



The Girl in the Picture

Kerry Barrett

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Two women. One house. Centuries of secrets

East Sussex Coast, 1855

Violet Hargreaves is the lonely daughter of a widowed industrialist, and an aspiring Pre-Raphaelite painter. One day, the naïve eighteen-year-old meets Edwin; a mysterious and handsome man on the beach, who promises her a world beyond the small coastal village she's trapped in. But after ignoring warning about Edwin, a chain of terrible events begins to unfold for Violet...

East Sussex Coast, 2016

For thriller-writer Ella Daniels, the house on the cliff is the perfect place to overcome writer's block, where she decides to move with her small family. But there's a strange atmosphere that settles once they move in – and rumours of historical murders next door begin to emerge. One night, Ella uncovers a portrait of a beautiful young girl named Violet Hargreaves, who went missing at the same time as the horrific crimes, and Ella becomes determined to find out what happened there 160 years ago. And in trying to lay Violet's ghost to rest, Ella must face ghosts of her own...

This haunting timeslip tale is perfect for fans of Kate Riordan, Tracy Rees, Kate Morton and Lucinda Riley.

The Girl in the Picture Details

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From Reader Review The Girl in the Picture for online ebook

Diane says

I enjoyed this book because of the dual time line, the intriguing unfolding mystery, and the many things that the main character and the girl in the picture have in common. The story started out a little slow at first but it quickly became a compelling mystery filled with greed, violence and manipulation that kept me guessing right through to the end of the book. In present time Ella Daniels has left her job and the hustle and bustle of London for a historic seaside home where she plans to become a full time writer. As she settles in and meets friends and neighbors she learns that the house she's renting has quite a notorious history, including a horrific murder and the unexplained disappearance of a teenage girl that happened more than 150 years ago. As Ella does research and gathers clues the story unfolds through the eyes of a very naive and talented young artist named Violet, and the married couple who live next door. Mystery lovers and fans of historical fiction will find this book a real treat. I read a complimentary copy of this book through NetGalley and all opinions expressed in my voluntary review are completely my own.

Helen says

When a book is put in the same league as Kate Morton, it has quite a bit to live up to! 'The Girl in the Picture', is quite impressive in delivering the necessary plot twists and I would safely recommend it to all fans of this genre. This is the first Kerry Barrett book I have read and it will not be my last. Always a literary challenge to write a dual timeline narrative, Kerry masterfully alternates between Ella in the present, to Violet in 1885 in a seamless, easy to follow and intriguing tale.

Set on the coast of East Sussex and centring around the occurrences in the one house of these two women, separated only by the passage of time. What secrets does this house contain in relation to the murders and disappearance so many years ago? Kerry does a wonderful job of engaging the reader, providing little pieces of the puzzle to present day Ella, as she attempts to investigate what occurred back in 1885 to Violet. The intrigue heightens the further into the story you get, but it's not until the end that you will confidently put all the pieces of this engaging puzzle together.

I enjoyed many aspects of this book - everything from: the well executed, dual timeline, the slow unfolding suspense and mystery combined with the substantial character development in both timelines. The story may start out a little slow for some and the modern day story lack that bit of lustre, but don't let this deter you from a well written tale. The manipulation and violence may prove a little too close to home for some, but it certainly adds to the realism.

As Ella seeks to uncover the local mystery surrounding her newly purchased residence, the notorious tale of a murder mystery from 150 years ago will engross you. The balance between Ella's present day discoveries coinciding with real time events for Violet is well done. This tale will prove a real treat for lovers of historical fiction with the added element of a well executed mystery.

This review is based on a complimentary copy from the publisher and provided through NetGalley in exchange for an honest review. The quoted material may have changed in the final release

Evie says

The Girl in the Picture by Kerry Barrett is a poignant story of a love affair that should've never been. This is one of those books that are hard to put down once you start.

I knew I was hooked when I flipped to page 2. The story revolves around a 150 years old crime that no one's been able to solve. There are lies and deceit, a failed love affair, and a wife who feels sorry for her husband's mistress and decides to help her with what little she can.

There are so many twists and turns the reader doesn't see coming, which makes this book a thousand times better because nothing is predictable in its storyline.

The way in which Ella, the author character in the book, tries to solve the mystery researching every clue she comes across, at the same time as Violet, Edwin, and Frances redact the events behind the clues Ella is researching, I thought was short of ingenious.

