



Come Back to Me

Sara Foster

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Do you have to honour a promise you made in the past if it means losing all you have now?

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As the mystery of Julia's identity unravels, a terrible tragedy from ten years ago gradually comes to light. While Chloe struggles with a secret of her own, Alex has to decide whether he should take Julia back to Australia to try to lay the past to rest, when doing so will risk all he has with the wife he loves.

And Julia must decide whether to finally confront Alex with the whole truth about what happened back then.

Set in London and Perth, *Come Back to Me* is a taut psychological drama that will keep you enthralled until the very last page.

Come Back to Me Details

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Author : Sara Foster

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From Reader Review Come Back to Me for online ebook

Amanda - Mrs B's Book Reviews says

*<https://mrsbbookreviews.wordpress.com>

*4.5 stars

Perth based British author Sara Foster has become one of my favourite writers, especially in the psychological mystery field. *Come Back to Me* is Foster's debut novel and marks the third novel that I have read by this author. *Shallow Breath*, also written by Sara Foster, still remains close to my heart, a number of years after I finished this book. I have the feeling that *Come Back to Me* will also linger with me for some time.

Come Back to Me is a consuming psychological drama that splits its setting between London and Perth. A simple double dinner date opens up old wounds and buried secrets when Mark brings a date, Julia, to a London restaurant to meet his friends, Chloe and Alex. Immediately, it becomes obvious that Alex and Julia are uncomfortable in each other's company. They clearly have a past history together which they refuse to divulge to their respective partners. Eventually, the truth surrounding Alex and Julia's connection begins to emerge and a terrible event that occurred ten years ago is gradually revealed. It is a secret that will require Alex to join Julia, on the other side of the world, in Australia, to confront the past and lay some demons to rest. However, matters are complicated further when Alex's current love, Chloe, hides a special secret of her own. This creates a new source of tension between Alex and Chloe. Alex is then torn between the woman he loves now and a woman he loved in his past. *Come Back to Me* is an involving story of love, loyalty, honouring promises, secrets and revelations.

Sara Foster is talented author, who is adept in creating stories with a strong grounding in the psychological mystery genres. She is unafraid of delving into complicated situations that arise in our everyday lives. A brave task for an author, especially as *Come Back to Me* is Foster's first published novel. *Come Back to Me* is a stimulating and addictive read that I was hard pressed to put down. In fact, I recall reading this book in two back to back sittings. This signals my obvious enjoyment of this story.

Foster's characters are full-bodied and complex. These characters have many secrets to unravel, which encourages the reader to stay with the novel. There are some interesting relationship dynamics and emotions that emerge from *Come Back to Me*. I loved the shroud of secrecy that engulfed the main character of Julia. Her journey in particular was a harrowing one that submerged me in a mixture of feelings from sadness, to shock and deep admiration. In fact, there were a number of times where Julia's harrowing attack in Perth reminded me of British backpacker Joanne Lees terrifying experience in the outback in 2001, where she and her boyfriend Peter Falconio were set upon by a crazed gunman. There are obvious links between this real life case and Foster's fictional character Julia's ordeal. These passages were handled with great care and insight by the accomplished hand of Sara Foster. Alex, Julia's boyfriend at the time of her attack in Perth, was a protagonist I held much sympathy for. I could see how conflicted he must have felt between having to choose to between his current love and a past love that he made a lasting promise to. My only real issue with the character set in *Come Back to Me* was the lack of communication or lost opportunities to engage in vital conversations that occurred during the novel. Many of the complications in the story could have been prevented or solved earlier if these characters had of spoke up, instead of burying or avoiding the truth. These frustrations aside, overall the characterisation in *Come Back to Me* is of a high standard.

What I loved about *Come Back to Me* was flashback style of narrative employed by Foster. I also appreciated the alternating setting (London and Perth). This novel also moves in time, from the past in

Australia, to ten years later in London. Both settings are described in plenty of detail, so much so that you feel like you are stepping on the bustling footpaths of London and then on golden sands of isolated Perth. The transitions in location and time were seamless. I am familiar with both these locations and genuinely feel Foster did a good job of bringing these two contrasted settings to life for the reader.

