



No Mercy

Joanna Schaffhausen

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Police officer Ellery Hathaway and FBI profiler Reed Markham take on two difficult new cases in this stunning follow-up to *The Vanishing Season*.

No Mercy is award-winning author Joanna Schaffhausen's heart-pounding second novel.

Police officer Ellery Hathaway is on involuntary leave from her job because she shot a murderer in cold blood and refuses to apologize for it. Forced into group therapy for victims of violent crime, Ellery immediately finds higher priorities than "getting in touch with her feelings."

For one, she suspects a fellow group member may have helped to convict the wrong man for a deadly arson incident years ago. For another, Ellery finds herself in the desperate clutches of a woman who survived a brutal rape. He is still out there, this man with the Spider-Man-like ability to climb through bedroom windows, and his victim beseeches Ellery for help in capturing her attacker.

Ellery seeks advice from her friend, FBI profiler Reed Markham, who liberated her from a killer's closet when she was a child. Reed remains drawn to this unpredictable woman, the one he rescued but couldn't quite save. The trouble is, Reed is up for a potential big promotion, and his boss has just one condition for the new job—stay away from Ellery. Ellery ignores all the warnings. Instead, she starts digging around in everyone's past but her own—a move that, at best, could put her out of work permanently, and at worst, could put her in the city morgue.

No Mercy Details

Date : Published January 15th 2019 by Minotaur Books

ISBN :

Author : Joanna Schaffhausen

Format : Kindle Edition 320 pages

Genre : Thriller, Mystery, Suspense

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From Reader Review No Mercy for online ebook

Carol says

Bring on book #3!

Second in her mystery-crime series, **NO MERCY**, Joanna Schaffhausen brings back the tough-skinned Officer Ellery Hathaway and FBI profiler Reed Markham....as well as Speed Bump the dog.

Everyone knows Ellery....or at least the story of her well publicized and disturbing past, but for now she is supposedly off the streets, suspended for shooting a murderer and being "shrunked up" along with a group of others who have experienced violent crime.

But Ellie's quick-witted investigative mind is always set on overdrive so as she judiciously meets her new groupies, she ends up deeply involved in two old cases that require the help of an old friend....an FBI agent friend with a mysterious and complicated past of his own....a friend she must tread cautiously around....a friend who knows the horrors of her past and just may win her heart....or not.

A complex plot makes for an intriguing storyline here, but highly recommend reading **THE VANISHING SEASON** first to enhance your reading experience.

Many thanks to Minotaur Books/St. Martin's Press via NetGalley for the arc in exchange for an unbiased review.

Sandy says

So she killed a guy. Hellooo....he was a vile, psychopathic murdering dirtbag. Why all the fuss? Well, it might be due to the fact she's a cop. But it's probably because she's Ellery Hathaway.

At least that's what she calls herself now. She had a different name as a young teen. That's when she was abducted & kept in a closet by a man who now sits on death row. Of all the girls he snatched she was the only one rescued & the media attention was endless. In time the damaged girl grew up, changed her name & became a cop in a small town where no one knew her face. But that all changed after her identity was revealed during her last case when she killed a killer. And the media rejoiced.

Which led to her current situation.... a forced "time out" from the job & mandatory group therapy. Ellery decides she might have to attend the sessions but that doesn't mean she has to speak. So she listens. To Wendy, a woman who was raped & is still waiting for justice. And to Myra, an older lady still grieving for the baby son she lost decades ago in a fire. Hmmm...

Ellery has always led a solitary life. Her beloved hound Speed Bump & the job were enough. But now her days are empty & with too much time on her hands, she begins to dig into the investigations surrounding Wendy & Myra's tragic events. All she needs is the help of one person. Enter Reed Markham, the FBI agent who pulled her from the closet all those years ago.

Buckle up, peeps. It's about to get bumpy. I won't get into the investigative plot lines. Suffice to say Ellery & Reed make a good team as he puts his profiling skills to use & she does the footwork. But this is also the

story of their unique relationship. Ellery is a damaged soul, a woman who can't stand to be touched & keeps her closet doors nailed shut. The only person she tolerates (besides "Bump") is Reed. He knows her history & what she endured unlike all the others who stare or pry for sensational details. He also provides a levelling influence.

As Ellery's investigations become increasingly dangerous, there were times I wanted to sit her down & ask her just what the hell she was thinking (thankfully, Reed does that for me). She seems to have no sense of self preservation. And then I realized she didn't care if she died because living with all her fears & personal tics was just so hard. She believes (wishes?) she should have died in that closet & it's left her with a fatalistic feeling that she's walking around on borrowed time.

