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Detective CeeCee Gallagher is no stranger to high-pressure cases. But this one could easily cost her career...and her life. A macabre serial killer is on the loose, leaving the bodies of his young victims made up to resemble dolls. With only a Bible passage sent by the killer to guide her, CeeCee will have to sacrifice everything to find him and end his reign of terror before another child is murdered.

The Devil's Closet Details

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From Reader Review The Devil's Closet for online ebook

Ragne says

I guess it was my own fault. I should have known it was chick lit at soon as I saw the name "CeeCee" as main character.

The thing is, I actually believed it would be an exciting read. That's why I was so disappointed when I realised the story was much more about CeeCee's marital problems, her new love, and other chick lit-stuff.

The mystery is sadly rather obvious, except small things where the reader doesn't have all the information, such as local names.

CeeCee is an infuriatingly rash woman. She doesn't care about the people around her when she acts. One of the times that illustrates this, is when she foolishly enters the house of the suspect alone, without a warrant. Michael, her partner, warns her that if he doesn't hear from her in exactly one hour, he will start a huge search-and-rescue. She says she understands, and will call. When she finally calls, over two hours later, she is in trouble, and whispers that she needs help, before she hangs up. After the danger is over, she does not call him again to let him know. No, she does not care that most likely, the entire police dept. is out looking for her instead of doing their job. She drives home, takes a long shower, tries to calm down, then drives Michael. All the while, everyone (including her husband, boyfriend, father, and uncle, who also works in the police) is in terror, imagining the absolute worst, and no police officer is able to do their actual work, because they are out looking for her.

The reason I still gave it two stars, is that the language is quite good, there's a good "drive" to the story, and I could, maybe too much, relate to her marital problems. And the climax is quite good. However, I don't think I'll read more of these books. There's just too many other books to read, such as mystery books where I actually have to think a bit.

Lynda says

Detective Cee Cee Gallagher was on the case every parent dreads, a missing child. This predator was not the norm; this person had a proclivity for dolls and a mounting appetite for outwitting authorities, a manipulative elusive criminal on the loose, never stopping at one.

"The Devil's Closet" was one book I can say it took several attempts to get into before I actually sat down to read it in its entirety. As a mother, the prologue haunted me, immobilized me from proceeding further until the desire to know more won out. I liked the range of characters and their conflicting natures, a realistic sampling of people in society, even dedication and intelligence were sidetracked with attraction and gossip. The value of open communication in relationships and departments was emphasized. Emotional moments of fear and the compulsion to go on, fighting every intensifying urge to give up but compelled to take each step knowing it led to growing fear and pain, unsure what was next...it was demanding, forceful and powerful in its hold on me. Despite the need for more proofreading, "The Devil's Closet" was a great crime mystery, I was happy I pushed forward to read it.

My review was based on a free download.

Tomi says

The serial killer part of this was good but the multiple adulteries ruined it.

Auntie Sherry says

Need more stars!!! Excellent job!!

Joyce says

Good book

Once I started this book I couldn't put it down. The characters are believable and mesh together well. The plot had me guessing right to the end. Some ebooks I have read have so many typos but this one didn't. I know it's silly but those typos really bother me.

Kristen says

In Stacy Dittrich's *The Devil's Closet*, welcome to the world of sex crimes and carnal sins. For Detective Cecilia "Cee Cee" Gallagher, she's chasing a sexual predator and killer of young girls. It all started with multiple Amber Alerts of missing young girls all over the Cleveland area. From one town to another, Cee Cee and her squad discover shocking clues from past crimes. When her former lover FBI Michael Hagerman returned to assist, it tilted her world and put her marriage in crises. Though with this tough mother of two, she dealt with her husband's infidelity and protecting her own daughters. While she managed to deal with her own emotions, she sifted through the papers to follow her own gut on nailing this sick son of a bitch. And when she does, it cuts closer to the truth. With a near-death encounter, she fought tooth and nail to save her own life and deal with her own family issues.

