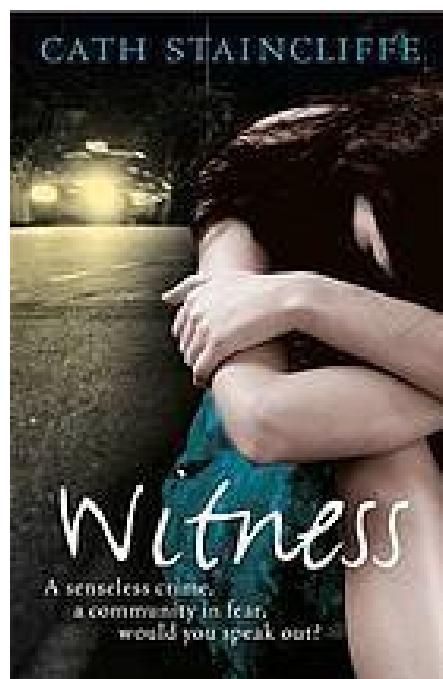




Witness

Cath Staincliffe

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) ➔

Witness

Cath Staincliffe

Witness Cath Staincliffe

Four bystanders in the wrong place at the wrong time. Witnesses to the shocking shooting of a teenage boy. A moment that changes their lives forever.

Fiona, a midwife, is plagued by panic attacks and unable to work. Has she the strength to testify?

Mike, a delivery driver and family man, faces an impossible decision when his frightened wife forces him to choose - us or the court case.

Cheryl, a single-mother, doesn't want her child to grow up in the same climate of fear. Dare she speak out and risk her own life?

Zak, a homeless man, offers to talk in exchange for witness protection and the chance of a new start. Ordinary people in an extraordinary situation.

Will the witnesses stand firm or be prevented from giving evidence? How will they cope with the emotional trauma of reliving the murder under pitiless cross-examination? This is a compassionate, suspenseful and illuminating story exploring the real human cost of bearing witness.

Witness Details

Date : Published April 1st 2011 by Constable & Robinson

ISBN : 9781849013437

Author : Cath Staincliffe

Format : Hardcover 309 pages

Genre : Mystery, Crime, Fiction, Thriller

 [Download Witness ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Witness ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online Witness Cath Staincliffe

From Reader Review Witness for online ebook

Geraldine says

This is an exceptionally good book, not least because it approaches the crime novel from a unique angle - at least as far as I am aware. From the point of view of 4 chance witnesses to a gangland killing. We never see anything from the perpetrators' point of view, nor, really, from the police angle, despite DI Joe Kitson being an important presence throughout the novel.

There's a danger when you see an unusual angle for a story that the writer fails to deliver, and that can be even more disappointing than if they had promised a run-of-the-mill formulaic. Fortunately, this writer does.

Her writing style is quite understated. No excitability or grand statements. she maintains a clear distinction between four characters. For example, when Fiona goes for a walk she notices and names the flora and fauna around her, but the other characters don't.

As the blurb says, the four witnesses have different reasons for not wishing to give evidence and these reasons are revealed via their inner dialogue, and there is no confusion between the four. The character development is strong, not only with the four key players, but with several other peripheral characters being allowed to develop somewhat. We get a glimpse into the pasts of the two men, less so for the women, although we can read between the lines, and we see how their pasts can influence their current actions, but the story doesn't hinge or depend on the past being an explanation.

There are some clever but subtle devices. Two witnesses were chance passers by, and their lives seem to change between the shooting and the trial, but don't really. The other two witnesses are crucial because they were local and acquainted with the perps, and their lives go on as normal for a while...well, I won't say any more for fear of spoilers.

I think it's a very accomplished book. It's not being clever for its own sake, and it has made me realise how little I think about the witnesses to serious crime, or how chance can turn you into a witness. If you peer closely, you can see, in retrospect some clever constructions, a couple of which I have summarised above. But they're inserted carefully, not leaping out as you read.

I didn't notice the style or construct of phrases and passages, which is the highest possible praise. No need for awe at clever vocabulary or to tut at over-simplified ideas. the words were there to let the story and most of all the characters to emerge.

It was set in an area of Manchester I used to be fairly familiar with - round Hulme, which was often my route into Manchester. Fiona lived in Chorlton but took the dog walking over to Sale. I was amazed when I saw the reference to Jackson's Boat, a well known and historic pub in Sale - rather silly article in the Sale and Altrincham Messenger <http://www.messengernewspapers.co.uk/...> and a slightly more sensible passage at the end here <http://www.salecommunityweb.co.uk/riv...>

I read so many books that use - or exploit - the area around Brixton, where I have lived for 25 years, so it seems quite novel for someone to use another area I know. I find it quite weird that writers use inner London and one or two other places, such as Brighton or Cambridge as if they are public property but avoid or fictionalise most of the rest of the country as if they fear they may be trespassing.

