



## Girl Number One

*Jane Holland*

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## **Girl Number One** Jane Holland

As a young child, Eleanor Blackwood witnessed her mother's murder in woods near their farm. The killer was never found.

Now an adult, Eleanor discovers a woman's body in the same spot in the Cornish woods where her mother was strangled eighteen years before. But when the police get there, the body has disappeared.

Is Eleanor's disturbed mind playing tricks on her again, or has her mother's killer resurfaced? And what does the number on the dead woman's forehead signify?

## **Girl Number One Details**

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Author : Jane Holland

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# From Reader Review Girl Number One for online ebook

## Cora ? Tea Party Princess says

**5 Words: Family, relationships, murder, revenge, tragedy.**

For a little while, I thought I had this book worked out.

I was wrong.

This book is full of the twists and turns that you'd expect from a mysterious psychological thriller, and it certainly kept me on my toes. I never knew quite where it was going to go next. It was full of surprises and I kept second guessing myself - and rightly so because I didn't guess whodunnit!

Eleanor was a bit of a weird one, and I loved the different sides to her - doesn't everyone have a work/professional self and a private self? I know I certainly do. I did think it was a bit weird how she seemed to run towards danger rather than away from it, but I understood why she did given all of the pressure building up around her.

Tension was high, there was lots of surprises, and I was completely blown away by the ending.

I've read this authors historical works, written under various pen-names, and they've always been fantastic. This transition to contemporary crime/thriller/mess-with-your-head is definitely a success and I look forward to more in future.

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## Tori Clare says

I'm giving this book 2.5 stars - it was somewhere between 'it was OK' and 'I liked it'. Thing is, it WAS just OK, nothing special or earth-shattering. Nothing jaw-dropping or original or sensational. It was somewhat generic.

There are a lot of novels at the moment with 'girl' in the title. Girl Number One, Girl on the Train, Gone Girl, The Girl with no Past, Lost Girls etc. Girl Number One is the only one I've read of these, but I imagine they all aspire to grabbing the readers of Gone Girl and marketing their books to attract those readers. Immediately, that's a turn-off for me. I appreciate originality. The present-tense writing irritated me a bit; it's written in first person too, not my favourite.

A girl's mother is murdered and the daughter was there at the time, witnessing events. The killer is never caught. That's the prologue. Skip forward a good few years and she's an adult who's been in therapy, trying to coax memories to the surface. But she's functioning and has a job. But suddenly, the killing starts again and it appears that the killer is leaving clues especially for her. Things transpire as you'd expect. It's a suspense novel, a who-dunnit, so we know we're not going to find out who it is until the end, and we know that the author is going to be chucking red herrings at us all the way and making every single character a possible suspect, which gets a bit tiresome.

Like I said, it was OK. Well written enough, but I wasn't completely convinced by the dialogue in parts. The

concept as a whole didn't excite me. The character development - as is normal for this genre - was minimal and so I didn't particularly care what happened to be honest. I finished the book yesterday and thought I'd better write a review before I forget everything about it, because definitely I will!

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## **Elaine says**

I won a copy of **Girl Number One** from a Goodreads Giveaway.

I did not like it and this is why:

1. The writing is immature or, to put it bluntly, mediocre. I had to speed read the last 50 pages because I just can't. Not anymore. Please, let it end.
2. The main character, Ellie, is an immature caricature who can't be taken seriously. Yes, yes, I know, she's only twenty four but when the main character invests more time thinking about how sexy Connor, Tris and Denzil is than about, say, the dead body she discovered, I'm outtie. And I thought Bella, Jacob and Edward was the most annoying love triangle I would ever read! I've learned my lesson.
3. Silly behavior meant to drive the action forward such as tampering with evidence, playing a below average version of Nancy Drew by breaking into a friend's home, and tattling on friends at the last minute to the Detective Inspector, who, of course, does not believe her and who trails behind in his investigation.
4. Dumb, shallowly drawn men including the aforementioned love triangle attendees and Ellie's lousy drunk of a father.
5. Plot holes I can drive a Winnebago through. I love that word. Winnebago. You know how you can say a word over and over and it ceases to lose all meaning? Winnebago is one of them.
6. The bad guy? I dunno. It made no sense which explains why when he/she was unmasked I didn't care.
7. But the worst sin of all? **Boring**. This book was SO boring but that was due to the above.

