



Methods of Madness

Stephanie Black

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It's been three years since the terrible night Emily Ramsey suffered a double tragedy-the death of her sister and the disappearance of her fiance. She deserves another chance at happiness and gentle, adorable Zach Sullivan is the perfect man to mend her shattered heart. But from the moment Emily opens the hand-carved box holding a glittering diamond solitaire, she's seized by an unshakable fear: she's going to lose Zach.

That's exactly what Monica, Zach's ex-girlfriend, is banking on. Bitter with envy, Monica will stop at nothing to sabotage Zach and Emily's romance. A troubling note shows up in Emily's mailbox, fanning the flames of suspicion. A bloody photograph sends her reeling. But when someone is brutally murdered, will Emily be able to escape suspicion and the possibility that she might be next?

Methods of Madness Details

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Author : Stephanie Black

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From Reader Review Methods of Madness for online ebook

Teri says

Methods of Madness by Stephanie Black

In Stephanie's new thriller, this novel takes so many twists and turns, it's very hard to tell who the murderer is. Emily Ramsey is filled with guilt over the death of her older sister Tricia that took place three years ago and on top of that, her fiance Ryan Tanner turns up missing at the same time. After three years have gone by, Emily is newly engaged to Zach Sullivan, a new man in town who teaches math. Someone is attempting to frighten her and Zach's former girlfriend Monica wants him back, so is appearing to make Emily jealous. Monica is also getting harrassed and when Emily sets up a meeting to talk to Monica, what she finds is Monica dead in her candleshop workroom and her blood everywhere. Emily knows someone is trying to blame the murder on her, making her think she is insane. Even the police are doubting her story. She's even beginning to wonder if Ryan faked his own disappearance. It isn't until she starts adding pieces to the puzzle together does she start figuring who the murderer is. She has a hard time trusting anyone except her mother who wants her to talk to their friend and psychiatrist, Dr. Kincaid. This is a page-turner in the first degree, just like the previous two thrillers of Stephanie's.

Forever Friends Rating 5 Stars by Teri
Until Next Time, See You Around The Book Nook.

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Taffy says

I have been humbled in my claims to pick out the bad guy(s) in books. I sorta guessed in Stephanie's book but she always threw in some reasonable doubt and I couldn't quite place the murderer. I was getting annoyed with a few characters which shows Stephanie's ability to craft her characters; each had a unique voice (and something that annoyed me). And she weaves them through each other, which twists and turns the plot until I was unsure of myself solving the mystery. The mystery is intriguing and the story moves along quickly. I wanted to keep reading to see WHO DONE IT! Stephanie kept me hooked from the first page.

When I thought of Stephanie writing this story, she scared me. I wondered if it scared her to write some of the story? Maybe I will interview her and we will find out together!

Good job again, Stephanie!

Abby says

I really enjoyed this book. It was recommended to me by my mother-in-law. It was thrilling, mysterious, and suspenseful! It's also a very quick read (I read it in about 3 days). I recommend this book to anyone that is looking for an intriguing mystery. The ending is totally not what I expected, but it does leave you guessing up until that point.

The only down side is that there is a lot of internal thinking by the main characters (this is primarily during the middle of the book) and it does seem rather unrealistic in some parts. I would have preferred to see more dialogue and interaction between the characters, although I thought Black did a decent job with the writing. The last 30 pages are intense!!!

Marcia Mickelson says

Methods of Madness by Stephanie Black is very suspenseful and keeps the reader guessing until the last few pages. It has been three years since Emily Ramsey's sister was killed and her fiance disappeared. She is now engaged and trying to move on, but still suffers from sadness due to the loss of those 2 important people. She keeps having the feeling that she will lose her new fiance, Zach. Then Zach's ex-girlfriend, Monica, begins to show interest in him again.

Emily gets a troubling note, a bloody photograph, and begins finding strange objects in her apartment. Part of her thinks she's going crazy and then someone is murdered. Everyone is a suspect-Zach, Emily's friends, someone from the past. Emily even begins to doubt herself. She doesn't know who to trust and feels that she, herself, is in danger.