Anne says

Cath Staincliffe's *The Kindest Thing* was one of my Top Ten Reads of 2010 and her latest novel, *Witness* has confirmed her place amongst my favourite authors.

Tackling a sensitive subject once again, she does not shy away from real-life situations, this really is hard-hitting stuff that once again makes the reader ask themselves 'what would I do?'

The brutal gangland murder of a 16 year old boy is the focal part of the story, but does not take centre stage. The real story concerns those people who witnessed the murder - four ordinary people who have to make up their minds whether they are brave enough to testify in court. The murderers are well-known gang members, if they, or their cronies discover the witnesses identity, then they are looking at a death sentence.

The story of each witness; Fiona, a midwife; Mike, a delivery driver; Cheryl, a young single mum and Zak, a homeless guy is very well told. Each witness has their own reasons for wanting the murderers put behind bars, just as they each have a reason as to why it may be easier to keep quiet. As the story unfolds, the reader starts to learn more and more about each witness, their individual stories are just as interesting and compelling as the main murder story.

There is no doubt that Cath Staincliffe has done lots of research in this area. I was a volunteer with Victim Support for a few years and often worked closely with the Witness Service volunteers and I could identify with some of the situations described.

This is an excellent story, tense and quite emotional in places, with excellent characters who really do seem realistic.

laura m says

exactly like the preview says, this is a book about the aftermath of a violent event, the slaying of an innocent colored teen as seen by four different witnesses who don't know each other, how it affects each of their everyday lives and who will decide to make a move and testify against know gangsters getting themselves in grave danger, and why.

it was nice to get a glimpse into lives of every family affected by this event and see how things turned out for them as well as for the culprits, seeing how each decision bears a consequence.
would love to read more from this author.

Pete says

I was excited to read this book because of its good press and interesting premise. On the premise idea it doesn't disappoint. The four different narratives work well and create impetus however the convenient full-circle ending of these is a little too trite for my taste, even if it is not happily ever after for everyone. I also think this is a book that needs to be read at speed. Naturally, dealing with a murder and subsequent court case there is a long passage of time which could drag if you read the book slower. My main problem with this book is its focus on the procedures of appearing as a witness and I think it focusses far too much on the minutiae of this at the expense of decent characterisation and a real exploration of the feelings of the various witnesses, their reasons for appearing and their fears.

Teresa says

I hadn't heard of Cath Staincliffe until last year when I saw so many excellent reviews of her novel *The Kindest Thing* which explores the aftermath of a woman's decision to help her husband die. She has also written an 8 book crime series but with *The Kindest Thing* and now *Witness*, her writing has an added dimension – the crime and its investigation no longer take centre stage.

Witness opens with the brutal murder of a teenage boy in Manchester. The story revolves around four bystanders who happen to witness the killing – Fiona, a midwife who suffers panic attacks following the murder, Mike, a delivery man who is torn between doing the right thing and protecting his family, Cheryl, a single mother who knows the perpetrators and Zach, a homeless young man who is hoping for a fresh start via a witness protection programme. As in her previous novel, the question, "What would you do?", is put very firmly to the reader.

I don't read a lot of contemporary fiction but I think Cath Staincliffe may very well have converted me with this novel. Written in the third person, each chapter relates the back story of each witness, how they came to be at the murder scene, how they are encouraged/discouraged re the looming trial. The characters are distinctive, all coming from different backgrounds but all have so much to lose by bearing witness. The author creates a very vivid picture of modern-day Manchester and the influence of gang culture, the sway held by gang leaders. We also see how difficult it is for the police to gain the trust of potential witnesses, trying to reassure them that there will not be any repercussions.

Witness is an extremely readable, well paced story about ordinary folk in extraordinary circumstances. Each of the main characters is strongly delineated, realistic, filled with the same strengths and weaknesses as we readers and thus the author makes it easy for us to empathise with their dilemma. Looking forward to reading Cath Staincliffe's previous stand-alone novels and future writing from this very perceptive author.

Natalie says

Excellent read, utterly gripping and has rebooted my love of reading, after a slow patch!
Staincliffe has created 4 excellent voices to tell the story of the murder of Danny Macateer through the eyes of the witnesses. Highly recommend this one!