By the end, cases are solved & old secrets unearthed. But the final pages put the focus squarely on Reed as he discovers he might have his own closet full of ghosts to deal with. It's a tense & exciting read that stands well on it's own but I recommend *The Vanishing Season* to get the full background on these characters.

Katie says

Thanks to St. Martin's Press for granting my wish to read an electronic review copy of this recently published book and introducing me to author Joanne Schaffhausen. This was a quick dark read with several interesting subplots surrounding law enforcement officer Ellery Hathaway while she is attending a required group for victims of violent crime. My only regret is that I didn't read the first book in the series, *Vanishing Season*, first before reading this one. I am now very invested in the characters and am looking forward to seeing what happens next. However, reading the second one first gave a little spoilers and left me racing to catch up with the characters. The events in the book were true to the characters and showed their struggles. I recommend this series.

Schizanthus says

Content warnings include sexual assault and family violence.

I fell in love with Bump immediately in *The Vanishing Season* and now he's back, shedding fur throughout the pages of *No Mercy*. Ellery and Reed are back, too. After the events of the first book (you could read this book as a standalone but I'd highly recommend reading them in order) Ellery has been suspended from her job and forced into group therapy with other survivors of violent crimes.

Because this is Ellery she's not so interested in looking inward because, ugh, feelings! Rather, this is the perfect opportunity to get herself personally involved in the crimes affecting some of the other group members. Ellery starts investigating an unsolved sexual assault, whose perpetrator may be responsible for a number of other assaults. She also manages to get entangled in a historic arson case despite the convicted arsonist having already spent decades in prison.

Naturally Ellery, who is strong, determined and at times petulant, jumps in head first and pretty soon Reed, FBI profiler and the man who rescued her from Francis Coben's closet many years ago, has joined her in Boston. Even though Ellery basically has Reed wrapped around her little finger I still really like him, or maybe I just want him to cook for me. No matter how much I like Reed he's a runner up to his adorable daughter, Tula, who's my favourite human character of this book. Sorry, but no human could ever own a piece of my heart like Bump does!

I loved that there was more of a focus on Ellery and Reed's relationship in this book. Their initial interactions in the first book were understandably awkward because of their shared history up to that point. While they're still finding their way they're more comfortable in each other's presence and they're building a more equal relationship, although Reed still feels the need to protect Ellery and Ellery still understandably chafes at physical and emotional closeness with any man, even Reed.

Cover Rant: When I reviewed *The Vanishing Season* I'd only seen the American cover and thought it was nice enough, if a bit tame as a representation of Ellery's personality and story. Then I saw the UK version which, pardon the pun, nailed it! The American cover for *No Mercy* again falls short for me while the UK version shines. The American cover for this book doesn't give the reader any sense of who Ellery is or what this story is about. I think Ellery would be disappointed that there isn't anything gritty or honest about this cover. Sure, looking outside the window you can tell that the story has moved to the city, but the matches on the UK cover? They grab my attention and make me want to know more!

Thank you so much to NetGalley and Minotaur Books, an imprint of St. Martin's Press, for the opportunity to read this book. **Please** publish the third book soon! I'm hanging off a cliff here waiting to find out what's next for Reed!!!

Erin says

Thanks to NetGalley and St. Martin's Press for an e-Arc in exchange for an honest review.

3.5 stars

Here I go again.....adding another series to the bulging bookshelf and I am not even sorry. Although this was book 2, the author sheds enough light on Ellery and Reed's backstories that it makes a good stand alone. Both characters are pretty damaged and yet together they make a fantastic team as they try to look into an arson case and a rape case. Neither of these cases were connected except that two of the victims are in Ellery's support group. But even before that I was hooked from the lead sentence *You kill one guy one time , and suddenly everyone thinks you need therapy.*

Now I might not describe this story as fast paced, but it was still highly engaging and makes me think that I might want to continue exploring this author in the future.

(Bern) Mom to 2 Posh Lil Divas says

?? 4 WOOT! I found a new series to LOVE stars! ♥?

Ellery Hathaway has a tendency to run head first into trouble. Once a victim of a sadistic serial killer who abducted her and held her hostage she is now a champion of victims. Only problem is she is currently on mandated leave from her job in law enforcement after shooting a murderer. Of course, that doesn't stop her from delving in to help those in need.

As part of her suspension Ellery must attend therapy sessions. As part of her therapy she attends group

sessions where she meets victims of violent crimes. Of course, instead of delving deep and looking inward Ellery gets drawn into not 1 but 2 cases.

Wendy was brutally raped and her assailant never caught. She is unable to move on, living in constant fear that he will return for her. Can this sexual predator be caught before there are more victims?