Come Back to Me is a psychological based mystery novel that serves to remind that often our pasts and the promises we made in times gone by, will eventually catch up with us. It is about working to right past wrongs, despite how painful the process may be. Going back to the where Sara Foster's successful writing career started, by reading her debut novel, Come Back to Me, was a rewarding experience. Come Back to Me is a novel I highly commend.

Susan Mackie Powers says

Full of secrets, twists and turns

What if something horrible happened to someone you loved, and you couldn't stop it? What if your loved one pushed you away and you went, always regretting it? What if, ten years later, you had the chance to try to make it right? A chance meeting of his lost love on a double date with his wife and a friend transported Alex back to a terrible time. He and Amy had been young and deeply in love when tragedy struck. Amy disappeared and for ten years, he had not known if she was alive or dead. Now, when he had finally moved forward and found happiness with his wife, Chloe, Amy was sitting across a table from him. Amy fled, but it didn't take long for them to reconnect, and Alex found himself torn between his love for Chloe and the life they had built together and his lost love for Amy and his guilt for letting her down when she needed him.

Come Back to Me is a story about the promises we make to the people in our lives, and the secrets we keep while trying to protect them. It is about the many kinds of love we feel for them, and how we reconcile who we really are when those secrets can no longer stay hidden. Until the end, I was never quite sure how it was going to come around. The resolution of all the hidden secrets and relationships was ultimately satisfying

Loz says

1.5 Not-For-Me Stars

Part 1 introduces the four characters.

Chloe, a family law lawyer. Mark her colleague and ex. Alex, Chloe's husband and Julia, the woman Mark took to their double date. The woman who promptly leaves after it becomes apparent that her and Alex have history.

Part 2, I barely remember!

Part 3, there's so much going on. And they're all still keeping secrets!

I just couldn't care! Besides the four main characters, there's so much going on. They've all got family issues, schizophrenic brother, child abuse, Parkinsons disease, and so many secrets... didn't think it was ever going to end.

Sara says

A little biased on this one! The characters became great friends, and I miss them now they are off into the world. The story still makes me shed a tear. I hope everyone enjoys reading it.

Helen McKenna says

Mark and Chloe are solicitors working for a London firm. They've shared a past, but Chloe is now happily married to Alex and life is good. But then, one night at dinner in a restaurant, Mark introduces his date Julia to Chloe and Alex and everything suddenly changes. Although they deny knowing each other, it's obvious that Alex and Julia have some kind of connection. Eventually it is revealed that they did know each other many years before and now have to face up to something that happened that has haunted both of them since.

This story drew me in right from the start. Chloe's life is going well, too well as it turns out, and now she is thrust in the middle of something she had no part in. It is obvious that whatever happened to Julia and Alex has scarred them both, but Julia much more so. But as the story moves on you learn of Alex's guilt over not being able to stop the event or protect Julia from harm.

Just to complicate things Chloe has a secret of her own - a secret she is unable to share with Alex once Julia re-enters his life. Although she does her best to hold it together at work and in dealing with her dramatic mother and Alex's brother (who suffers from a mental illness), you can literally feel Chloe beginning to crumble.

The suspense is great as the story slowly unravels, moving between present and the 1990s in Australia. As you come to know just what did happen, you can understand why Julia has become the person she is and while you know Alex is the only person who can help her heal, you begin to wonder if he actually can.

The main themes of this story are love and the difficult choices that can be associated with it - especially young love. It also touches on mental illness and post traumatic stress and the lengths people go to in the search for coming to terms with tragedy.

Mish says

Review for the Australian Women Writers Challenge 2012

Excellent psychological thriller that had me glued to the pages from the very first chapter, and the pace didn't die down for a second. It starts off with Alex and Chloe, a happily married couple getting ready for a dinner date with Mark and his new lady friend, Julia. Mark is Chloe's work colleague but he is also Chloe ex boyfriend.