Christine says

Once again, Dittrich crafts a very disturbing case (loosely based on a case she worked) involving a predator who sexually abuses and murders young children. This isn't for the faint hearted as the subject matter is pretty awful.

Like the previous installment, I really enjoy the investigation aspect of this book. It freaked me out and I was on edge to see who the killer would eventually be stopped. As for our lead investigator CeeCee...I'm not a huge fan. Dittrich's writing style is very dry and non-emotional so it's hard to get a well rounded/realistic view of anyone. We are told she's a brilliant investigator but she seems to whine, cry and act unprofessional quite often. It's amazing anymore has any respect for her. There was a lot of drama involving her love life (as

well as her boss/friend) that I didn't care for. I will definitely continue to read this series even though because I love the actual cases and 'the hunt' for the killers.

Grade: 3/5

Sue says

Again poor writing but good plot, I hate CeeCee!

Sarah says

I see that the majority of reviewers agree with me that the main character isn't very likable. I didn't like CeeCee very much – she spent most of the book crying over her relationship problems, which were big distraction from the plot. I mean, I didn't mind the romance so much, but it just seems so unrealistic that so many of the people in the book were having affairs with married partners. Of course, the woman who wrote this is an investigator herself and she says in the appendix that this really reflects the way police marriages are – I don't know about that – but it was kind of distracting. And CeeCee herself is really annoying as I said. I couldn't figure out why everyone loved her so much – were two men were after her and madly in love with her and why the two other characters desperately wanted her friendship. It's like she was so popular and everyone either wanted to marry her or earn her friendship, and I just didn't understand why. However, the plot was really interesting and the climax was very suspenseful. I have to say, I would probably buy another book in the series if it was in the thrift store for \$.50, but I wouldn't spend the full price. I have the next book in the Stacy Dietrich series, and I intend to read it, but I wouldn't go out of my way to purchase another one

Neil says

For anyone who like a thriller this could be the book for you. The basic plot is that there is a serial killer on the loose, and as this individual seems knowledgeable about Police procedures there isn't a lot for CeeCee Gallagher to go on. Not only that but she also has to cope with her own personal life crumbling about her. It makes a pleasant change to read one of these Police thrillers with a female as the central character. Everything was well written and this also includes the characters, you will not be surprised to learn that the author was a police officer herself. So it is all done from a position of knowledge. The only slight downside for me was that almost as much time was spent on CeeCee's personal life as was spent on the case. As this was the first book that I have read from this author, I have just been looking for her other books which probably tells its own story.

Rhonda says

Stacy has done it once again- a brilliant crime novel based loosely on true events.

"Detective CeeCee Gallagher is no stranger to high-pressure cases. But this one could easily cost her career...and her life. A macabre serial killer is on the loose, leaving the bodies of his young victims made up

to resemble dolls. With only a Bible passage sent by the killer to guide her, CeeCee will have to sacrifice everything to find him and end his reign of terror before another child is murdered."

I grew up reading "True Crime" magazines so the grotesqueness of the storyline didn't bother me but it did kind of creep me out when, at the end, I realized the book was loosely based on true cases that Stacy had investigated.

The storyline was easy to follow and besides the crime itself, I felt like I got a small peek into the interpersonal relationships between law enforcement across the country.

I did think the ending was a bit stretched out but I understand Stacy's need to tie up loose ends.

Tara says

I really enjoyed this book, although its subject matter sent a lot of uncomfortable chills down my spine. In *The Devil's Closet*, Detective CeeCee Gallagher is involved in the search for a kidnapper and murderer. The victims are young girls between the ages of 6 and 8, and none of them are found alive. CeeCee finds herself butting heads with the FBI, dealing with marital problems and up against a ticking clock.

I have always been bothered by the violence adults inflict upon children, especially when it comes to sexual violence. This is a novel about sexual violence against children in it, and if you are the type of person who turns green at thought of it, you might not want to read this book. There is no graphic violence, it is all hinted at in discussions between the characters, but the reader knows what is happening to the victims without needing to actually be given a blow by blow report. CeeCee Gallagher is police officer and mother of two young daughters, and her anger towards the murderer I felt was very justified. In my job, working for the legal system, I hear a lot of things I wish I didn't and I am always outraged when I hear about a sex crime committed on a child, so I appreciated CeeCee's anger.