Mayra is the lone survivor of a fire that destroyed her family's business, claimed the life of her young son and left her wheelchair bound and both physically and emotionally scarred. The man who was arrested for the fire is up for parole and his lawyer claims he was innocent. Is he? What really happened that fateful night and who was responsible?

Without her police resources at her disposal Ellery is limited in what she can do but there is no doubt that she has to help. What's a girl to do but call on her favorite FBI agent, Reed Markham for assistance.

I absolutely love the tangled relationship between these two. What are they? Friends? Hero and Victim/Survivor? Professional Acquaintances? Or is there more brimming beneath the sexually charged surface?

Both of the mysteries were compelling packed with tense moments for both Ellery and Reed. Ellery is a strong female lead (which I'm a HUGE fan of!) facing emotional demons from her tortured past. You can't help but root for her even when you want to shake her for being reckless! Reed is the calm to her storm. He just can't seem to stay away from this girl he once saved. The bond they share, the bubbling emotions simmering just beneath their interactions all add up to an amazing duo that I want to see lots more of - bring on Book 3!

Thank you to Joanna Schaffhausen, St. Martin's Press and NetGalley for providing me with an arc of this book to review.

Kaceey - Traveling Sister says

4.25*

I am so happy to have a new series to enjoy!

This is book 2 of the Ellery Hathaway series, but no worries if you want to jump right in! It easily stands on its own! Joanna Schaffhausen cleverly gives enough detailed background that will make it possible to put you into the middle of the action.

Ellery has seen more than her fair share of horror. Remarkably, she's survived a serial killers' attempts on her life. On not one, but two separate occasions!

She is currently on leave from the police department while she completes her department-mandated therapy. Except sending Ellery to therapy doesn't quite achieve the *Zen-like*, inner-peace they were hoping for. Just the opposite! She's made it her personal mission to help two women from her therapy group, putting her own need for help on the back-burner.

Wendy was brutally raped and left a shell of the woman and the person she was. Her rapist never caught. Can Ellery bring this animal to justice and give Wendy her life back?

Myra is confined to a wheelchair, covered in severe burns. She still mourns the loss of her dear, young son who died in the fire. The arsonist just came up for parole. Can she find enough reasons to keep him behind bars? But is that really where he belongs?

Ellery calls on her long-time confidant, close friend and FBI agent Reed Markham to return to Boston to help re-examine both these cases. Of course, Reed cannot say no. He can never say no to Ellery! But is that purely for professional reasons? Hmmmm...?

Joanna Schaffhausen writes a powerful, suspenseful read that I quickly devoured in just a couple sittings.

Fasten your seat-belts...**Oh my gosh, the ending!!**

WOW! I cannot wait for book 3!!

A buddy read with Susanne!??

Thank you to Danielle Prielipp at St. Martin's Press- Minotaur Books via NetGalley and Joanna Schaffhausen for an ARC to read and review.

Maranda says

Occasionally a book is so well written that anything they write will hit your TO READ SHELF. Joanna Schaffhausen's Ellery Hathaway series wins on all fronts. Love Ellery and Reed and the romantic tension that has been going on. (Hope that blooms so relief is felt by all) Ellery's childhood still holds terror for her but her hero and now friend Reed seems to sooth her. A Couple unsolved crimes come to the attention of Ellery while in a group therapy session. Challenges to unravel these are due to the fact that Ellery has been suspended from the police force. Enjoyed this mostly because of the in depth characters. Suggest ready "Vanishing Season #1 to understand fully what Ellery and Read have been through together. CAN'T WAIT for #3!! A copy of this book was provided by St. Martin's Press via Netgalley with no requirements for a review. Comments here are my honest opinion."

Magdalena aka A Bookaholic Swede says

After reading the fantastic THE VANISHING SEASON, I was eager to get my hands on the sequel, NO MERCY. I was not disappointed!

Police officer Ellery Hathaway is now on involuntary leave because she shot a murderer at the end of the last book. The public also knows that she once was the single living survivor of a serial killer, which makes her something of a curiosity. Ellery hates this unwanted attention, as well as being required to attend group therapy for victims of violent crimes. All of this leads to her starting to investigate both an arsonist and a serial rapist. So she turned to her friend, FBI profiler Reed Markham for help, the man who saved her all of those years ago

READ THE REST OF THE REVIEW OVER AT FRESH FICTION!