The book kept me guessing the whole time. I had suspicions, kept thinking one person did it and then my opinion would change. Black expertly weaved clues throughout the whole book, and I doubt anyone was able to figure out the ending. All of the evidence and clues came together in the end to create a thrilling conclusion. I highly recommend this book, but make time for it because you won't want to put it down until you figure out who did what. And, trust me, you will not be able to figure it out. Each character is vividly portrayed unique. I really love the cover and think that it adds to the intrigue of the book.

Kathi-Ann Busha says

This story starts with a tragedy, Emily's sister is killed and her fiance disperses on the same night, which sadly happens to be her birthday. Fast forward several years and she's moved on, newly engaged to a lovely young man named Zach, who is just about the sweetest guy you can find. But things don't stay happy for long, there are threats and fake blood and a murder that make Emily think she's crazy. And I'll be honest, I didn't see the ending coming. That's unusual for me. Usually I can peg it down early on, but not this time. It came out of left field for me, which was awesome. I love being surprised.

This is an LDS fiction book, so there is an element of religion in it. That being said, it's subtle. It explains how Emily would know and move in circles with people who are so different than her. It explains how her mother knows casual acquaintances and other things like that. And, like all faith based fiction, it gives the

main character a kind of overriding faith to fall back on that you don't see in most popular fiction these days. It's quite refreshing.

In all, I'd say that this is a very good book. The suspense is there, the story is captivating, and while there were a few characters that I didn't care for, they were mostly very well written.

Jackie says

There is a reason I avoid "Mormon" fiction.

Anna says

Like many mothers, I spend a lot of time waiting around. Waiting for ballet or riding lessons to end, waiting to see teachers, or waiting for the middle daughter to make up her mind what she wants for breakfast. It's often helpful to have a book handy to while away those dull minutes but, I have learned recently, it's very important to have the right book handy. Not this one. Because you won't be able to stop reading and you'll be late meeting the children after those ballet or riding lessons as a result.

Methods of Madness won the 2009 Whitney Award for the best thriller by an LDS author, and it's easy to see why. There is a full cast of well-developed characters, any one of which (including the heroine herself) could have "dunnit". And there were three whole mysteries going on at once. Where did Ryan Tanner go? Who is sending the photographs? And who killed- no, sorry, no spoilers. Because the victim is very much alive at the beginning of the book, and a fully rounded and relevant character.

One of the things I like about LDS fiction is it doesn't get bogged down in clever rhetoric or overblown prose. The writing is straightforward and simple and, in Stephanie's case, deceptively good yet still easy to read. Other LDS authors I have read have an even more basic style, sometime verging on the amateurish, but Stephanie really is a good writer. I think she is capable of writing in an even more complex and atmospheric style than she does, but why would she? Her audience doesn't demand subtlety or multifaceted dialogue.

I think Stephanie Black has firmly established herself as the premier writer of women's LDS thrillers. If you should find yourself in an LDS bookstore with money to spare and a Stephanie Black book on the shelf in front of you, go ahead and buy it. Just don't think you can dip into it in your downtime.

Anne says

Whitney Award-winning author Stephanie Black has excelled herself with Methods of Madness. What a heart-thudding story! And I never did guess who was guilty. When all was finally revealed, I had to retrace several scenes and enjoy the smart plotting all over again.

An old quotation by Sir Walter Scott kept running through my mind as I read this book – "Oh what a tangled web we weave when first we practice to deceive." I felt the main character's bewilderment and frustration increase chapter by chapter until eventually even she doubts her own mind.

This book baffled, intrigued, horrified, and thrilled me right to the end. By the time I finished reading, I wasn't sure whether it's better to trust or distrust everyone! Methods of Madness certainly puts a whole new spin on not judging others until we totally understand the full story.

Hillary says

wow. Stephanie nailed this one. I was really disappointed with "Fool me twice", mainly because of the romance, but this one was amazing. The romance worked for me, but not only that, the suspense and mystery was just great! I thought at first that I had the killer pegged and just as I was about to put it down in frustration, BAMM she shocks me with something I didn't see coming. Then, just when I think I have it figured it out again- BAMM from another direction! I was starting to think I was as confused as the main character for a while there! I even went back and re-read a part to make sure both Emily (the main character) and I knew what was going on, then BAMM- got hit with a SHOCK at the end! What a great read!

