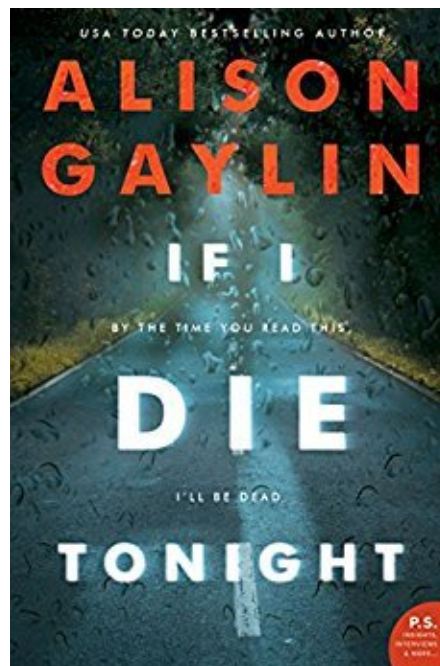




If I Die Tonight

Alison Gaylin

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If I Die Tonight Alison Gaylin

Reminiscent of the bestsellers of Laura Lippman and Harlan Coben—with a dose of *Big Little Lies* or *Stranger Things*—an absorbing, addictive tale of psychological suspense from the author of the highly acclaimed and Edgar Award-nominated *What Remains of Me* and the *USA Today* bestselling and Shamus Award-winning Brenna Spector series, in which a seemingly open-and-shut police case with a clear-cut hero and villain turns out to be anything but simple.

Late one night in the quiet Hudson Valley town of Havenkill, a distraught woman stumbles into the police station—and lives are changed forever.

Aimee En, once a darling of the '80s pop music scene, claims that a teenage boy stole her car, then ran over another young man who'd rushed to help.

As Liam Miller's life hangs in the balance, the events of that fateful night begin to come into focus. But is everything as it seems?

The case quickly consumes social media, transforming Liam, a local high school football star, into a folk hero, and the suspect, a high school outcast named Wade Reed, into a depraved would-be killer. But is Wade really guilty? And if he isn't, why won't he talk?

Told from a kaleidoscope of viewpoints—Wade's mother Jackie, his younger brother Connor, Aimee En and Pearl Maze, a young police officer with a tragic past, *If I Die Tonight* is a story of family ties and dark secrets—and the lengths we'll go to protect ourselves.

If I Die Tonight Details

Date : Published March 6th 2018 by William Morrow Paperbacks

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Author : Alison Gaylin

Format : Kindle Edition 384 pages

Genre : Mystery, Fiction, Thriller, Suspense, Mystery Thriller

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From Reader Review If I Die Tonight for online ebook

Kaceey - Traveling Sister says

This was my first read from Alison Gaylin (though I own 3 of her others). What an unexpected surprise. Why haven't I picked up one of her other books till now!?

Jackie is doing her best to raise two teenage sons on her own. And lately she feels like she knows them less and less. But come on...what teens aren't distant and mysterious to their parents?

So when tragedy pays a visit to the small town they live in, her world is rocked as all eyes turn to one of her boys. Surely it's a huge misunderstanding. Could he really be guilty of the crimes everyone is accusing him of? Can she save him?

This book started out with a bang and I was quickly pulled in. At one point, (half-way) I felt that it started to drag a bit. But no worries - that quickly turned around. I found myself racing to the end to see how this was all going to play out.

I was drawn to all the characters from Jackie to her sons, even the local police. Each had a strong voice and enough depth to separate one character from another. (Love that!)

The final third of this book had me riding a rollercoaster of emotion. I was sad, frightened, shocked...and happy. Yes, all thriller fans, there are some fabulous moments in this one to keep you on your toes. Highly recommend!!

I will definitely be reaching into my bookshelf to read more from this author!

A Traveling Sister read with Brenda and Susanne!