Susanne Strong says

3.85 Stars.

Ellery Hathaway has a tendency to run towards trouble instead of running from it. When she was young, she

was the 17th victim of Serial Killer Francis Coben. She was the only survivor, thanks to FBI Agent Reed Markham. After that, she became a Cop - though she is currently on suspension - due to killing a serial killer (sounds crazy right?). Now she's in mandated therapy hoping to get her job back. In group, she meets likeminded people who've also survived violent crimes. Hearing their stories she's sure can assist some of them in finding justice, if only she can convince Reed Markham to help.

"No Mercy" is an interesting, fast-paced, suspenseful read. The characters of Ellery and Reed are tormented in their own ways. Both however are extremely likable and immediately draw you in. This is book two in the Ellery Hathaway series - though it was my first foray into her story. While some of the backstory was explained, some was not. Luckily for me, I read this with my trusted book buddy Kacey who thankfully explained everything I needed to know. We both thoroughly enjoyed this and at one point, both of our eyes just about popped! Based on that alone, we will definitely be tuning in for the next installment!

This was another fabulous buddy read with Kacey!

Thank you to NetGalley, St. Martin's Press and Joanna Schaffhausen for an arc of this novel in exchange for an honest review.

Published on Goodreads and NetGalley on 12.13.18.

Jasmine from How Useful It Is says

I started reading No Mercy on 10/7/2018 and finished it on 10/16/2018. This book is a fantastic read! The plot is intriguing and I just couldn't get enough of the main characters' working relationship, their sharp tongue at each other and at interrogations is exhilarating. I like Ellery's dog, Speed Bump's role in both books. It's been almost a year since I read the first book and I'm glad that the author brings back snippets of what happened scattering around in this book. I like how Ellery continues to move on with her life despite the constant threats she received. I like the career discussions in this story as well as family troubles.

This book is told in the third person point of view following Ellery Hathaway as she makes her way to a group meeting for survivors of violent crimes. She can't continue her job as a police officer until she attend this meeting the court mandated. At the meeting, she meets Wendy, who was raped but the rapist got away. Ellery also meets Myra, who survived a fire from a burning building while the arsonist stand by to watch. Ellery's secret life in this book is now all over the news and she can sympathize with these two survivors. Wendy is reaching out to Ellery to help her catch her rapist. The second point of view is Agent Reed Markham, FBI Profiler well known for his role in rescuing one victim from a serial killer. As Ellery digs around the arsonist case, she found herself being threatened and her truck is set on fire.

No Mercy is very well written and a fast paced read! I couldn't put the book down every time I pick it up because the cases they work on are fascinating. I smile often at the main characters' witty conversations. The cool part is that more than two people could be accused of the crime. I like that I couldn't guess who it is. I like the mini cliffhangers. I like Reed Markham and his strong will to stand his ground and not let his boss threaten him with his dream job. I enjoy the detective work and the twists. I like the hint of romance. I highly recommend everyone to read this duology because it's an addicting read!

Pro: fast paced, page turner, humor, couldn't put down, adrenaline rush, suspense, mystery,

Con: none

I rate it 5 stars!

***Disclaimer: Many thanks to Minotaur Books for the opportunity to read and review. Please be assured that my opinions are honest.

xoxo,

Jasmine at www.howusefulitis.wordpress.com for more details

Maureen Carden says

No Mercy is the type of book I try not to read anymore; a crazed killer, a damaged heroine, and a slight will they/ won't they subplot. Except when the book is written by Joanna Schaffhausen. Then I am on the hunt for the book.

Evidently you can't shoot a crazed killer in cold blood. Especially you can't pull that trigger if you are a cop. Even if you are Ellery Hathaway, the only survivor of the serial killer that the most recent dead serial killer is emulating. Confused? Then read *The Vanishing Season*. Not because it is necessary to understand *No Mercy* but just for the sheer pleasure. Read it and weep.

Anywhohows, as my ol' daddy would say, Ellery is on suspension and is in forced therapy. Ellie doesn't think she needs individual therapy much less group therapy for crime victims. She won't apologize for shooting the psychopath and she already knows she is damaged w-a-a-a-a y beyond healing.

Some of these members have been in this group for a good many years, which is a pretty damn depressing realization on its own merit. In order to get through group therapy hell, Ellie decides to help out a few of the other members of her therapy group.

Ellery realizes early on that she can't help these people alone and that she needs the help of the FBI agent, Reed Markham, who saved her once. He was drawn to help the young police officer once again in *The Vanishing Season*. For some odd reason Reed is told that he will pay a tough professional price if he aids Ellie again. Serial killers, the gift that just keeps on giving.

