



The Favorite Daughter

Kaira Rouda

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From the author of the page-turning domestic suspense *Best Day Ever*, comes another gripping novel of psychological suspense set in an upscale Southern California community, for fans of B.A. Paris and Shari Lapena.

The perfect home. The perfect family. The perfect lie.

Jane Harris lives in a sparkling home in an oceanfront gated community in Orange County. It's a place that seems too beautiful to be touched by sadness. But exactly one year ago, Jane's oldest daughter, Mary, died in a tragic accident and Jane has been grief-stricken ever since. Lost in a haze of anti-depressants, she's barely even left the house. Now that's all about to change.

It's time for Jane to reclaim her life and her family. Jane's husband, David, has planned a memorial service for Mary and three days later, their youngest daughter, Betsy, graduates high school. Yet as Jane reemerges into the world, it's clear her family has changed without her. Her husband has been working long days—and nights—at the office. Her daughter seems distant, even secretive. And her beloved Mary was always such a good girl—dutiful and loving. But does someone know more about Mary, and about her last day, than they've revealed?

The bonds between mothers and daughters, and husbands and wives should never be broken. But you never know how far someone will go to keep a family together...

The Favorite Daughter Details

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Author : Kaira Rouda

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From Reader Review *The Favorite Daughter* for online ebook

Deborah Blanchard says

This is such a great read! Told in the first person by Jane, the main character in this book. Is she a grieving mother or a psychopath? This book keeps you guessing! I wasn't sure of the answer. The story kept me intrigued throughout. Every single time I thought I knew what was happening, I was thrown by another twist. The characters are complex and richly developed. The story too is complex. The book flows well from beginning to end and is so well written. I was on the edge of my seat right up to the climatic ending! This book will keep you turning the pages. You won't be able to put it down! I highly recommend this book!!

Theresa Alan says

This is a challenging novel because the first-person narrator is wildly unlikeable even though she is in mourning for the death of her eldest daughter. She'll tell the reader something and then go and lie to her therapist, her driver—anyone who will listen, which isn't many since she's managed to alienate everyone over the years. She judges people by what they do for a living—how much money they make. Also a highly unlikeable trait.

She makes it clear that yes, things have gotten even worse in the year since her daughter died and she was in a haze of pills for much of it, but her alienating behavior began a long time before that. Even through her self-absorbed eyes, you have sympathy for the surviving daughter and even the philandering husband. That is quite a trick to pull off. However, it's easy to figure out the gist of things early on, and that's what makes this particularly disappointing.

Thanks to NetGalley for the opportunity to review this novel, which RELEASES May 21, 2019.
For more reviews, please visit: <http://www.theresaalan.net/blog>

Cassie says

Thank you Netgalley, Graydon House and Kaira Rouda for my free ARC in exchange for an honest review.

That's the power of the bond between mothers and daughters. It can never be broken, even in death.

Kaira Rouda is back and is quickly becoming one of my favorite authors. Her ability to write a completely narcissistic, unreliable and unlikable main character is unparalleled. And the fact is, despite the terrible things that character is saying and doing, I was completely hooked and raced to the finish line to see how the entire story unfolded.

As with her previous work *Best Day Ever*, *The Favorite Daughter* is told from the POV from the narcissistic and unhinged Jane Harris, a wife and mother of two teenage girls. Her first daughter Mary, who was adopted early into her marriage, has died under tragic circumstances, leaving her to raise her biological daughter, Betsy. However, it's clear from the very beginning, Jane preferred Mary to Betsy and has been struggling with which daughter is still alive.

Without Mary to place my biggest hopes and dreams on, I'm left with Betsy. At least she doesn't need to bother with sibling rivalry anymore.

I mean, *cringe*. The book is full of statements like this from Jane and no matter how many times I read something like that, I felt for Betsy and what it must have been like for her to be raised with a mother like that.

The book takes place around the one year anniversary of Mary's death and the impending high school graduation of Betsy. Jane has decided to reemerge into society and tries to reconnect with her family. However, it's very clear they have been moving forward with their lives and Jane struggles to adapt.

My husband used to be so handsome. They were such cute little girls. We were the perfect family.

As I stated above, I was absolutely engrossed in this novel. Despite how horrible Jane was, I needed to know what was going to happen next. And by the time I got to the heart-stopping ending, I couldn't help but feel exhilarated. Everything was wrapped up so well, even with all the little twists and turns along the way. I'd recommend going into this with as little information as possible.