Kathryn says

Amazing, suspenseful, unpredictable book to the end. Emily had everything going for her, a doting big sister, her finished education, and a loving family and fiance. The night of her bridal/birthday party changed everything. Her sister died of a hit and run decorating for Emily's party and her fiance disappeared with out a trace. Three years later she has moved forward to be engaged to another man, Zach and thinks that she will finally find her happily ever after that her friend and fill in sister Nicole has been telling her about...but it isn't ever that easy. Zach's ex-girlfriend wants him back and is fighting dirty, threatening notes and pictures of Ryan from Emily's computer show up implying that she is being unfaithful to Ryan her missing fiance. Then the clincher is the murder of Zach's ex girlfriend pointing all the blame of Emily the jeleous fiance. Evidence starts showing up in Emily's apartment that make her wonder how they got there, who put them their and if she is loosing her own mind. Others including the cops are starting to think that she is loosing it when she doesn't remember making phone calls or writing notes that are from her phone and in her handwriting...or was it her? The people around her show one face when really they are not what they appear. The people closes to her are now who emily is looking at as the real killer...but what she discovers is the truth about what happened 3 years ago is still playing out now. Nicole is trying to pay restitution and Brent just has a from a distance love for Emily only because he thinks she is a faithful fiance to Ryan. You think that Zach is being a jerk and not supporting Emily, but in reality he has taken thinks into his own hands and hired a detective of his own to help prove emily's innocence. Nicole confesses to being drunk and hitting Tricia with her SUV and having Ryan in the car when it happened. Ryan tries to do the right think and Nicole hits him in the head. She then tries to kill Brent who was going to kill emily because brent had Ryan's wallet and could tell on her and then kidnapped emily to kill her too. Emily apoligizes for her part in Emily's unhappiness and explains that she tried to fill in for her part. She believed that after so much killing more wouldn't matter and killed Monica to protect emily from more loss. Monica was afraid to admit her first mistakes for fear of being rejected by her family and husband for not being perfect.

A.L. Sowards says

Somewhere between 4.5 and 5 stars. I was suspicious of the right people early on in this book, but I don't

think I get any points for figuring it out early, since I was also suspicious of pretty much everyone else in the book (really, I think the only people I never suspected were Emily's parents, the first-graders, and Rochelle). I didn't love the book at first, because the whole single's ward dating drama thing isn't my favorite (didn't like it when I was living it, still don't like reading about it). So if you're like me, just hang in there—the book gets really good after the first body shows up (I hope that doesn't sound morbid). There were a few times when I just gave up trying to figure out motives, hoping that it would all make sense in the end. And it did. This book has LDS characters and was published by an LDS publisher, but could easily be read by anyone that likes suspenseful books.

Saralyn says

The story was all right, but I couldn't stand the main character. Why wouldn't she tell anyone anything? It was like reading a romance novel. Just TALK for goodness sake.

Darla says

(Genre:LDS fiction/mystery/suspense) This is the story of a young single adult named Emily who lost her sister in a hit and run accident on the same day that her fiance disappeared without a trace. It is now 3 years later and Emily is engaged to someone else and hopes to move on with her life. As soon as the engagement is announced, however, she receives a creepy note with a picture of her former fiance questioning if she has forgotten him already. Her life takes a nose dive from there as more spooky things happen to her and she begins to question her sanity.

I have only read one other book by Stephanie Black and I felt that this was a stronger story and better written. While I did accurately guess one of the involved individuals and their interest pretty early on, I wasn't able to clue in on the other individual until much later in the story. I liked the uncertainty and having to question everyone's motives (just as the main character had to). I did feel like the resolution was a little quick and simplified at the end. However, it was an enjoyable read and a fun way to pass an afternoon.

Dlora says

Emily Ramsey doesn't think she'll ever be happy again after her sister dies in a hit-and-run and her fiance disappears on the same night, but three years later she finds herself engaged again to Zach. His old flame decides that she wants Zach back and tries to sabotage their relationship. Mean-spirited things start happening--including a murder. I wish Emily were a stronger, more confident character but I think it was necessary for the plot development. Along with Emily, we don't know who to trust or even if Emily's own sanity is in question. The title of the book captures the essence of the plot--*Methods of Madness*. Is Emily going mad or is someone expertly framing her? The action keeps getting more intense and the author keeps you guessing to the very end.

Rebecca says

Rated PG