Read at your own risk.

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## **Martha Dunlop says**

I loved *Girl Number One*. It had me hooked from page one, and I raced through the story to find out what happened next.

Stumbling across a body on the anniversary of her mother's death was bad enough, but when the body disappeared before the police could find it, Eleanor's sanity was called into question. Those close to her watch with sympathy, and the pupils she teaches at the local school hound her until she is given compulsory time out. This leaves her with nothing to do but investigate the murder herself.

I loved the romantic tension, which upped the intensity even further. It was ambiguous enough that I really

wasn't sure how things would end up, and the plot also kept me guessing right up until the end. There were false starts, suspicions that led nowhere and resentments that took a lot of untangling. Add to that surprises in the final showdown and you have a compulsive, page turning read that I would recommend to anyone who enjoys thrillers.

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## **Amy says**

Full review on [www.novelgossip.com](http://www.novelgossip.com)

For once, I really do not have a whole to say. I usually cut myself off in reviews because I do not want to ramble on and on and bore you guys. I'm feeling apathetic about this book though so this will shorter than usual.

Things started out pretty well here. The premise was strong for me and I usually enjoy books where the heroine is unsure of herself and wonders if she's cracking up. Eleanor finds a dead woman in the same woods where her mother was killed years earlier. By the time the police arrive, there is no body. Then, she gets the sensation that she is being watched, often. Is she losing her mind? Has she already gone mad and hasn't even realized it herself?

Ellie was a pretty boring character despite all the drama in her life. She came off as very cold and detached. She shows no emotion whatsoever when she finds a dead women in the same place her own mother died! That's when I knew I wasn't going to be able to connect with her much. Later, she thinks it's a good idea to sleep with a man who is one of her own main suspects as the killer. She totally lost me then, I just can't. Her character was also under developed, as were all the characters in this book.

I guessed very early on who the killer was which is always a huge let down. I swear I only end up finishing the book so I can know that I was right and feel justified in my rightness. When the big climactic scene finally comes, (parts of this were very slow, especially for a so called thriller) there was just no excitement. Maybe it's because I couldn't muster any up, I'm not sure. The motivation for the string of murders was weak too and I was holding onto my last hope, thinking maybe that would provide something unique.

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## **Meredith says**

When she was 6 years old, Ellie witnessed her mother's murder. She blocked out the memory of who committed the crime. 18 years later, Ellie goes for a run and finds a body where her mother was killed. The killer starts tormenting Ellie, leaving another body for her to find on her mother's grave, and sending her a message to let her know that she has been chosen to be his "number one girl." Ellie needs to try and remember who murdered her mother in order to save herself from the same fate.

Girl Number One starts off strong. I liked Ellie and found the mystery to be intriguing. However, it unravels at a certain point and Ellie started to irk me. She starts having doubts about everyone around her being involved in her mother's murder, which is understandable but she sleeps with someone minutes after thinking that he is involved in the murders! I feel like this one has potential, but it just gets too out of control in the end. Overall, it was an entertaining and easy read, but there were some elements missing to make it a

must read!

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### **Lindsey says**

This book started with such promise but ended up being a pretty standard and not-so-mysterious mystery. Other reviewers said they couldn't put it down, and that is accurate, but only because I guessed the identity of the killer within about 50 pages and I had to see if I was right (I was). I honestly ended up skipping quite a few pages, as well. There were a lot of plot holes and many of the things the characters did made absolutely zero sense except as a means of forwarding the plot. The writing was fairly juvenile, too. In one scene, the author made a point of narrating the fact that the main character left her drink unattended. She literally said "I left my drink unattended." Then later in the night, big surprise, she realizes she was drugged. The book was filled with that kind of narration, which is pretty amateurish. I was surprised by it because Jane Holland has written quite a few novels. This book just didn't do it for me.

