



Perfect Game

Leslie Dana Kirby

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Lauren Rose has recently moved to Phoenix to begin a new life as she starts a prestigious emergency medicine residency, but she could end up doing life in the Arizona State penitentiary instead. Lauren has always lived in the shadow of her more glamorous sister Liz, the wife of baseball superstar Jake Wakefield. But when Liz is found viciously murdered in her Scottsdale home, the spotlight turns to Lauren as prime suspect in the high-profile investigation. Having lost both parents at an early age, Liz's death leaves Lauren all alone in a new city. Jake's support proves invaluable as she navigates the nightmare her life has become. As Lauren spends time with Jake, they develop a closeness that she finds both comforting and confusing. It's an intimacy forged by their shared grief, their mutual love of baseball, and by the thrill of him pitching a perfect game for the Diamondbacks. Meanwhile, the Scottsdale police repeatedly question Lauren. She objects to a lie detector test as bad science. An arrest warrant is issued. The ensuing trial leads the evening news every night as a rabid public just can't get enough of the sordid proceedings, quickly dubbed The Trial of the Millennium. Will the outcome be influenced by this media circus? The Perfect Game is Leslie Dana Kirby's compelling debut novel.

Perfect Game Details

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Author : Leslie Dana Kirby

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From Reader Review Perfect Game for online ebook

Thelma Didomenico says

A terrific read. Excellent story on how our justice system works and doesn't work! It kept you interested throughout the whole story. Excellent ending as I love a good murder mystery. I truly enjoyed your book and hopefully there will be a next book? Great job, Ms. Kirby. And thank you poison pen press for the ARC!

Killer Nashville says

In Leslie Dana Kirby's debut novel, *The Perfect Game*, Lauren Rose, a young doctor, finds herself caught up in the emotional aftermath of her older sister's murder. Immediately cast as a suspect in death, Lauren finds herself defending her reputation not only to the police, but to the quick-to-judge media who feeds off the fame of her sister Liz's widowed husband—star pitcher Jake Wakefield.

But there's a snag in Lauren's reputation: she thinks she might be falling for Jake, bonding with him in their mutual grief and love of baseball. Lauren must navigate the suspicions against her, her feelings for Jake, and eventually the highly publicized trial against Liz's murderer in order to be at peace with her sister's death.

Through *The Perfect Game*, Kirby explores the pressures of a high-publicity trial, and makes the ordeal more relatable for readers through Lauren's grounded, quieter lifestyle compared to the lavish wealth and fame of the Wakefields.

Kirby hits her stride in the trial portion of the novel, with strong courtroom dialogue and an exciting pace that will leave readers anxiously waiting for the jury's verdict. The twists leading up to the media-circus and the trial will have readers frustrated and delighted with the characters Kirby creates. From the intelligent, compassionate Lauren, to the sharp-tongued and sassy lawyer Candace Keene (my personal favorite), the characters of *The Perfect Game* invest readers in the drive behind the novel: justice, secrecy, and the theatre-like aspect of the courtroom.

The major characters feel organic, and their relationships evolve naturally over the length of the novel. Kirby's writing is quickly paced, and finishes with one last twist that's both satisfying and unexpected. I would recommend this book to readers looking for a mystery that follows a high-profile case with romance and baseball fans.

Reviewer: Alycia Gilbert studies English and French at a local university with an emphasis in both literature and writing majors, which thankfully excuses the large amount of time she spends reading. An aspiring writer, Gilbert enjoys penning short stories and poems, and she is currently expanding a short story in an attempt at writing a full novel. She acts as editor-in-chief of her university's two literary journals, and loves to help other student writers through editing and strengthening the products of their talents.

Killer Nashville's Review of *The Perfect Game*
Killer Nashville's Past Book Reviews

Laura says

Lauren and Liz Rose are excited to be living in the same city again. Lauren moved to Scottsdale, AZ after finishing med school, Liz moved to Arizona with her husband Jake Wakefield, when he became the star pitcher for the Arizona Diamondbacks. The women are especially close because they lost their parents in an accident as children. Even though they were raised by a loving grandmother, they cherished the memories of their parents and the time they spent with each other.

After a grueling night in the ER, Lauren hears the devastating news that her sister is dead. She has been brutally murdered in her home in an apparent robbery while Jake was on the road. She had just seen Liz, and her sister told her she had some big news that she would share later, but now it was too late. The only thing Lauren wants is justice for her sister.

Things go from bad to worse for Lauren as the police are diligently collecting evidence against the killer and it appears to be her. She is furious and adamant that she is innocent, but the investigation is relentless. When Jake helps shield her from the police and press, they found comfort in each other. They spent time together, mostly discussing the case, memories of Liz and baseball.