Do not hesitate to get this book when it released, because Kaira Rouda is one of the best in the game right now and this book is an example of her amazing abilities.

Maybe, like my husband, most people don't really see me at all anymore. There are so many ways to look at it. One person's crazy is another's brilliance.

Karen Trosterud says

This was my first book of Kaira's that I read and was pleasantly surprised how suspenseful it was... Jane Harris was a delusional narcissist that I had a love/hate relationship with! I received an advance copy and all opinions are my own! Highly recommend

Lisa Steinke says

"Kaira Rouda vaulted us head first into the haunting mind of Jane Harris, an unreliable narrator like you haven't read before. Both compelling and addicting, *The Favorite Sister* is a roller coaster of a ride that will have you twisting and turning. Just when you think you know what happens, the plot pivots once more—leaving you guessing until the very end!" ~Liz Fenton & Lisa Steinke, bestselling authors of *Girls' Night Out*

Judy Collins says

5 Stars +++ I LOVED **THE FAVORITE DAUGHTER!** My Top Books of 2019. If you loved **BEST DAY EVER**, you will devour **THE FAVORITE DAUGHTER**. Jane is a character you will never forget. Look for my review a little later and stay tuned for a fun Q&A Elevator Ride Interview with the Author, coming May, 2019.

In the meantime, pre-order and move this gem to the top of your TBR list. Kaira, you rock! Your humor is "dynamite!" *I have never laughed so hard.* The "queen" of narcissistic personality disorder. If you are looking for a highly entertaining well written psychological suspense thriller, this is it!

Amy says

Well, Rouda has once again shown that psychological thrillers can be both darkly funny and chilling at the same time without feeling cliched. Both this and Best Day Ever had a really fresh and current vibe that makes you feel like you're reading something from an author who has found their perfect niche. I'm a huge fan of Rouda's style and am so excited to (hopefully) see her continue writing in the same vein.

The entire story is told from Jane's perspective and what a character she is. Often she is speaking directly to the reader giving this such a personal touch, I loved that aspect and she is also one of those narrators that constantly keeps you guessing, one minute I was sure she was delusional and a borderline psychopath and then the next I would almost feel sorry for her. Who is the real Jane?! You'll have to read to find out, but finding out the truth was one hell of an addictive roller coaster ride.

Once again, I was confident I knew what would eventually happen but the author wrong footed me in the end, there were quite a few startling revelations that delighted me. Jane is just as over the top and dramatic as Paul was in BDE and I love me some drama! Totally recommend this for fans of domestic suspense, it was just so wickedly fun.

The Favorite Daughter in three words: Addictive, Dramatic and Sinister.

Liz Fenton says

Kaira Rouda vaulted us head first into the haunting mind of Jane Harris, an unreliable narrator like you haven't read before. Both compelling and addicting, The Favorite Sister is a roller coaster of a ride that will have you twisting and turning. Just when you think you know what happens, the plot pivots once more—leaving you guessing until the very end!

Anissa says

No one leaves a star. That's what makes one a star.
- Norma Desmond (*Sunset Boulevard*)

Jane Harris is a modern-day Norma Desmond but with a smidge more crazy, tracker apps and a higher body count.

I figured this would be a ride with an unreliable narrator but I had no idea that Jane was a next level narcissist. It was tense watching her unfurl her machinations on her family and others and it was so satisfying

by book's end to find that she had had her head so far up her own rear, she missed some very big things and that was her downfall. She literally could not imagine a world in which she is not the smartest, prettiest, most deserving or most aggrieved.

Jane throughout talked about getting back into her Hollywood life but truly, there's no getting back into something that never was. She thought every man who crossed her path was captivated by her. She couldn't pass reflective surfaces without checking herself out.

Jane's husband was cheating and planning to leave her and I didn't feel bad for her. Her daughter was ready to flee the nest & I didn't have any sympathy for Jane's empty nest feels. I was cheering the husband and the remaining daughter to make their grand escape and successfully disappear into the ether just to be free of Jane. I was pulling for a witness protection type disappearance. When I finished the book, I was still pulling for Kiley to return! Jane had me rooting for the "home-wrecker" to have a happily ever after! That shouldn't be a thing! People were all means to an end for Jane. She only saw her family members as an extension of herself & when they didn't conform to her strictures and demands, she went to extremes to manipulate them to her will or if they were really willful, end them.