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

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### **Marjolein says**

2.5 Stars

*Read all my reviews on <http://urlphantomhive.booklikes.com>*

Eleanor witnessed her mother's murder as a little girl. Now, she finds a body in exactly the same spot. Only, the police can later not find it.

I find it slightly ironic that while I read this book I was very annoyed by the main character, while one of the main points of the stories is that the police and everyone think she is not completely in her right mind. Eleanor made such strange decisions and was complaining a lot, which really decreased my appreciation of the story. The story on the other hand was never that much of a surprise for me. There are a lot of twists in the story, as Eleanor considers every male characters as the potential murderer. Only, anyone who's ever read the same kind of book before, it will be no surprise whether or not the body Eleanor found is real...

Thanks to the publisher and Netgalley for providing me with a free copy of this book in exchange for an honest review!

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### **Betsy says**

I received Girl Number One by Jane Holland in a giveaway. Review is unbiased.

This is the first book I have read by Jane Holland. I am pleasantly surprised how much I enjoyed it. The plot was interesting with the main character, Ellie, finding a dead body where her Mom was murdered years ago. When the police get there, the body is now gone. Where did it go? Is someone trying to make her crazy? Did she imagine it? Based on her troubled past and also that is the anniversary of her Mom's death, everyone

seems to think that she is mistaken. Now she is on a journey to prove everyone wrong and also find her Mom's killer. I figured out the plot quite early in the book, but I still found the journey entertaining. The descriptions of the locale and the surfing community were a bit too descriptive for me and did not add too much to the story. Don't let this keep you away though as I usually do not tend to like descriptive parts. I will be looking to read other books by this author. 4 stars

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### **Louise Wilson says**

Eleanor Blackwood saw her mother being murdered in the woods near their farm when she was just 6. The killer was never found. It's now 18 years later and Eleanor stumbles over a body in the exact same spot her mother was murdered. When the police arrive the body is nowhere to be seen. Has her mother's killer resurfaced after all these years?

I was not quite sure where this story was talking me and when I thought I knew, how wrong was I. My suspicions were always wrong. There's quite a few surprises in this enjoyable thriller.

I would like to thank Net Galley, Thomas & Mercer and the author Jane Holland for my ARC in exchange for an honest review.

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### **Alex ? Deranged KittyCat ? says**

Girl Number One started on a good premise, and left me totally uninterested.

When she was six years old, Eleanor saw her mother murdered. She was terribly traumatized, and the murderer never got caught. Eighteen years later, on the anniversary of her mother's death, she finds another dead woman in the exact same spot.

That's cool, right? Interesting? Well, not so much when you couldn't care less about any of the characters. Somehow, the book feels all over the place and I cannot find the reason for many of the things happening in it. The murderer sees Eleanor as some kind of special snowflake and I don't agree with him. And how he gets caught and overpowered is so stupid that I'm amazed he got away with murdering two women and abducting another one in the first place.

Now, if you'll excuse me, I have a *date* with a smarter, more charming psychopath.

*\*Copy provided by the publisher via Netgalley in exchange for an honest review.*

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### **Cheryl says**

Eleanor Blackwood was six years old when she witnessed her mother's murder. Now 24, she has returned to

her home town where she has gotten a teaching job. But even after so much time has passed, she is haunted by the memory. At the time of the crime, police questioned her, but she couldn't provide a description of the killer. Suppressed memories have led her to seek help from a therapist.

Eighteen years to the day that her mother was murdered, Eleanor awakens early and goes for a run in the woods bordering her town. As she approaches a stream, she notices something blocking the path..... the body of a woman is lying there. The number 3 is written on her forehead.

