogue between Ellie and her musician brother. The final 150 pages bring some life to the story line and salvage the book's rating.

Ellie Hatcher series - Julia Whitmore appeared to have everything: a famous father, a luxurious town house, a coveted spot at an elite prep school. When she is found dead in her bathtub, a handwritten suicide note on her bed, her parents insist that their daughter would never take her own life. A search of Julia's computer reveals that in the days leading up to her death she was engaged in cyberbullying against an unlikely victim. NYPD detective Ellie Hatcher is convinced the case is a suicide. Pressured to pursue a case she doesn't believe in, she is pulled into Julia's inner circle.

Michael says

N.Y.P.D. detective Ellie Hatcher and her partner, J.J. Rogan are summoned to the scene of an apparent suicide. The victim, age sixteen, is from a wealthy and influential family.

Alafair Burke uses her knowledge of the streets of New York to create action that rolls out as if the reader was a pedestrian in the street or in Washington Square Park, listening to the sounds and watching the antics of the cast of characters.

Ellie not only investigates the questionable suicide but has flashbacks to the death of her own policeman father who was found dead of an apparent self-inflicted wound. She considers if she "...could simply set aside her own past like a discarded shopping bag."

The teenage children and their relationships with their parents are the heart of the story. Many of these teenagers live on the streets and have been cast aside by their parents. There is also a lesson on the danger of abuse of prescription drugs and antidepressants.

The author keeps the reader guessing through the intricacies of the story and the reader will shake their head in appreciation for the author's writing skill as we read the concluding chapters of this entertaining story.

Susan says

Good whodunit, with many interesting characters and plot twists. The author did a great job of keeping my interest right up to the end of the book. Nice job!

This book was received for free from Goodreads First Reads.