Because she lived in California, Lauren didn't know Jake very well. She believed they could become friends until the police arrested him for her sister's murder. The prosecution had a tough job ahead of them. Everyone knew and loved the gorgeous hunk of a man who was the darling of the Diamondbacks. Who doesn't love a man that pitches a perfect game and how on earth could he ever kill his wife?

It is said the best defense is a good offense, and that is the tactic used by Jake's lawyer. To prove reasonable doubt, he implies the police were correct in the first place, and Lauren is the true killer. The press is having a field day, capitalizing on the sensationalism of the trial.

I cannot believe this is Kirby's debut novel. The Perfect Game grabs you in the first few pages, taking you on the roller-coaster ride of emotion with her characters to the end. You get into the heads of Jake, Lauren, the lawyers and police because her descriptions and backgrounds of all of them are solid and believable. I found myself wanting to yell, "No! Don't trust him!".

It is fast paced, with smart dialog that puts you in the ER and courtroom with the characters. The plot is solid, throwing a few curve balls at the reader just when you think you've figured it out. As far as I'm concerned, Kirby not only hit one out of the ballpark with this book, it is a grand slam.

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Cherie says

I love a good legal thriller so I was really excited to read The Perfect Game. The wife of a famous baseball star is murdered. The two main suspects are her husband, Jake, and her sister, Lauren. Jake and Lauren bond over their grief and a shared love of baseball which just complicates everything. The media takes full advantage and starts to paint Lauren as the jealous sister who wanted her sister's life. Did Lauren really murder her sister?

I enjoyed this book but there were a couple of things lacking for me. First, Lauren does some incredibly stupid things and is definitely lacking in common sense. Why in the world would you ever start a romance with your murdered sister's husband?? Even if there's an attraction there, it's inappropriate. As a character, she seemed very intelligent and seemed to have a good head on her shoulders so her relationship with Jake didn't seem to fit. Then again, grief can change how a person would normally act, so there's that. Second, I did not like the ending. The culprit got what they deserved but the way it happened didn't sit well with me. I didn't feel like what happened was in character for anyone involved. I felt like the details of the ending were there more for shock value than as a real resolution.

Despite those things, the book was enjoyable. It moved along quickly and there were a couple of nice twists. I did figure out what was going on pretty early on, but that didn't hinder my enjoyment at all. Fans of baseball will enjoy some of the scenes and conversations but those who are not fans, like myself, won't be turned off by them. The courtroom drama is not quite on par with legal thriller authors like John Grisham but it was still very exciting and those were my favorite scenes.

Overall, this was a solid read that I really enjoyed. Exciting legal drama, murder mystery, quick pace and some interesting twists. This is worth picking up if you enjoy the genre.

Cathy Cole says

When I learn of a new mystery that's set right here in Arizona, I want to read it, and the setting of the Phoenix metropolitan area combined with a bit of Arizona Diamondbacks baseball did not disappoint. Not a baseball fan? Don't worry. There's not enough of the sport in the book to scare away any non-fans.

With the local police zeroing in on Lauren so quickly and their constant badgering of her, readers are practically thrown into the Save Lauren camp. The identity of the killer isn't the issue in this book; it's rather easily deduced. The problem lies in gathering the evidence to prove it, and as things begin to look dire for Lauren, the strongest scenes in *The Perfect Game* unfold in the courtroom. Deleted internet searches, surprise witnesses, video surveillance and more are making Lauren Rose look guiltier and guiltier-- and then author Leslie Kirby turns her book into a game of cat-and-mouse. Strategy and skill are going to be what saves this young woman... and a little bit of luck.

Unfortunately the entire book fell a bit flat for me, and most of it was due to the character of Lauren Rose. This young woman was just a bit too naive for me to believe completely. Yes, I understand feeling lost and alone and bludgeoned with grief. With no other family than her fragile grandmother, if Lauren didn't feel that way, she wouldn't be quite human, would she? But I turned from fully supporting Lauren to wondering what kind of an idiot she was when she began to get romantically involved with her murdered sister's husband. Multiple scenes in which her sole concern seemed to be about what clothing to wear when going to spend time with Jake Wakefield actually made me question her love for her sister.

Combine my disappointment in Lauren with some rather easily foreseen plot twists, and I was left with a book that has potential, but one that fell short of being a perfect game.