After a second body, bearing the number 2 on her forehead, is discovered, Eleanor realizes that a killer is on the loose, and that the recent events are somehow related to her past. Desperate to remember what happened, Eleanor finds herself in a race against time before she becomes the next victim.

Riveting and suspenseful, with a real sense of place, Girl Number One is a thriller that will pull you in and keep you guessing until the very end!

Thank you to Net Galley, Thomas & Mercer Inc., and author Jane Holland for giving me the opportunity to read the ARC of this book.

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## **Elaine says**

When Eleanor Blackwood finds the body of a young woman in the woods, in the exact same spot where she witnessed her mother's murder 18 years ago, it seems that history is repeating itself. However, when the body disappears before the police arrive everyone seems to assume that Eleanor's mind is playing tricks on her. Are they correct, or is someone deliberately trying to scare her?

On the surface this book ticks all my boxes, a dark psychological thriller which keeps you guessing all the way through but there was something about it that just didn't quite live up to the mark for me. I think it is mostly to do with Eleanor herself who at times really irritated me. She doesn't so much face danger head on, but runs to meet it in a way that had me shaking my head asking myself why she doesn't make sure someone knows where she is going. I found it difficult to get a handle on her in some ways. She is 24 years old, a sensible newly qualified PE teacher and I couldn't quite match that side of her with the beach party loving surfer chick that emerged at times. Which was the real Eleanor? At times in the book she seems to doubt every male character in turn which made for a twisty read but again, in this respect, she kept showing a tendency to bring the danger to herself. If you think someone might be a murderer then why are you arranging to be on your own with them?

I class a good psychological thriller as one that has me glued to it, has me analysing the characters and finally deciding that, at the end of the day, my own husband could be the guilty party. A good read will have me taking the kindle to the toilet with me and ordering takeaways. This one though, was one that I could very easily put down although I have to say that the basic story line is a good one. Just something lacking there for me.

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## **Jody McGrath says**

When Eleanor Blackwood was 6 years old, her mother was brutally strangled in the woods next to their hamlet. Ellie ran like her mother told her to, but she returned and found her mother's body. 18 years later it is the anniversary of her mother's murder. In defiance, she goes for a run in the woods to the spot where it happened so long ago. There, she finds the body of a young woman, also strangled, with the number 3 written in black ink on her forehead. She runs as fast as she can and contacts the police, but when they return the body is gone. They believe she is cracking up, she knows what she saw. Days later, with her on again-off again boyfriend, Tris, they uncover another body in the woods. This one is marked number 2. Now the police believe her, but she doesn't know who to trust, because she is pretty sure she is girl number one.

This was a psychological thriller that had action and suspense right out of the gate. It started off strong and I was completely hooked, until about halfway through the book. The main character, Eleanor, I think is supposed to be an unreliable narrator. But she never was. It was obvious she wasn't crazy, although she was way paranoid. She thought that every man in her life was the killer. Even when there wasn't any reason to think that. The killer is blatantly obvious, and of course the only man she doesn't suspect. The mystery was just way too easy. The author attempted to throw in 4 or 5 red herrings, but it was just too obvious.

I rated this 3 stars because I truly liked the beginning and the idea was great. It just seemed to lose steam at the halfway point. Even Eleanor seemed to be strange. One of her best friends disappears, so she goes surfing with her friends? I don't know. Maybe I should've went with a 2...

\* I received a free copy of this book in exchange for an honest review \*

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## **CL says**

Eleanor Blackwood witnessed her mother's murder many years ago in the woods near their home. Now many years later Eleanor finds another body of a young woman in the exact same spot but when the police arrive there is no body. Has her mother's murderer resurfaced or is Eleanor's mind playing tricks on her? She is given time off from her teaching position so now with time on her hands she attempts to investigate on her own. Is she losing her mind or is there a killer playing tricks on her. Great read. I would like to thank the Publisher and Net Galley for the chance to read this ARC.

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