Thank you Kaira Rouda for writing a character that appalled, stunned and kept me up late reading. I'd read another by Rouda in a heartbeat. Well done all around and I think this will definitely be one of the more talked about of 2019. Definitely recommended.

Many thanks to the publisher for the ARC, you made my reading weekend.

Kimberly Belle says

It's not often that a psychological thriller makes you laugh out loud, but Kaira Rouda latest page-turner had me cackling until deep in the night. The Favorite Daughter stars Jane, a woman grieving the death of her oldest daughter, whose attempts to reclaim her place as perfect matriarch are as riveting as they are darkly hilarious. Fans of Rouda's Best Day Ever will adore this one, and Jane's whip-smart wit will win Rouda some new fans, as well. Smart, surprising, and 100% satisfying.

Jamie says

There is NO ONE and I mean NO ONE who writes the delusional, unreliable narcissist quite like Kaira Rouda! If you thought Best Day Ever's Paul Stromm was a fun character to hate-read, wait until you meet Jane Harris - who just may put Paul to shame! This plot was so inventive and creative, I really enjoyed being along for the ride! I know this will be a book everyone is talking about in 2019!

I received an advanced copy. All opinions are my own.

Kaira Rouda says

I hope you enjoy THE FAVORITE DAUGHTER! Thank you!

Stacey Camp says

****5 Stars****

Kaira Rouda's latest book, *The Favorite Daughter*, is a haunting, first-person follow up to her hit *Best Day Ever*. In both books, Rouda painstakingly details what it might be like to live in the shoes of a psychotic, narcissistic person who thinks any and every single thing revolves around their needs, desires, and wants.

Jane Harris - the lead character - is an Orange County, California housewife and socialite who has spent the last year mourning her bright young daughter's strange disappearance and subsequent murder. Her family life is crumbling around her - her husband seems to be straying and her other daughter is hanging out with the wrong crowd - but Jane is determined to take the helm again and show that they are strong amid tragedy. Getting her family to comply won't be easy, but soon enough they will once be the talk of Orange County's elite circles. To do so will also mean hiding a past - one that the police involved in her daughter's case are onto.

This was a quick read for me because 1) I'm from Orange County, California, where this story takes place and can relate a lot to the places and shallowness of the wealthier subset of folks living there, and 2) because I love well written first person thrillers. I appreciated that Rouda tried to dive deep into the mind of someone who tries to rationalize every single terrible, destructive decision they make. She really gives you a sense of what a sociopath might be thinking when they decide to betray, trick, and con the people they supposedly love.

I saw some of the plotline coming, but that didn't ruin it for me. If you are a fan of thrillers and domestic noir, you'll like this book a lot. There are lots of crazy twists and turns for every the most seasoned thriller readers.

Thank you to Kaira Rouda, NetGalley, and Harlequin for the opportunity to read this exciting new thriller!

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Wendy Walker says

LOVED EVERY PAGE.

Here is my "official" review - but I would also add that this was the kind of book you hold in your hand while going through security at the airport, and checking in, and finding your seat - sneaking in a few more paragraphs any way you can.

Addictive and haunting, *The Favorite Daughter* is a breath stealing free-fall into the dangerous, twisted mind of a woman poised to wreak destruction within her family – the mother. Rouda’s narrative is flawless – a master class within the psychological thriller genre. Hooked from page one, this book did not leave my hands until the very end. Phenomenal!

Donna Hines says

Perfect Life or is it?

A tragic accident leaves Mary (oldest daughter) of Jane dead & poor Jane can't recover.

She's become a hermit refusing to leave home but a year has passed so she's ready to venture out.

David (Jane's husband) planned a memorial service and 3 days later their youngest daughter Betsy was set to graduate, so what's the problem?

Well, it now appears trouble in paradise has arrived.

David seems to have become a workaholic spending more time there, Grace has become distant and secretive, and well there's also Kylie?

Who is Kylie...wait WHAT!

You never know what secrets are kept hidden behind closed doors and this family sure has their own full closet.

Kaira has nailed this thriller and I highly recommend it for those who love mystery, intrigue, suspense, and non stop action.

Thank you Kaira, the publisher, NetGalley, and Aldiko for this ARC in exchange for this honest review.
