



Rewind

Catherine Ryan Howard

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Catherine Ryan Howard's unique thriller *Rewind* begins when an Instagram star, Natalie's, death is caught on video. It then rewinds to explain why Natalie was where she was, and who is responsible for her brutal murder.

Natalie and her fiancé Mike seem to be living a fairy-tale life. They are building a lifestyle brand, have become social media stars, and are planning their wedding. When Natalie disappears, Mike and all of Natalie's loyal followers are baffled. Why would she want to escape her perfect life?

Natalie's escape is fueled by growing paranoia, but then she lands at a remote resort managed by the strange and unpredictable Andrew. Natalie is suspicious of Andrew, too, and of an odd groundskeeper whom she runs into on her first day at the resort.

Each chapter begins with a video cue that indicates where in the plot its events take place. The story lines of multiple characters are pieced together, including those of Natalie, Mike, an intrepid reporter, and a number of people who had reasons to want Natalie dead. This intriguing device keeps the revelations coming, but not in a traditional linear manner. Momentum increases as pieces of the puzzle fall into place.

Strong characterizations are a highlight. Natalie is crafted as a woman on the verge of superstardom who can't figure out how to deal with her demons. The reporter, Audrey, is driven to find out the truth while also proving her value as a journalist. Supporting characters strike just the right tones: they are supportive, creepy, and intriguing, depending on their roles.

As the book progresses, story lines converge in a more and more horrific way. Nothing is as it seems in *Rewind*, and the final reveal provides the satisfying chill that makes the entire journey worthwhile.

ANGELA MCQUAY (September / October 2019)

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