



Not Guilty

Patricia J. MacDonald

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When Keely Bennett's world is shattered by the suicide of her beloved husband, Richard, she and her nine-year-old son Dylan have to start over. Her late husband's childhood friend, Mark Weaver, helps Keely settle Richard's affairs and sweeps her into a whirlwind romance -- and eventually a comfortable suburban lifestyle that includes marriage and a beautiful baby girl. The darkness that clouded Keely's past has all but vanished. Yet Dylan, now a teenager, remains distant, brooding and resentful of his stepfather and baby sister, Abby. Then history repeats itself, and her life is once again thrown into chaos. But Keely's nightmare is just beginning?for the authorities are looking for a murderer, and they already have a prime suspect: Dylan.

Refusing to believe her son is a killer, Keely vows to clear his name. But the prosecutor has a personal stake in seeing Dylan convicted -- and her pleas for help from the police fall on deaf ears. To save her son, Keely must rely on herself. But she is far from alone; someone is watching her every move. When her investigation threatens to uncover a conspiracy of secrets and corruption, she is suddenly plunged into the path of danger - - and into the sights of a ruthless killer who will stop at nothing to ensure the truth stays buried forever....

Seamlessly weaving a psychological portrait of the bond between a mother and son with the breathless intrigue of a murder mystery, "Not Guilty" is a novel that finds Patricia MacDonald at the height of her celebrated powers.

Not Guilty Details

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From Reader Review Not Guilty for online ebook

Marcie says

Good murder mystery. Kept me guessing til the end.

Carl Brookins says

There are certain facts readers need to know about Keely Bennett. She taught American Literature in high school and was the advisor to the yearbook club. Then her husband commits suicide in a rather messy way and he is found by the couple's young son. After that, the story gets really dark and messy. I'll admit right up front that I am put off by authors who feel they have to search for synonyms for "said" in order to make dramatic points and who use a lot of italics for the same reason. For those reasons, the impression I take away from this novel is perhaps more negative than it should be.

Billed as a dark psychological thriller, author MacDonald, who certainly can write well, seems to take the easy path in many instances in a story with considerable potential, with surprising twists and a protagonist I found difficult to like. Keely Bennett makes obvious mistakes, seems unable to think for herself in many instances, and is ultimately present at the final resolution, rather than creating it. She's very good at despair and hand-wringing. Her son, Dylan, on the other hand seemed the very essence of a modern teenager, beset by adults who neither understand nor listen to him, a boy with a mother one step from being institutionalized, supportive friends at school, yet possessed of keen insight and a willingness to act while his mother dithers.

Sherry says

First book by this author, and I LOVED it. One of those books that you just couldn't wait to get back into, or never wanted to put down. I will be reading more of her!

Jessica says

It took me a while to get this book read but life slowed down so I could get back to reading. I really enjoyed this book. At first I struggled to get interested but then the story started to get interesting. Didn't really expect the end though.

Kristin Williams says

This was the first book I'd ever read of hers and I loved it!! I never wanted to put the book down!! I've actually read the book twice, and it was obviously better the first time around, but I still enjoyed it the second

time around! The bad guy is not who you expect!! Very cleverly written with a wonderful twist!

Jen says

Keely's 1st husband committs suicide and she finds her 8 year old boy next to his body.

Keely then gets remarried to a husband that her boy is not fond of.

Next thing you know her 2nd husband is dead too.

Could her boy have caused both of these deaths?

Or is there someone out to get revenge on Keely?

A good book that kept me flipping the pages.

I wish the end would have been a little better.

Diane says

This was a pretty good book, got me interested from page 1, but was very contrived. It led you to believe that the cards were stacked against one person, and then switched that person again & again until the ending, which was totally unexpected and almost unrealistic in my view. But if you like mysteries I would recommend it, and I will probably look for more by this author.

NK says

Great suspense. Many suspects and murders. It holds your interest.

Dawn says

Weak female lead

Janet Mahlum says

Not 4 stars, but better than 3.5 stars. The first third of the book just dragged. I was about to give up on it. I was SO tired of this rebellious, sullen, angst-filled teen-age boy I just wanted to scream, "All right, already! I get it! He's an angry teenager who hates the world." But enter Miss District Attorney - evil, wicked, Cruella, with shades of Pip's Miss Haversham and the action picked up. I spent an Icelandic Christmas Eve, staying up way past my bedtime to finish the book. There were an awful lot of coincidences and a lot of events strung together necessary to make the ending unsuspected yet plausible. What are the odds that a young widow living far away from her deceased husband's home would end up marrying one of his best friends. Widowed a second time, she meets a man who was also a friend of her first husband. Third time's charm? They might have to start calling her "The Black Widow."