When they arrive at the restaurant, Chloe and Mark notice the surprised look on Alex face when he sees Julia for the very first time, and their strange reaction towards each other. It's obvious to Mark and Chloe that there is a history between Alex and Julie. But Chloe concern is what history do they have? Is this woman

still part of her husband life? Are they having an affair? All these thoughts and questions are running through Chloe's mind. She becomes suspicious and is jumping to conclusions thus creating tension in their marriage. Alex is not helping the situation when his behaviour is out of character; he becomes secretive, withdrawn and distant from Chloe.

Alex needs to make an important decision which could make or break his marriage; ignore Julia and be up front with Chloe about his past, or pursue Julia and keep the promise he made to her many years ago.

There are twists and turns in this story that got my heart racing. Horrible and tragic secrets are revealed. And it was amazing how instantly I became caught up in these four individual lives from the get go. I read it so fast because the writing was smooth, it flowed and it was uncomplicated – and I must add, very hard to put down. It's a wonderful book and I highly recommend it. Looking forward to reading Sara Foster's latest novel 'Beneath the Shadows'.

Brenda says

Alex and Chloe are living an idyllic life, very happily married, both working in jobs they enjoy...Chloe as a lawyer, Alex working from home on his designs. One of Chloe's colleagues, Mark, with whom she had a brief fling a few years ago, invites her and Alex to dinner at a London restaurant, where they meet Mark's date, Julia. Suddenly, as Alex and Julia come face to face, something goes terribly wrong. The shocked looks on their faces said they knew each other, but they pretended to be new acquaintances, which made Chloe and Mark extremely suspicious.

And so begins the avalanche of confusion, heartache, terror, and loss as the mystery of Julia's identity slowly unravels. Where has Julia been the last 10 years, why has no-one, not even her family, been able to find her? Alex has to decide whether to help Julia now, when he feels he let her down 10 years ago, and wonders if they can lay the terrible tragedy which befell Julia to rest by heading to Australia?

Chloe has a secret of her own, one she feels she can't tell Alex now, as she feels betrayed by a past she knew nothing about, and still knows nothing about. Alex is torn between his wife, whom he loves dearly, and Julia, whom he also loved dearly.

This psychological drama has every emotion you could imagine, with a plot that keeps you glued to the pages, right to the very end.

Lauren K says

Sara Foster's debut novel, *Come Back to Me* (2010) is the third book I've read by this talented Western Australian author. Having previously enjoyed *Beneath the Shadows* and *Shallow Breath*, I picked up this one at a second hand bookstore and it has sat on my TBR pile for a little while. I finally managed to pick it up and read it over the Christmas holidays and I'm kicking myself for having waited for so long- I loved it!

Come Back to Me is a mystery that spans Australia and England and had me hooked from the very first

chapter. The way that Foster weaves the suspense throughout the story by relinquishing a little background information at a time and cliffhanger chapter endings managed to keep me on the edge of my seat almost the entire time. The characters frustrated me for a majority of the story (I just wanted them to communicate!!) and yet they were characters that were flawed and relatable, no matter what their circumstances.

Chloe and her husband Alex turn up at a double date dinner with her colleague (and ex-boyfriend) Mark and his new woman, Julia. The tension steps up immediately as it becomes obvious that Alex and Julia have some history. The tension is amplified by the delay in Chloe actually confronting Alex about this and why Alex isn't upfront about it in the first place. And yet at the same time, I could understand why they did this. Chloe is fearful of losing Alex and Alex is so shocked by Julia's reappearance that it brings up a lot of unresolved feelings for him. The plot takes off from there with Alex and Chloe's marriage on the rocks, the identity of this mysterious Julia is revealed and Mark and Chloe develop an unlikely (and dysfunctional) friendship.

Although I wanted Alex to be more open with Chloe and to have tried harder to get his message across, I can also understand the difficult position he was in and how he felt he needed to supporting Julia. Julia was a character who is surrounded by mystery, but as her story unravels I could really empathise with her difficult experiences and how she chose to deal with this. Chloe was probably the most frustrating character for me as she just made silly decisions, she was avoidant and at times emotionally immature. And yet, I could still relate to her because of the fear of losing her husband and her life which led her to make these choices.

Foster creates fantastic mysteries that are psychologically stimulating and portray realistic and intriguing characters. Well worth the read and I'm looking forward to reading future books by this talented Aussie author.