This book is the first in the CeeCee Gallagher series and I am looking forward to reading more of them. There is a lot of tension in this book and CeeCee has to deal with an overloaded plate of issues, but her main focus is always on the case and finding each missing girl. There are times when her bullheadedness results in a later realization that she misjudged something or someone and she does admit when she was wrong.

I always enjoy reading the Author's Note at the end of books, as it leaves me with a bit of insight into what drove the author to write a particular story. Stacy Dittrich includes an Author's Note at the end of this book, explaining that this story was inspired by a criminal investigation she was involved in, about a child rapist/murderer who she nicknamed *The Doll Man*. Reading her "note" made me a little more uncomfortable with the story, but it also made me appreciate this novel all that much more. I know there are men (and women) out there like *The Doll Man*, they walk among us and the majority of us have no idea, but I still find it upsetting and disturbing that there are people out there who wish to do harm to young children.

This book was offered as a free e-book from Barnes & Noble and that's how I received it. I have since added the CeeCee Gallagher series to my "wishlist" as I do want to continue to read about the adventures of CeeCee. Stacy Dittrich has a new fan. I'd recommend this book to fans of Tess Gerritsen and Patricia Cornwell.

Anime Mage says

Introduction:

Oh my god! My soul....it's gone! This book was so bad that I felt my soul literally become eviscerated, leaving my mind and body as an empty husk. This isn't a book...this is torture on levels that would make even Ramsay Bolton from Game of Thrones feel ashamed! Now if you know me...this book was a part of a summer Goodreads challenge....which included a lot of thrillers such as "What Doesn't Kill Her", "The Stand", and "Tell No One." And while I read a number of bad books for said challenge, "One of Us is Lying", "Shadow Man", "The Missing", this book's somehow end up being worse than all of them! This novel wasn't just subpar, it was so terrible that I legitimately felt angry. I seriously wanted to tie this book to cinderblock shoes and throw it down a river! This is without the shadow of a doubt the worst thing to EVER grace the planet!! The most terrible part about this is this book broke my streak of good books in a row for this year's Goodreads challenge! ?

Review:

The story is about a cop named CeeCee and she must catch a killer who kills children and turns them into dolls like corpses.

The biggest problem with this book that this book is enjoyable ONLY IF one enjoys the love triangle between CeeCee, Eric, and Michael....which was not only ABYSMAL but pretty much 98% of the book. And to make matters worse.....all the characters were garbage and were thoroughly unlikable the entire time!

Let's start with the main character and narrator: CeeCee Gallagher. Unfortunately she not compelling at all. She has all the tropes that every heroine thriller protagonist has: a "tragic" backstory and being an asshole. Basically she was almost killed when she brought down a drug organization. The book does a terrible job of making this interesting and instead comes off as a stupid jumping off point for the romance between Michael and CeeCee. It's not even tragic really, as it lacks any emotional depth. We don't even get to see that tragedy, we are only told of it in the most lazy exposition dump possible. It also ties into her character and the book in general so poorly that had the book didn't flat out tell me that it happened, I would never have guessed that she had a near death experience. So her backstory is both poorly integrated and lacks emotional thrills. She also thoroughly unlikable. She keeps treating her co-work, Naomi, like garbage, even though she doesn't do anything to warrant such behavior. If anything, CeeCee was just being mean and judgmental towards her just because she could. Another thing about CeeCee that I hated was that she cheats on Eric. I am not so much angry about the fact that she cheated on Eric, but more because the book makes it seem boring and irritating. Now, books have successfully humanized characters doing things that are not considered ethical, such as killing and cheating. Take Dexter for example. He kills people. But those series of books humanize him by making his mindset really interesting and make it seem like his victims deserve to die. And he also real cool dynamics with all of his antagonists. However, this book doesn't do that with her. CeeCee's cheating isn't made interesting, or cool, or engaging. Instead, it makes her feel incredibly unlikable. She breaks Eric's heart without guilt because she is too lazy to make things work out. She destabilizes her entire family just to sleep with some guy that looks hot. And her chemistry with the antagonist is so cliché that these characters could be from any other thriller. And the energy that CeeCee's brings to that dynamic is so lifeless that she may as well been a dead iPhone. Now, all of this would be fine if the book WANTED you to hate CeeCee. But it doesn't. The book wants you to LOVE CeeCee, for her to sleep with the man she wants, for her to find