I enjoyed seeing how Ella puts her facts together, especially when they are wrong and the reader knows it. I found myself shouting "no, that's wrong. Edwin did... or Violet went to... or You need to go look in the attic...LOOK IN THE ATTIC!"

Kerry Barrett is a new-to-me author, and trust me when I say I will be looking up her books. Fortunately, it seems she doesn't have a long backlist I need to read, but only a few. I loved The Girl in the Picture, and I think any lovers of women's fiction with a dash of suspense will absolutely love this too!

Carolyn says

What a great find! Very enjoyable, sad, poignant murder/mystery book involving the occupants of one house 150 years apart. A real page-turner!

4.5

Under the Covers Book Blog says

East Sussex Coast 2016 - Ella Daniels has given up her safe life as an accountant to pursue her career as a thriller writer full time. So, her and her family have moved from London to the coast on a house overlooking the sea. However, Ella soon hears the rumours of a mysterious murder and a missing girl and she can't concentrate on her new novel until she gets to the bottom of the tragic case.

East Sussex Coast 1886 - Eighteen year old Violet Hargraves aspires to be a painter, however, her father insists that it isn't proper and instead she should marry. However, when the naive Violet meets the handsome and older man Edwin, her new neighbour, he offers her the chance to make her dreams of becoming a painter real. As Violet starts to fall under his spell she gets a warning from the most unlikely place...his wife.

This is my first read from Kerry Barrett, but I don't think it will be my last, she sucks you in as the tale

unfolds told from two points in time; present day from Ella's point of view and then back in 1886 as Violet first meets Edwin and events start to unfold. The Girl in the Picture did a great job in pulling you in, feeding you parts of the past as Ella slowly starts unravelling the story from the present, so although you may guess what has happened you can't be entirely sure until you reach the end.

It was also a bit of an emotional journey, Ella starts to learn about Violet's life and starts to see parallels to her own history, which forces her to face some emotional baggage she's been hauling around since childhood. Towards the end of the book when the whole mystery unravels and you learn the full extent of the tragedy...I admit, I may have shed a few tears, there was no ugly crying but it was a bitter sweet poignant moment.

I really enjoyed this book I really liked how well Barrett balanced the two separate timelines and the intrigue of the mystery with the more human story of Ella and Violet.

*ARC provided by publisher

Reviewed by Suzanne♥ ? Don't want to miss any of our posts? Subscribe to our blog by email! ? ♥

Mistress #darklings says

This is the first book i've read by Kerry Barrett, and i'm so excited that i have now found another fabulous author! Upon finishing this, the first thing i did (after catching my breath) was go to Amazon and purchase her previous novels. Yes, it is THAT good!

The girl in the picture is one of those books that combines aspects of my favourite genres, historical fiction and a bit of mystery thrown in.

In the present day we meet Ella and her family. On a whim and gut instinct they pack up their lives in London and move to a little cottage called Cliff house down in Brighton. Locally it has an air of mystery and legend surrounding it with stories stretching back over 150 years. It tells of a young girl called Violet Hargreaves, 18 years of age. After a night of violence in 1855 what follows is a mystery that stretches for a century and half. On the night that her neighbours are found attacked, one dead, Violet disappears. The only trace to ever be found is her hat. What happened to this aspiring young girl with a huge ambition?

Ella makes it her mission to find out. Nothing is going to stop her, not even an approaching publishing deadline. The more Ella discovers about this poor young girl, the more similarities she discovers with her own life, both losing their mothers at a young age, and a baby brother each. Being brought up by their fathers but both fearing they would be sent away. The more she digs, the more she realises how hard Violet must have found it. The differences in social standings and niceties of the time, make a stark contrast to the world and opportunities women have today.

Can Ella do what no one else has managed and put this mystery to bed once and for all? What actually DID happen to Violet Hargreaves on that fateful night in 1855?

I thoroughly enjoyed this authors writing style, it was comprehensive and flowing in its nature. I thought the descriptive flair lent itself well and the character development was inclusive and they were given a depth that meant as a reader, i could relate to them.

Honestly, i cannot tell you just how good this really is. I finished it a couple of days ago and i find myself at times thinking about it and being drawn back in, even now. I can't help feeling like i'm emotionally invested in the story and lives of these two women. It's definitely a novel that will stay with me for a while yet.

Thank you to the author & publisher for the chance to read & review this story. I must say though, that all thoughts and opinions are entirely my own.

I eagerly anticipate more of the same from this author.

