



## **The Surrogate**

*Tania Carver*

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A sickening killer is on the loose. A killer like no other. This murderer targets heavily pregnant women, drugging them and brutally removing their unborn babies.

When DI Phil Brennan is called to the latest murder scene, he knows he has entered the world of the most depraved killer he had ever encountered. After a loveless, abusive childhood, Phil knows evil well. But nothing has prepared him for this.

And when criminal profiler Marina Esposito is brought in to help solve the case, she delivers a bombshell: she believes there is a woman involved in the killing, a woman desperate for children...

A shocking, gripping debut novel, *The Surrogate* is the perfect read for fans of Tess Gerritsen and Karin Slaughter.

## **The Surrogate Details**

Date : Published September 17th 2009 by Little, Brown Book Group (first published 2009)

ISBN : 9780751542288

Author : Tania Carver

Format : Paperback 438 pages

Genre : Mystery, Fiction, Thriller, Mystery Thriller

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## From Reader Review The Surrogate for online ebook

### Gabriel says

\*\*\* 3.75 \*\*\*

This is a psychological thriller mystery, not so much of a super-action detective murder investigation book... if you're expecting and hoping for super-action like I initially did, this is not the book for you...

on the contrary, you may need some patience and that's to say it lightly, as I for one, I need it quite a lot of patience to allow myself to pass the first chapters without a lot of action happening...

it's written in a very British style, so not so much in the American motion-picture style like once again I was hoping and expecting... and it's nothing wrong with the British style, it's just that one will need some patience to go through, that's all...

it is, however, a good to almost a great book, well above average and would worth your time, if you like this style and have the patience to finish it...

it's an ugly story I'd say, a very ugly story about "damaged people with damaged minds" but it's told in an interesting way, intriguing and quite catching with the author a master at building suspense while digging into the twisted human mind...

so, an ugly and unpleasant story, yet told and delivered in a nice package so we, the audience can digest it better... it's a look into the ugliness of the mind and how come to some irresponsible damaging actions can trigger over time, over generations, a chain of events destroying lives that otherwise could be normal, if "normal" is a real concept and someone can define it...

it's a beautiful psychological mystery book about an ugly and unpleasant story...

yes, it is fiction, yet the scenario presented can happen, if it didn't already happen in any village, or city or place in the world... thus, it's worth your time, even if at times you may be disgusted by the ugliness, yet it may worth your time if you are interested to find more about the human mind, and how ugly it can turn out to be...

I rated 3.75 stars, almost 4 stars because it's a good book...

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### Pattie says

The Surrogate is the first in a series introducing Detective Inspector Brennan and psychologist Esposito. I bought this novel as it received great reviews on Goodreads and I truly enjoy police procedurals, especially those set outside the U.S. Also, I was going to the beach and I thought it would be a fun, quick read. Well, not so much. Perhaps it was the subject matter -- pregnant women getting murdered for their fetuses but I think it was more the uneven pace and clunky dialogue that had me sighing and feeling dissatisfied. I understand that Tania Carver is a pseudonym for the author Martyn Waites and it was, to me, obviously written by a male. That's not a bad thing by any stretch but I am curious as to why he chose a female

pseudonym rather than a male. Anyway, perhaps I've read too many of these types of books but I was just rather bored, not impressed, and couldn't suspend my disbelief enough for the final confrontation.

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## **Leslie Lindsay says**

What sounds like the most grisly and uncouth story is actually, strangely good. Tania Carver is an English writer and *THE SURROGATE* is her debut crime psychological thriller. When I mentioned the storyline to a member of my book group, she cringed and told me point blank, "I will never read that book." Well, yes--it does have to do with a serial killer who is focused on killing late-term pregnant women and taking their babies for their own. Definitely not a warm and fuzzy read.

Since I am the type of person (and reader) who is interested not just in what people do, but why they do it, I found *THE SURROGATE* did not disappoint.

The prose is good--even you can get past some of the the English-isms (i.e. "lift" and others, including spellings that favour the -ou), and a few place name that I just wasn't familiar with. There is a good deal of police/detective work, crime scene investigations...and if you like crime thrillers, this will draw you in. As for the actual killings, I will say Carver may have taken a page out of Jack-the-Ripper, but it's not overly graphic, she leaves much of it to the reader's imagination.

The tale is well told, twists and turns and all, but I found the ultimate story of Hester the most intriguing. Again, this is the 'why' and not the 'what.'

Fans of the CBS crime drama "Criminals Minds" will truly appreciate.

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## **LeseMaus says**

???

Tania Carver  
Entrissen  
512 Seiten

"Dreimal hat der Killer zugeschlagen und jedesmal ist das Opfer eine schwangere Frau. Doch diesmal fehlt von dem Kind jede Spur und ein Wettlauf gegen die Zeit beginnt... "

Der Einstieg in die Geschichte ist blutig und verstörend und ich, als Thriller-Leserin, musste erstmal schlucken und durchatmen.