Dave says

A young guy gets murdered. This story has everything to do with the court case, but hardly anything to do with the court case at all. There isn't really a court case at all in the story, but there is. It's everything to do with the guys who did the murder, but they hardly appear in the story at all. Clear?

Debs Longman says

Unusual read

I found this an entertaining and unusual read. Four very different lead characters each struggling with what they witnessed. An enjoyable book.

Ella Belakovska says

I like the fact that Cath Staincliffe writes crime drama that doesn't just follow a detective around until they have solved the murder. Instead, we are told early on who the perpetrators are and, as is often the case where gangs are involved, the difficulty is not that the police don't know who they are looking for, but that they need to have a strong case in order to bring the perps to justice. This means relying on (credible) witnesses to come forward and be prepared to undergo examination in court, which in the case of at least one witness here, is a terrifying prospect given the risks.

The story begins with the murder of a young lad in broad daylight, told from the perspective of a nurse who was first to the scene and who attempted to save his life. In the event of his death, she becomes one of several other witnesses, whose stories unfold chapter by chapter. Staincliffe does a good job of trying to illustrate different characters from varied backgrounds, and voices the turmoil they have in deciding whether or not to testify in court. She also highlights the mental health difficulties associated with witnessing a trauma and how becoming a part of the criminal justice system can bring unforeseen issues as time ticks by.

One of the most interesting, but frustrating, characters was Zak, a homeless boy who clearly had a troubled childhood and whose motivation for becoming a witness is questionable but understandable. As he is contending for page space with three other characters, it is difficult to fully engage with him (and he is hard to like a lot of the time) but I would like to have learned more about him and his background.

The novel is resolved satisfyingly, and it does feel like the author knows her stuff when it comes to courtroom proceedings and the flaws in the law. Definitely worth a read if you like crime drama with a difference.

Zoe says

It seems I am in the minority with this book - so many raving reviews and yet I didn't like it.

The premise is a good one - 4 strangers witness a shooting of a young lad, Daniel. The shooter is a known gang member and so all 4 witnesses are reluctant to come forward for their own reasons. Until they DO come forward. And that's the end of that. Literally. This was weak and not particularly well executed add to the fact that not a lot actually happened here, I was bored by a good percentage of this.

There was one character I DID like in this book - Just one the one out of all of them - and that was the dog, Bess!

Chloe says

4.5 stars.

A cleverly written story following the lives of 4 different people who all witnessed a shocking crime: a community nurse who rushed to give first-aid, a delivery driver who happened to be driving by, a young mother out walking with her child and a homeless man whose own illegal activity placed him in eye view of the crime.

Just four of the lives that were dramatically changed through this one incident and all who are hesitant to speak out for fear of what could happen to them.

Rachel Sargeant says

This author is the queen of characterization. After I'd finished this novel, I found myself wondering how one of the characters was getting on - as if I knew her!

Four very different people, with very different backstories, witness the shooting of an innocent teenager by leaders of a local gang. The whole community is too terrified to speak out. Will these witnesses find the courage and space in their chaotic lives to take a stand?

Clear plot, poignant story, masterful close third person narrative.

Simply superb.

Bianca Bacchus says

Good easy read:-)

Gail says

I adored this book and loved Zak and his wonderful Bess. I was left stunned at who received the reward money and finished the book sobbing my heart out at the conclusion (without giving the story away). This would make a cracking TV drama as the story is told from 4 different witnesses. I would highly recommend this fantastic book.

Maxine (Booklover Catlady) says

Cath Staincliffe delivers brilliant writing yet again. I love the way she intertwines a crime with the lives, hearts and minds of the characters in her book, this one packed an emotional punch.

In a nutshell, four innocent bystanders witness the cold blooded shooting of a teenage boy in inner Manchester. The book follows each of the witnesses from the moment of seeing the shooting onwards, each one having a very different lifestyle and character. The question is which one or if any will testify to see the murderers come to justice?

There is a lot of thought in her writing, heartfelt and real as the novel tackles the thinking process, fears, worries, urges of each of them as they try to have life go on after this young boy dies. None of them will ever be the same again.

I devoured this book in hours, by the time we were at the trial scenes I was on the edge of the sofa (my cat looked concerned) as I eagerly read the happenings and the final verdict. And the ending was absolutely excellent, very clever and moving. I'm a fan of Cath Staincliffe's books, none have disappointed so far. She is very good at making you think what you would do in these situations. Four out of five stars, another rewarding read.