stability, and to kill the killer. In other words, the novel fails to make her a compelling protagonist, both because of how generic and unlikable she is.

Eric and Michael are not much better. Outside of their feeling for CeeCee, there is absolutely nothing else worth mentioning for their character. They are both entirely defined by their love for the main character. They even keep saying "CeeCee wait" or "CeeCee please" every time they appear. The fact that CeeCee is such a botched character makes the romance and by extension the characters themselves an abysmal bore! This level of characterization is actually worse than that of "One of Us is Lying". At least in that book you find SOMETHING unique about each of the characters....at least there was something that stood out. But here....THERE WAS ABSOLUTELY NOTHING!! They were boring and were practically disposable.

Then there was the killer. He was basically a generic serial killer from every thriller ever. He is essentially a dumbed down version of the killer from "What Doesn't Kill Her"....except this time he is a pedophile and fails to bring tension at all. Despite this, he is surprisingly more interesting than the rest of the cast. He wants to be caught and has guilt complex. This made him stand out somewhat. It was for this reason alone that I found him the most tolerable of the cast, if only because he had some degree of depth. He also rightfully calls out CeeCee on her bullshit. Hell, I even wanted him to kill off everyone else so that the book could end faster. Unfortunately this didn't happen. Despite being objectively the only part of the book that I liked, he still pales in comparison to other serial killers such as Dexter Morgan from "Dexter" and the killer from "What Doesn't Kill Her". The killer has such little screen time that he comes off as an underused supporting character than a fearsome antagonist. He takes such a backseat to the underwhelming romance that he might as well not exist. He also doesn't kill off anyone worth mentioning and fails to bring tension to the story in any way. He's not even scary! I was like "hey look. Generic serial killer number 195." His entire story arc is so predictable that you could write it in your head.

What would have fixed the antagonist was if he actually did some permanent damage to CeeCee. I am not talking like "kill off forgettable side character that has some connection to CeeCee".....I'm talking like significant death of important characters that actually matter. I would had the killer kill off everyone CeeCee holds dear every two chapters. And those characters wouldn't die off screen either...we would see and feel their deaths with a raw and painful intensity that would make us feel with CeeCee. This would give CeeCee a MASSIVE stake in the story because she has more to lose than just her paycheck. This book could also use this to analyze CeeCee's decaying mental stability as she slowly realizes that she is losing everyone she loves. And to top it off, the killer would reveal himself to be someone extremely close to her, and then end up killing her after a nail-biting cat and mouse game. This would at the very least make the book feel original, if only because it allow the antagonist to actually win this time. Hell, it might actually make the book somewhat enjoyable. But this didn't happen. All we got was a cliché villain that doesn't even do his job. So even the best part of the book was terrible.

Then you have the story. *Screams in agony* The book WANTS you to think that its about our heroes hunting down the serial killer. But instead, it actually focuses on the poorly done romance between CeeCee the lying whore and her two fools. Her romantic dynamic with both Eric and Michael is so terrible that I wanted to stop reading almost right away. This slowed the story to an abysmal crawl and made the book an absolute chore. The reason for this was, as previously mentioned, that NONE of the characters involved were compelling. It was just pointless flirting for entire book until finally someone gives in. The killer-storyline was so poorly integrated that the storyline may as well have been a separate book. In fact, I feel that the storyline was shoehorned in so this book can look more exciting than it actually is.