Schaffhausen has written such wonderfully damaged characters with Ellery and Reed. Ellery is haunted by why she survived when no other victims did. Reed is haunted by the "if only" thoughts of why he couldn't have been faster, smarter and saved more victims. Ellery is his victory, and maybe now his downfall. Again. Schaffhausen certainly kept me guessing. The crimes Ellery are asked to look into aren't unusual but they are vicious and the victims are still hoping for some kind of peace and closure. Ellery, however, knows there is no such thing. With one villain, the leads were there, with the other storyline being a true whodunit. Ellie is also reminded of the law of unintended consequences.

Reed utilizes his analytic profiling skills to help Ellie despite the professional price he might pay, which sucks as he is finally coming to accept the personal price he has paid to be an agent.

Schaffhausen's secondary characters were intriguing and spent no time in the "flat character green room" waiting to be brought on-page. When the other characters appear, they can be mesmerizing.

There are secondary plots with surprising family issues that are just as compelling and will have you eagerly looking for the third book.

There is a hint of romance between Ellie and Reed, but it never goes anywhere because the two numbskulls don't seem to realize there are lots of airplanes, trains and buses that travel between Virginia and Boston. Which makes me crazy.

The pace is perfect; the dialogue is smooth until it explodes in unexpected directions. This nascent series is one of the best I've read in recent years.

My thanks to NetGalley for an ARC in exchange for a fair and honest review.

Lou says

No Mercy is the second novel in the Ellery Hathaway series featuring the feisty policewoman alongside FBI profiler Reed Markham and for all intents and purposes it's a fantastic follow-up to *The Vanishing Season*. The writing pulls you in very early on and the action moved at a speedy pace making it difficult to put the book down. The plot is well crafted with many surprising twists and turns which helped me to race through it. It's important to mention that this novel doesn't stand well on its own as you don't get to see the dynamic and ever-evolving relationship between Ellery and Reed and you're not privy to information about Ellery's background which goes some way to explaining her impulsive nature.

Many thanks to Minotaur Books for an ARC.

Carrie says

No Mercy by Joanna Schaffhausen is the second book of the thrilling Ellery Hathaway series. This series follows Ellery Hathaway who is now a police officer but Ellery wasn't her original name, she changed and became the person she is today thanks to once being the victim herself.

Years ago Ellery Hathaway became victim number seventeen of serial killer Francis Michael Coben when she was abducted and held captive. Ellery was lucky enough that FBI Agent Reed Markham saw something other investigators hadn't and followed clues to Coben's home where he managed to rescue Ellery and put Coben behind bars making Ellery the one that survived.

However, while on a case in search of another killer Ellery's worse nightmare came about and she and Reed had to solve both cases. Now after everything that happened Ellery is once again in the spotlight and forced to take a break from her job and enter therapy where Ellery meets another victim. Not being able to pass by helping another victim Ellery again finds herself asking Reed Markham to come help her with a case.

Being the second book of this series I already know what to expect and dare I say I think this one just got a little better than the first leaving me to rate it at 4.5 stars. What you have in this series is a small town vibe with a flawed main character that has taken her tortured past and turned into one heck of a strong female lead. Pair that up with a determined FBI partner that is still very much wanting to rescue and keep her safe and it makes for a great dynamic duo chasing down these killer cases. Definitely a fan and will look forward to more in the series.

I received an advance copy from the publisher via NetGalley.

For more reviews please visit <https://carriesbookreviews.com/>

Kendall says

I read the first in the series *The Vanishing Season* and loved it! Of course, I had to get my hands on the second in the series and Ellery she never disappoints ;).

First off, can I just say how much I love Ellery's dog Speed Bump?! Ugh... my heart <3.

Ellery Hathaway has been suspended from her job as a cop due to killing a vile man that was a psychopath. Hathaway has quite the childhood trauma herself from being targeted by a serial killer that now sits on death row for targeting her as child and many other girls.

Hathaway can never get away from her past and the trauma that she endured. She takes on cases to help other victims that have experienced trauma like her. Hathaway is ordered to do group therapy sessions to come back to work after killing a vile man in the last case she solved.

Hathaway soon finds herself involved in some of the individuals of her group therapy where the violent crimes haven't been solved which include brutal assault and losing a son that was burned a fire years ago.

Of course... Hathaway can't solve her crimes without FBI profiler/agent Markham Reed who pulled her out of that closet years ago.

Joanna definitely doesn't leave her readers without tension, anxiety, and relationships that flourish. She does it again with this high packed tension mystery!

I'd recommend starting from book 1 to get the background story for Hathaway and Markham Reed.

Huge thank you to Minotaur/St. Martin's Press for the arc in exchange for my honest review.

Published to GR: 11/6/18

Publication date: 1/15/19