Thank you to Edelweiss and HarperCollins for an ARC to review

For this review and our Full Traveling Sister review please visit Norma and Brenda's fabulous book blog: <http://www.twogirlslostinacouleereadi...>

Susanne Strong says

3.5 Stars* (rounded down)

Aimee En knows she isn't a reliable witness. She is a has been, washed up musician who just came from a late night gig but swears she is telling the truth. A boy in a black hoodie hijacked her car and then boom - he hit another teenage boy with it. And Aimee En witnessed the whole thing. The problem? The police think she may have done it herself.

Wade is a teenager that no one likes. In fact, he is pretty much despised by everyone in school. He bullies everyone around him via social media, including Liam, the teenager who got hit by the car, putting Wade into the spotlight. Even his younger brother Connor starts to look at Wade in a different way, suspecting him of wrongdoing. Wade is clearly keeping secrets and soon Connor starts keeping them too. Soon everyone in the town of Havenkill suspects Wade, except for his mother.

“If I Die Tonight” is a slow burning mystery that is more of a character driven novel. All of the characters are well written. There are several side stories which were successfully integrated into the main storyline. The novel itself holds your interest and keeps it.

This was a Traveling Sister Read with Brenda and Kacey. We had a great time reading it together. Thanks sisters!

Thank you to Edelweiss, Harper Collins, William Morrow and Alison Gaylin for an ARC of this novel in exchange for an honest review.

Published on Edelweiss and Goodreads on 12.28.17.

*Will be published on Amazon on 3.6.18.

Heidi says

I once read this quote in a book, and it has stayed with me: “You’re only ever as happy as your unhappiest child.” (unfortunately I have forgotten where I read it, or I would give due credit to the author). How true! This is the situation Jackie finds herself in, a single mother trying her best to raise her two teenage sons. Her older son Wade has been distant and secretive lately, estranged from his peers, a loner who rarely smiles. What has happened to the happy little boy who used to laugh and play, her precious first born? Ever since her husband left her for another woman and cut off all contact with his sons, Wade has been angry and distant. Then one night a car is stolen and a teenager killed in a hit-and-run. Straight away suspicion falls on the weird kid, the outsider – where was Wade that night? And why won’t he do anything to defend himself? Caught up in the most horrible of situations, Jackie can only do one thing – believe in her child.

If I Die Tonight is a heartbreaking book in so many ways. As a mother who has seen her children through the turbulent years of teenagehood I could relate to Jackie’s confusion and pain, and the feeling of powerlessness and failure to not be able to “fix” things for her unhappy child. My heart bled for her as things start to go wrong and her child stands accused of a crime. As Jackie goes through a range of emotions – sorrow, pain, frustration, anger and guilt – I reflected on how difficult it is to raise children in a world where conformity rules, where society makes scapegoats of people who dare to be different from the norm. This was such an emotional rollercoaster ride! And once social media gets involved, things turn really ugly. Gaylin has done a brilliant job in portraying the judgment imposed by people on social media, the media frenzy and the ensuing witch-hunt. It was scary, and had my heart racing in utter horror as I tried to put myself in Jackie’s shoes. Whether guilty or not, this teenager was being tried and convicted by people’s opinions without any evidence, let alone a fair trial.

Told from several viewpoints, including excerpts of social media feeds, Gaylin tells a compelling story that will tug on every parent’s heartstrings. Each and every character is believable and well rounded, giving a different perspective to the situation, right up until its surprising finale. I especially liked Pearl, who made a most intriguing character, and her side story was fascinating – I would love to see her back in another mystery. The ending certainly packs a punch, and I did not see that one coming at all!

If I Die Tonight is a slow burning, character driven family drama with an intriguing mystery at its very heart that will tug on every parent’s heartstrings. Tackling contemporary issues such as single parenthood, peer pressure, mental health, mob mentality and the impact of social media on our lives, it would make for interesting bookclub discussions or personal reflection. I really enjoyed Gaylin’s writing style and look forward to reading more from this author!

3.5 stars

Thank you to Edelweiss and William Morrow Paperbacks for the free electronic copy of this novel and for giving me the opportunity to provide an honest review.

blog *facebook* *instagram*

Deanna says

My reviews can also be seen at: [https://deesradreadsandreviews.wordpress...](https://deesradreadsandreviews.wordpress.com/)

I have wanted to read Alison Gaylin's novels for quite some time but just hadn't had the opportunity. After reading the description for ***"If I Die Tonight"***, I was really intrigued, and couldn't wait to get started.