Sara Beggs says

Any book that can leave me a weepy mess deserves five stars.

Lily (Night Owl Book Cafe) says

Please be advised, trigger warning for sexual assault and physical abuse.

When Ella and her husband decide to take the jump and move her family out of the city into a small town into a house on a cliff, the last thing Ella expected was the house to be tied to an unsolved murder case that happened 150 years ago. Upon finding a beautiful self portrait of a young woman who may have lived in the house a hundred years ago, Ella cannot help but immerse herself in the mysterious murder and the disappearance of Violet Hargreaves, especially since the girls history seems to resemble what Ella went through growing up.

East Sussex Coast, 1855

Violet is a lonely 18-year-old girl whose father is a widowed Industrialist and travels a lot. To fill her lonely days, Violet paints, despite her father's disapproval of Violet painting - it is her escape.

She meets a handsome married neighbor next door who claims he knows artists in London that can help Violet get noticed and break out into their world. All Violet wants more than anything is to escape her small town and do what she loves most and that's paint. But, when Violet ignores warnings about Edwin, she sets in motion the horrible set of events that had the town's people wandering for years of what had occurred and a mystery that was never solved.

This was so interesting. It's a historical fiction but those who are afraid of slow moving Historical Fiction don't be. Kerry Barrett delivers a beautiful if not horrific story about two women set years apart with centuries worth of secrets. She spins a lovely tale of a girl named Violet, who just wanted something more than a lonely marriage out of life and Ella a thriller-writer who might be just curious enough to uncover it.

The entire time I was reading Violet's story I found myself rooted to my seat, finding it completely riveting and thoroughly heartbreaking.

I wanted to know how it all ended for the young girl so naive, yet so full of passion.

The ending had me gasping, because I did not expect that to go the way it did. Not only was it completely heart wrenching, but also quite a bit horrifying. You can't even tell that it's coming until a certain point and at that point you get to know Violet enough to really feel for the girl and her outcome.

I wasn't sure how plausible the ending was to be honest, but I guess I could see it happening. It felt original, unexpected and definitely creative. Ella's obsession with Violet was strange and at times it did feel hard to believe because I did not know why she was so consumed in a mystery that happened so long ago, with not much to go on, but her prodding really paid off in uncovering the ugly truth that was hidden all these years unanswered.

I highly recommend this book for anyone who enjoys an engrossing story that builds up in tension and mystery, with characters that will stick to your heart long after it is finished. This review was originally

posted on Night Owl Book Cafe

J.M. Powers says

I love dual time period books; but they must be intricately woven to keep me interested.

The Girl in the Picture by Kerry Barrett does not disappoint. In addition to the historical aspect, the mystery is believable and intriguing.

Ella, is the present day main character while Violet's life is reflected during the mid 1800's. The mystery revolves around the disappearance of Violet. Something the villagers still talk about 150 years later.

The uncanny parallel lives are what hooks Ella's heartstrings and piques her drive to dive into the mystery. They both lost their mothers and unborn baby sibling at the age of five. In turn a strained, but loving relationship with their fathers ensues...along with insecurities.

Ella, has left her secure job as an accountant to write full time. They move from London and rent an old home in a small village—Violet's former home. Soon, she hears about the history behind the house.

Violet, a talented painter, is swayed by a married neighbor, Edwin. The 1800's is no place for a woman with dreams, but Edwin encourages her, and tells her he has ties in the art world. He is a predator in every sense of the word. (I hated him.)

Violet is an innocent, sheltered eighteen-year-old young woman. She is swayed by Edwin's snake-like charm, and soon allows him into her life and heart.

It was painful to watch. Yeah, I said watch. The author actually planted me in the story so well it felt as if I watched the scenes play before my eyes. The switch between present day and 1855 were seamless. The characters are easy to love, except for Edwin. He is a villainous sleaze.

The mystery unfolds a little at a time, and I followed along with undying interest. I didn't find the ending unbelievable, as I do some mysteries. This plot was well thought out.

Ella and Violet stumble through their insecurities, but there is growth in both main characters.

I loved this book and highly recommend it to anyone who likes dual time period mysteries.

I received this book from Net Galley.