Kat says

another really good one from patricia macdonald!

a womans husband is dead from gunshot, her 9 yr old son in the closet. i dont know why she didnt make him go to counseling

her husbands boyhood friend, a lawyer, gets her his insurance \$, then breaks off his engagement to marry her. he gets her a really nice house, but it has a pool and he cant swim. they have a baby girl. the boy is teen now and acting out.

the woman comes home to find her baby all wet and the husband drowned in the pool. the gate was open. first she thinks her son accidentally left the gate open but when he tried to slit his throat she found his note that he didnt leave the gate open and she believes him.

turns out the husbands foster father did it! and he killed the woman the man had been engaged to as well.

Julie says

Not Guilty by Patricia MacDonald is a 2002 release published by Pocket Books.

Keely's first husband Richard committed suicide after suffering with migraine headaches to the point of agony. Richard's long time friend, Mark arrives and works with Keely to get an insurance settlement for her and her young son, Dylan.

Keely and Mark fall in love and marry, then have a daughter. Life should be perfect for Keely, but Dylan is withdrawn, moody, and defiant. Then the worst nightmare Keely could imagine happens. Her second husband, Mark is found dead in the swimming pool and Dylan was the prime suspect.

Keely's life turns upside down as she works to prove her son's innocence.

Mark's former fiance , a desperate social worker and an over zealous detective all try their best to make Keely look like a bad mother and to make Dylan look guilty.

The only thing Keely knows to do is to find out who was responsible for Mark's death. As she digs into Mark's life, she discovers she never knew Mark at all. She also finds that her first husband was also not what he seemed.

I enjoyed this novel. I love suspense novels with lots of secrets and suspects. We never knew who to trust here. All the people in the novel had secrets. Some were major game changers and others were more benign, but after awhile, Keely can't trust anyone but herself.

A good mystery, great suspense. Overall a B+

Lucie McIntosh says

I'm having trouble connecting with the protagonist. She acts like The current event is something everybody has occur to them. I really don't like Dylan so far. Although this book did become interesting still wasn't one of my favorites. I felt that the characterization of Dylan could've been better defined. If she would've somehow made him seem like a good kid it would've been easier to connect to him. There wasn't any previous stories about him to make you connect to him. I really didn't like the protagonist pretty much the whole way through. It was hard to sympathize with her. She seemed quite self-centered most of the time. Towards the end it made you think that the author was setting up her to begin dating Dan. Overall I felt this book could've been better. Some of the stories were not completely resolved at the end.

Krankenschwester says

quand une amie me donnée cet roman.

j'ai hésitéé pls jours avant de le lire.

Surtt que les premiers pages sont un peu lourds et ilya pas une vraie crime.

Mais au fur à mesure des pages surtout après la tentative de suicide de son fils.

les événements sont accélérés et tu ne peux plus quitter le roman surtout que plusieurs personnages sont suspectées.

Le suspense psychologique.

Roman parle d'une femme " keely" qui trouve son mari suicidée sans laisser un mot et son fils âgée de 9 ans pres de lui.

Après 5 ans elle marie de l'ami de son premier mari "Marc" avocat célèbre llors d'une sortie de "kelly "faire course.

"Marc" est mort en essayant de sauver son petite fille " Abby"malgré qui ne sait pas nagé.

Suite a cet accident ils ont trouver grille de piscine ouvert et ils ont blâmer son fils "Dylan" qui souffert de dépression.,

Puis il a fait une tentative de suicide en laissant une seule mot "Maman je ferme la grille".

Après cet mot,l'objectif de la mère est de battre pour montre l'innocent de son fils.

lors de ce démarche elle va découvrit la raison vraie de mort de son premier mari et s'ilya un lien entre les meurtres?

Comment on peut changer notre avis sur l'autre dans un seul jour de regret à le paix d'avoir mourir?

Comment les apparences peuvent être trompant?

Pour l'amour de nos enfants sommes nous capable de risquer le mort ou même tuer quelqu'un.?

Sue says

ugh. I refuse to read a book that OVER-uses the protagonist's names. Keely or Dylan, Dylan, Keely, Dylan . . . Keely, sometimes 5-10 times on every.single.page. Did someone not notice this?? ugh ugh ugh barf
