



The Necklace

Matt Witten

Oceanview Publishing (Sep 7, 2021)

Hardcover \$26.95 (304pp)

978-1-60809-458-5

When a convicted child murderer is up for lethal injection, the victim's mother is driven to exonerate the killer in *The Necklace*, a punchy thriller about an eleventh-hour discovery in the gruesome murder of a seven-year-old girl.

Twenty years after her daughter's murder, Susan believes that she will finally have justice. The convicted killer, Curt, is on death row in North Dakota, and Susan intends to watch him take his last breath.

A career waitress who's short on both cash and time, Susan takes cash donations from her upstate New York community and heads north, only to meet with disaster after disaster. As she faces delays, accidents, and thefts, Susan realizes that the wrong man is sitting in prison. In fact, the real killer may be closer than she suspected.

Only days before Curt is slated for lethal injection, Susan throws herself into acquitting "the monster." With the help of Curt's sister, a retired FBI agent, and a handful of friendly strangers, Susan tackles the disturbing memory of her daughter's death and its implications. The chapters alternate between the present and clue-rich flashbacks; these merge as Susan closes in on the Hodge Hills prison.

The characters are described in thorough, if stereotypical, terms. They include a virtuous single mom who works as stripper, and a teenager whose boots and punk haircut hide that she is a survivor of incest. But Susan is a compelling heroine, both worldly and naïve. Though her ordinariness makes her mission seem daunting, each win leads her deeper into the heart of the murder, causing her to second guess what she thought she knew about her family.

Emmy nominee Matt Witten twists multiple story threads into *The Necklace*, a breathless thriller that dives headlong into a horrific cold case.

CLAIRE FOSTER (July / August 2021)

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