The actual mystery itself is so generic that I genuinely question if the author had a drop of originality in her. You have seen this story elsewhere 100 times before. It's probably been done a billion times on every cop

show. Only at least in those cases they were done better and were somewhat enjoyable....mainly because you wouldn't have to put up with the romance seen here. The worst part is that no one in the story has a personal stake in the story. So what if the killer gets away? So what if the good guys don't catch their guy? Nothing is at stake here! If the bad guy gets away, CeeCee and crew lose NOTHING....they still get to flirt and bicker at each other endlessly for 4+ books or however long this series lasts for. At worst, our heroes feel sad for a week, and then would all get back to their lives as normal. Yeah sure a couple of people would get killed...but this would have happened anyways even if the killer was caught. There will always be another serial killer, no matter how many are caught. So the story fails to feel important in a meaningful way. Boring and poorly executed, the story fails to stand out.

Final Verdict:

I may have exaggerated in some of my previous reviews about books that I didn't like, but here I honestly feel that this is the worst book ever made. The characters were extremely unlikable at worst, the story was generic, and the pacing was slower than a snail. The villain was so much more tolerable compared to the rest of the cast that I was actively rooting for him, despite the fact he's a deplorable monster. This book was just awful. This is without a doubt the worst book of the summer. This worse than "One of Us is Lying", and "Shadow Man" if only because I could think of at least one good thing about them. This book can't even do that! This might be a little dark for some people...but this book left me more broken and lifeless than the little girl that the serial killer molested and murdered at the start of the book....trust me it was THAT bad!

It gets a score of 0.01/5 stars – the worst of the worst. Don't read this book! It is so bad that it will kill you.....there is NOTHING here. This book is worse than ANY of the books I read for this Goodreads challenge! Better to have nothing than read this. In fact...I will never read a thriller ever again...mainly because my track record with them has been less than stellar. Trust me...this book was so terrible that I feel dead inside. The only good use for this book is as a torture device. Throw the reader in the back of a truck with nothing except this book...and watch as the book slowly drives the reader insane at its sheer stupidity! Outside of that...this book has ZERO reason to exist! And you want to know the scary part? The author knew this book (and by extension the rest of the series) was so bad that she stopped making books for this series after 2010!! Yep...there hasn't been a CeeCee book in 7+ years (thank god...because having just one of these books is bad....much less 5 of them). That should tell just how bad this book really is. If you still somehow want to read this book despite my warning, well don't! Just read "What Doesn't Kill Her" instead....for that book is actually good, unlike this "novel".

Sigh.

Just thinking about this book makes me tired. Lesson learned: if it's a police procedural novel....run away as fast as possible.

What's next?

Up next is "Knights of the Old Republic" volume 1 by John Miller. I am somewhat enjoying it so far and the review is coming up soon! Should make me feel better after reading this piece of garbage.

Victoria says

Ceecee is a jerk. oh boo hoo she is cheating on her husband ,but can't stand it when she does it to her. she's selfish and whiny. won't read more of this authors books.

Celeste says

I thought this would be a good read, I was mistaken.I would give this book a one star if not for the plot. The writing style and main character peeved me off immensely. Reading this was like sitting through a text book lecture. You know what those are don't you? That's when you're in class and your professor/lecturer/teacher proceeds to read directly out of the text book without explaining anything of substance making it a totally pointless exercise. For example, in the book when Michael "asks relevant questions and gets appropriate answers" from the child molester. Seriously?! You see, theoretically I already know he must do these things, what I expect from a novel is to tell me WHAT these relevant questions are.

Apart from all that, Ceecee has to be the most irresponsible, non detective like, bitchiest child on the planet. I mean this is a grown woman who is immature at the best of times. Maybe it's just me, but I would assume someone who is in her thirties and a detective to boot would have a stronger character and not spend a majority of the case crying about her love life instead of, you know, doing her job. Her confrontation with Jordan is something I expect from a spoiled teenager with anger management issues. Not that what her husband did was any better but I had to put up with him a whole lot less.

Overall it was disappointing and I feel like I wasted my time. Never again Ceecee!