Fast bildlich stellt die Autorin die Tat vor und reißt den Leser mit allen Emotionen mitten ins Geschehen. Die Charaktere sind mit allen ihren Empfindungen klar gezeichnet, auch an persönliche Irrungen und Wirrungen der Ermittler fehlt es nicht.

In der Mitte schleicht sich leider etwas Langeweile ein, die sich ein paar Seiten gezogen hat.

Dranbleiben wird aber mehr als belohnt, zum Ende hin nimmt die Story nochmal richtig Fahrt auf.

Teils wütend, teils schockiert, zu lesen, zu was Menschen fähig sein können, lässt mich dieser Thriller

zurück.

Ein gelungener Reihenaufakt, mit einer guten Mischung aus Ermittlern und ihrer Arbeit und der Tat an sich.  
Eine Leseempfehlung gibt's von mir nur für Hartgesottene ?

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## **Melissa says**

I need to give this book 3 and a half stars, a well deserved 3 and a half it was too. I enjoyed reading it, although this is an odd thing to say bearing in mind that this book really does have a rather gory subject matter.

There is a killer targeting heavily pregnant women and is intent on taking the precious cargo they are carrying by brutal force.

The case falls to Detective Inspector Phil Brennan. He and his team are finding it difficult to make sense of the killings and call in Marina Esposito, a criminal profiler to help solve the case. Marina is Phil's former lover; they met over a previous case that left Maria in a rather desperately dangerous situation, which tested their relationship to the full. Maria believes there is a woman involved in the killings, a woman desperate for a baby.

Tania Carver is actually a pseudonym for a husband and wife duo Martyn and Linda Waites. This is their debut novel and what a debut it is, making quite a grand entrance.

This book is truly a captivating read which I really enjoyed and found it hard to put down. An absolute page turner. The book doesn't give away too many clues throughout, keeping the reader in suspense all the way. The details aren't the most gruesome I have read, but does make for some unsettling reading and although fast paced in sections, it is equally slow going in many places too. I'd rather it were a little more consistent. I have raved about much better. This lacked a little something, even though it also hit depths others haven't (I think) dared to tread which I liked.

None of the detectives made me feel any kind of connection with them. DI Phil Brennan, I felt, a little flat and not that engaging.

The plot from start to finish is packed with red herrings and well placed twists and ends with a big shocker that is impossible to anticipate.

If you are not squeamish, then I highly recommend.

A good debut novel that has attracted a lot of attention and justly so. I will definitely read more in this collection. I have book 2, The Creeper on my shelf, ready and waiting.

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## **Lisa says**

I am still asking myself how I got through this book, I had to keep putting it down & going back to it at a later date due to the subject matter I just shuddered every time I was at this particular dialogue I just kept going Oh No OMG etc I wouldn't say I enjoyed it but I had to find out who the perp was.

Tania Carver wrote a very dark serial killer thriller that chilled me at every moment I kept saying to myself WHY AM I READING THIS!! & even though I finished it am still wondering why?

The story follows DI Phil Brennan investigates multiple murders going back months he enlists the help Of Marina Esposito who profiles serial killers.

When the bodies of Claire Fielding & Julie Simpson are found brutally murdered & with their stomachs cut open & the babies either murdered or taken it sends shivers down the spines of Brennan & DS Clayton Thompson .

As the investigation deepens more woman murdered & all with the same MO they find their suspect Ryan Brotherton he vehemently denies any of this as he was with a prostitute at the time known as Sophie, DS Clayton Thomsen is so close he can feel it but ends up dead.

Then When Marina Esposito's name is on the list of Victims DI Brennan stops at nothing to find her they are lovers.

What I will tell you is that Hester is a piece of work what we find out about her I just thought that it was an OMG moment it was really disturbing for me.

WARNING - This novel is not for the faint of heart & all those women out there who have been or are pregnant.

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### **Gina says**

Absolutely one of the best books I have read in quite awhile! Full of suspense, twists and turns, and great characters. I will absolutely be continuing this series! Highly recommended! 5 stars!

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### **Dawn G says**

This book is the first in Tania Carver's (a husband and wife writing team) Brennan and Esposito series. I had read that their books can be very dark and this one did not disappoint. It had all the makings of an incredible psychological thriller; very disturbing crimes, horrific physical and mental abuse, extreme mental illness, and a cop, Detective Inspector Philip Brennan.

The book started out with a bang and could easily have been a 5 star read if not for a couple of character issues. Marina Esposito, a psychologist with such unrealistic expectations of Philip that I started to get irritated whenever I would see her name appear near quotation marks. She was ridiculously annoying and

could have benefited from seeing a good psychologist herself. Philip was annoying as well because he tolerated her "poor me" prattle. On the other hand, the villains were interesting and kept the story moving along.