Jayne Burnett says

Thank you to Net Galley for this book in exchange for a review & to Poison Pen Press. A light murder suspense read with good characters. The muster of Lauren's sister is tragic & made more sore when her sisters husband Jake tries to frame her for the murder. The detectives go to great lengths to investigate - even searching Lauren's apartment & photographing small injuries to her arms. Jake befriends Lauren - spends time with her - gives her an extensive birthday present but this is all fake - he wants information about the pice investigation. Quite a good courtroom drama with Jake himself as the defendant but after a lengthy trial & a long wait for the jury 2 reach his decision and after the help of a last minute witness's Jake is acquitted. Does the story end there? No it takes a surprise turn & Lauren gets revenge. 3.5 stars

Maria Ulery says

Let me say for a debut novel this is a must read! What is better when your nearing baseballs opening month than to start it off with a bang with this book. This book kept me guessing to the end it was full of baseball and legal info, which are 2 of my favs. Jake is married to Liz and is a star baseball player for the Diamondbacks. Lauren is Liz's little sister and is an intern in a hospital. Their parents are both dead it's just the two of them and granny left in their family so the girls are very close but with busy lives there is lot they don't know about each other. Liz turns up dead and its a battle to find the killer. There is also a little bit of hospital info like a peep at greys anatomy in this book. It is very well written and I can't wait to read more by Ms. Kirby. 5 Bats for this winner.

Nattie says

The Perfect Game is decent, but it's likely only a *dog* couldn't figure out the mystery, and they probably could too if they could read. I chucked the book when Lauren started getting on my nerves. She wasn't bad at first, but then when she was suspected of killing Liz, she became highly irritating. It was hard to feel sorry for her.

I wish some of these authors would cool it with the sassy black female character. Being black and female doesn't necessarily equal being sassy, and in LaRohnda's case, she's apparently the only one who had a poor grasp on proper speaking. These things annoy me. I do realize there are women who fit that profile, but in books, you see it so much, like some authors think there is no other kind to portray.

Curtis says

[Disclaimer: This review is based on an uncorrected proof copy received from the publisher in exchange for an honest review.]

Lauren Rose feels like her life is coming together. She just moved to Phoenix to start her medical residency, and is once again living closer to her sister and their grandmother. While residency will certainly be stressful, being near family and putting school behind her means a welcome change. But when her sister, Liz, is found murdered at her home, Lauren begins to realize that maybe things won't go as well as she hoped. Still

somewhat new to the city, she doesn't know many people and finds herself seeking support from her late sister's husband, famous baseball player Jake Wakefield. She doesn't know Jake very well, either, but he's a shoulder to lean on when the police begin to suspect Lauren of the brutal crime...

I'm all about a well-written mystery and I'm all about this one. The characters have depth, the relationships are dynamic, and it's so easy to get immersed in this world. There were many times I found myself getting frustrated with a character or circumstances or worried about what I thought was going to happen. The writing definitely helped me connect with the book, for sure. And while I saw some of the writing on the wall a bit early on, there were still enough twists and turns here to keep me guessing about some things right up until the very end.

There's a good focus here on the investigation and courtroom proceedings, though mostly from Lauren's perspective. If you enjoy police/legal procedurals like me, you'll definitely enjoy this book!

Sherrie says

I am well and truly stunned at the high rating this book has achieved. It's not very well written, the plot is a gimme from about page 25 on, it's at least 3 times longer than it needs to be, and it's just not very interesting. And I say that as both a mystery and a baseball fan.

Jack Goodstein says

Although it begins a bit abruptly, it morphs from an engrossing who done it to a court room drama with a surprise ending, which might have been handled more effectively. With all the press currently about athletes an spousal abuse, as well as a trial that has to remind many of the O J Simpson fiasco, the book has that ripped from the headlines vibe.

Karen says

This was due back at the library, so I raced through it.

I vacation in Scottsdale every spring training, so I know the area and I know baseball.

This author got a lot of things correct.

I was interested in the plot, and caught up in the action.

I'm not sold on the ending however.

Your mileage may vary.

Try it!

Rhonda Lomazow says

An edge of your seat thriller a mystery involving a murdered Major League Baseball players wife ,her sister who he befriends&a trial you will never forget a true page turner.

wade says

A very smart and nicely done mystery about a young woman whose sister is murdered in what appears to be a robbery. Ultimately, there is the trial of the person who is accused which brings into play her sister's husband who is a star pitcher for the Arizona Diamondbacks. I was engaged with the characters and did care about justice prevailing for all involved. She writes very clearly and paints a good visual image of the action. My only slight criticism is that I thought the court case went on a bit too long. Nevertheless, I feel that Ms. Kirby has a great future in the mystery genre.

Rick says

The story involved baseball, detective work, ER medicine and the courtroom. Plot had a nice little twist at the end and the writing was OK.