Dalene W. says

I really enjoyed this book. I will definitely read more books by Sara Foster. The characters in this book were well developed. I would give it 4 1/2 stars if I could. I don't want to give anything away about the book. I recommend it to anyone who likes to read suspense novels with a bit of romance tucked in for good measure.

Lady Delacour says

Come Back to Me...
Sara Foster's first book
was published in 2010.
This is my kind of story.
I now have all her books.
3.5 Stars
Listened with TTS.
Mildly UnClean.
Violence.
Foul Language.

Julie says

Wow! What a powerful exploration of love, conflict and adversity. The characters are so well written that they feel like friends. The unimaginable horrors that they experienced are told in a compelling way that explores the frailty of life.

Jackie Robinson says

I'm going to be honest. I can not, in good conscience, give this book anything less than five stars. While I was expecting more of a thriller/suspense, I still was pleasantly surprised to find some element of mystery, but a lot of family drama in it too.

I loved this. I have never read Sara Foster before, but I am going to hunt down the rest of her books down! Honestly such a great book. There are dual story lines but four main characters. It was so so interesting and such a quick and easy read. Foster writes impeccably and ughhh I'm ranting but I really loved this.

Read it pls

Rebecca Berto says

3.5 stars

MarciaB - Book Muster Down Under says

“Do you have to honour a promise you made in the past if it means losing all that you have now?”

When Mark introduces his date, Julia, to Chloe and her husband at a London restaurant, it's obvious something is very, very wrong. Alex and Julia pretend not to know each other, but the shocked expressions on their faces tell another story.

As the mystery of Julia's identity unravels, a terrible tragedy from ten years ago gradually comes to light. While Chloe struggles with a secret of her own, Alex has to decide whether he should take Julia back to Australia to try to lay the past to rest, when doing so will risk all he has with the wife he loves.

And Julia must decide whether to finally confront Alex with the whole truth about what happened back then.

Set in London and Perth, Come Back to Me is a taut psychological drama that will keep you enthralled until the very last page.”

Alex and Chloe are happily married, own a lovely home and are both doing well in their chosen careers – her as a family law solicitor, him a designer with his own business run from home.

One fateful introduction by Chloe's ex-boyfriend and current colleague, Mark, threatens to unravel

everything that Alex and Chloe have worked towards in their relationship – her name is Julia.

Immediately on arriving at the restaurant and being introduced to Julia, Chloe realises that something is seriously wrong – the shocked look on Alex and Julia's faces on seeing each other lead both her and Mark to believe that this is not the first time they have met. Julie hurriedly excuses herself from the table to go to the ladies room and Alex sits in dumbfounded silence.

As the story unravels, taking us from present-day London to 1990's Australia, we come to learn that Alex has kept a secret from Chloe - him and Julia share a past, one that he has been incapable of speaking about due to the tragic events which took place.

Whilst Chloe keeps a secret of her own close to her heart, she watches as her world appears to crumble around her. Can Julia face the demons of her tragic past thereby enabling her to get on with her life? Is this finally a chance for Mark to win back the woman he gave up years ago? Will Alex lose everything he has with Chloe? Will it be possible for Chloe to finally reveal her secret to Alex?

I found it quite difficult to put this book down. There were so many secrets intermingled in the plot that all I wanted to do was discover every single one of them. *Sara Foster* has an easy, flowing prose style and has created a tale with likeable, well-formed characters. Whilst injecting a lot of emotion and relationship issues into this book, I found the most prominent to be the importance of communication in a relationship.

If you are looking for a multifaceted psychological thriller and a complicated story of love which combine with multiple twists and turns, then this debut novel by *Sara Foster* will keep you enthralled right to the last chapter.

Ophelia Sen-Rainczuk says

This book was a waste of time! Psychological thriller it certainly was not, perhaps the way it drove me insane with the nonsense was psychological. There was no twist but the author tried her best to make one and drag it out. "I have something to tell him but I will wait" and then create some sort of argument in her head and then say "Ok not telling him".

I finished this book in one seating because I skipped so many pages to get over the bullsh#\$ and was hoping for a good twist in the end, but no, the "twist" was exactly what you've expect. Really cliché!