I do plan to read the next book in the series in hope that Marina gets the help she needs to become a more reasonable individual and that Philip develops a backbone.

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### **Amanda Allen says**

I'd gotten so used to reading less-than-great thrillers lately, that I'd forgotten what it was like to read a really, really good one. This book was fantastic.

Set in a small town in England, the police are desperately searching for a serial killer who is targeting pregnant women in order to steal their babies to create his own "family." There's a lot of fast paced action and unexpected plot twists -- I literally didn't see the final revelation coming.

I've already put Carver's next book on my "to read" list.

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### **Anja says**

Was man nicht machen soll, reizt einen ja bekanntlich am meisten :D Mir wurde abgeraten das Buch zu lesen da ich selbst grad schwanger bin, da musste ich es natürlich erst recht anfangen. Es geht sofort spannend, blutig und grausam los und man musste sich auch nicht groß in das Buch reinfitzen. Authentische Protagonisten über die es Spaß gemacht hat mehr zu erfahren und daneben eine unglaublich kranke, spannende Story. Ich konnte nicht mehr aufhören zu lesen und hatte oft Gänsehaut. Der Spannungsbogen kann auch bis zum Ende gehalten werden und immer wenn man dachte man hat eine Idee wie es weitergehen könnte kam es doch anders. Viele schöne unerwartete Drehungen und Wendungen die einen schaudern lassen. Mir hat das Lesen bis zum Ende Spaß gemacht und ich habe vor Spannung kaum ausgehalten, vor allem wegen dem Baby und auch wegen Marina und dann kam noch mal ne dicke Überraschung zum Schluss. Ich bin begeistert und werde nun auch die anderen "Marina" Bücher lesen!!!

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### **Leigh Barry says**

While the book is well-written and really reads at a brisk pace, I had some issues with it. Mainly, I did not like the character of Marina Esposito. Wah-wah-wah, bad stuff happens to poor Marina. And her policeman-boyfriend wasn't "there" for her when she needed to be (even though he had a totally legit excuse and tried to call her a million times to let her know. It's his fault, and she'll never forget it. Except she will, because she loves him! Maybe. She needs time, but not the kind of time where it's okay if he's working and something bad happens again. Whatever, Marina. I found that aspect of her personality so irritating, I had a hard time getting over it. That said, I did like Phil, and Anni, and even Clayton was engaging in his way. I REALLY appreciated the sympathy that Carver builds for the villain--I wish the scene between the villain and Anni had been fleshed out more, as well as the aftermath. That was so interesting, and I could have read pages more. Alas, it was over & the novel tied up (a bit too) neatly. Still, what I liked outweighs what I didn't. I

may read the next to see if I enjoy it. But Marina better grow a pair, or it's the last chance she'll get from me.

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### **Maureen DeLuca says**

A hard subject to read about ,--- Enjoyed Brennan & Esposito- and looking forward to reading the second in this series !

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### **Christine says**

This book should come with a warning. You must have a strong stomach to cope with the subject matter.

The Surrogate is the first in the Brennan and Esposito series by Tania Carver. The story introduces Phil Brennan, a police officer who suffers from panic attacks and Marina Esposito, psychologist. They have a romantic history together. This is a brutal tale of pregnant women having their lives taken and their babies ripped from their bodies. Why would anyone be that desperate for a child, they would do that to another person? Brennan's team is investigating and Esposito is brought in to offer insight.

See why it could possibly be a bit gruesome? I think the deaths of mutilated pregnant women might deter a few readers. I found it a twisted and rather fascinating story. We can easily empathise that for pregnant Marina, this is rather a challenging case. The relationship between Brennan and Esposito was strangely rather worthy of my attention. They both seem to be wounded needy souls, drawn together. Esposito seems at times rather immature and deserving of a good talking to.

There actually worked for me as an introduction to the series. I thought it was an incredibly promising start, with two leads who are just getting established and have masses of issues. I have a strong stomach and no kittens were harmed, so I didn't have a problem with the crime scenes. I loved the idea of a killer with a warm nurturing side, who wants to be a mother. We never think of mother-wannabes as killers.

Crime novels should unsettle you and this achieves 10/10 for that. I'm hugely looking forward to The Creeper, which is book two in the series.

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### **Tracy Fenton says**

I'm not easily freaked out but this rather gruesome and gripping story was right up my alley. Loved the storyline between Phil and Marina so much I've downloaded book.2 and will read it next! If you like sick and twisted storylines then you will enjoy this.

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### **DeB MaRtEnS says**

The fly leaf of The Surrogate guarantees that you will be up all night once you start. I concur! One of the best pot boilers that I have read in a long time and I'm delighted to see that there is a series to continue with. Marvellously fully fleshed out characters, a fast moving, serpentine and satisfying plot and a bit of dark



crime needing a psychological profiler make this a darn good detective mystery.

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