Janelle says

I enjoyed the mystery in this book, it was really the only thing that kept me reading. From the very beginning I really disliked Ella, the present day character. She was rude and mean to the people around her and her husband was constantly coddling her, so as to make sure she was happy above everyone else. I just found her self-centered character unlikeable and hard to care about or connect with. I did enjoy reading the Violet and

Francis chapters and felt they helped to advance the story, but they both were a little "wooden". I liked the characters, but didn't really have any feelings for them. The Edwin chapters were just awkward. All in all, I finished the book just to see what happened and I enjoyed it, but it is not the kind of book that leaves you caring about anything that happened in it. Had the characters been more fully developed, this could have earned more stars from me.

Alina says

Sensational, mysterious and outstanding novel by Kerry Barrett! I am kicking myself for not reading this book months earlier. From the moment I was introduced to our three heroines Ella, Frances and Violet - I was glued to their stories.

A horrific accident takes place on a warm evening of September 1855 in a quiet and small town of Sussex. Frances and Edwin Forrest are attacked in front of the family home, in the result - Edwin is found dead, heavily beaten Frances survives, and so is her unborn child. However, another mystery hangs over the peaceful town of Sussex - Forrest's young next door neighbor Violet Hargreaves goes missing that very same evening.

One hundred and fifty years later, Daniels family of four moves into a charming house at the beach in a lovely little town of Sussex. During their first evening, Ella, who is also a mystery novel writer, sees a figure in an attic window. But she brushes it off. Days go by, and Ella learns about a tragic accident that happened next door many many years ago, and of a disappearance of a young girl who lived in their house. As they settle in, Ella decides to clean up an attic and built her study in there. In a process, she discovers a hidden door in the wall, and behind it, Ella finds many sketches, a dairy and a picture of a very beautiful girl, Violet Hargreaves. Was the figure in an attic window during family's first evening in the house just Ella's imagination? Ella Daniels is on a mission to resolve a 150-year-old case.

I will tell you the truth, I was pleasantly surprised by the book. A puzzling story, amazing characters, remarkable discoveries. A very easy and fast read. Perfect for any mystery lover.

Melisa says

Omg my heart, what a story ??? this one is going to stick with me for a long time. I just took a look on Amazon, and this book is available there on Kindle for 99 cents right now, and I dare say that's a 99 cents well spent. review to come.

Copy provided by Netgalley, thank you!

Nessa says

I've not read any of this authors books before but having read the blurb and loving the book cover, it didn't take me long to decide that I wanted to read this book.

It didn't take me long to be drawn into the stories of both Violet back in 1855 and that of Ella in present day, I was captivated right from the first few chapters. I loved how the story went back and forth from 1855 to

present day which was done so seamlessly.

It was a truly emotional and heartfelt read, all of the characters were so well thought out and the story plot cleverly written. There was one moment within the story that was so tragic, I thought my heart would break from reading it, so sad, it brought tears to my eyes.

I thoroughly enjoyed this story, just didn't want it to end. I just could not put it down.

If I could give this book more than 5 stars I would as that it just how wonderful and brilliant this story is, truly a work of art, stunningly outstanding. I'll definitely be looking to read more by this author in the future.

Jackleen says

This is the first book that I have read by this author but it will not be the last.

Nancy Baker says

That was a short but attention grabbing read. Passing seamlessly between a present day story and one from 1855, a mystery slowly and methodically unfolds before your eyes that grabbed my attention full throttle until the end.

Violet is a young woman in 1855 living with her father on the seashore and both have never truly revived from the loss of Violet's mother when she was but 5. Deep seated resentment on both their parts has built an invisible wedge between them. Violet's only goal in life is to be an artist -- a career for which she is well skilled, but unfortunately live in a time era where only men are acknowledged in the field of art. With a father consumed in thoughts of getting his daughter handed over in marriage, he vehemently discourages her painting. In 1855 Violet disappears on the same day that their handyman is killed, their neighbor is killed and their neighbor's wife is nearly beaten to death.

Ella is an author, fairly new to the profession, who writes a mystery/detective series revolving around a female protagonist. Ella lost her mother when she was only 9 and has never forgiven hearing her father, on the day of her mother's funeral, asking an aunt to take his daughter in to raise. Now married with children of her own, Ella still struggles with trying to maintain her father's approval. On a whim, Ella and her husband sell their home and rent a seaside home near her husband's new job. Ella is hoping that the new surroundings will help her writer's block and inspire her with a new case for her detective book series. Little does she know what lies waiting for her within the walls of her new home.

I actually did figure out the ending, but even knowing the end result, did not deafen or diminish the amount of intrigue I felt in this quick read. Kuddos to this author for a job well done..