The book opens with a Facebook post on Jacqueline (Jackie) Reed's account. But the message isn't written by her...it's written by her teenage son, Wade.

"By the time you read this, I'll be dead"

Five days earlier....

Jackie Reed thinks she's losing touch with her boys. They are turning into men right before her eyes. 13-year-old, Connor his voice cracking in the midst of puberty and 17-year-old, Wade with his newly dyed black hair and unreadable face. She feels like they shut her out of their lives. Then Jackie accidentally sees a text on Wade's phone that worries her. She wants to talk to him but it's already late and he's probably asleep.

"They made it so you couldn't know them anymore. They made it so you couldn't help"

The next morning she can't find Wade. She asks her son, Connor where Wade is, but Connor is vague with his answers. She convinces herself that everything is okay.

And then the doorbell rings...it's the police

Connor Reed tries to convince himself that he didn't lie to his mother. Leaving out stuff isn't the same as lying. Connor thinks about last night. His brother in his room in the middle of the night...

"I can trust you, right Buddy?"

Police officer, Pearl Maze had been working the night shift when a woman burst into the station, crying hysterically.

"There's been an accident"

A local teenager, Liam Miller was rushed to the hospital after being run over by a car that was carjacked by another teenager. The woman who owns the car tells police that Liam helped her and then tried to stop the other person from taking her car. She says Liam is a hero. But who was driving the car that hit him?

Word travels fast in a small town and soon everyone is talking about what happened. Things like this don't happen in Havenkill. Many are positive they know who committed this crime.

But are they right?

Social media explodes with theories and threats. This accident will change the lives of many of the residents of Havenkill.

So many secrets so many lies!

I really enjoyed this interesting and thought-provoking novel. It drew me in from the first page. I thought the characters were well-developed and relatable. I really liked how the author used social media in addition to the multiple viewpoints of the characters. Facebook and Instagram comments and posts added to the story, increasing the tension and suspense.

I thought I had things all figured out. I may have been right about a few things but there were some things I NEVER saw coming. So many great characters...heroes and villains, each with their own interesting story-lines. The last few chapters are emotional and filled with tension until the truth is finally revealed. Although I wish there was a little more detail in regards to a couple of characters, overall I was more than satisfied how everything came together in the end.

“ If I Die Tonight ” was an exciting and well-paced psychological thriller driven by fascinating characters and a fantastic plot. I am really looking forward to reading more from Alison Gaylin.

I'd like to thank William Morrow for giving me the opportunity to read this book in exchange for my honest review.

Brenda - Traveling Sister says

I was lost in the deep slopes of the craggy coulee with two of my Traveling Sisters reading *I Die Tonight* and we settled in amongst the rocky edges with each of our reading pillows that soon had us on our toes guessing and discussing the path of this clever and engaging mystery. *I Die Tonight* is stand-alone by Alison Gaylin and was our first book that we have read by her and won't be our last.

I Die Tonight is a tightly plotted multi-layered character-driven mystery that explores secrets, family ties and the length we go to protect ourselves and the ones we love. The story started off a little slow for us in the beginning as we get to know these well-developed characters and start to piece together the layers of this mystery that had us guessing and discussing right to the end.

Alison Gaylin does a good job creating flawed characters with something to hide or secrets that they want to keep hidden. We grew to love complicated Pearl with her personal demons and secrets she would like to keep buried and protective mother Jackie who fights to protect her son from the gossip around a tragic event that has exploded into small-town gossip and the damage of social media. Jackie's strength and faith in her son is tested and along with her, we started to question her loyalty to her son. Both characters are very strong and different female characters connected to that tragic night and seeking the truth to this layered and well-plotted story.

I found the social media part of the story to be fascinating and really like how Alison Gaylin showed us a realistic look at how quickly gossip can become the truth in a small town that left me feeling chilled and a little unsettled.

I now have What Remains of Me on my radar for a future Sister Read and look forward to more from Alison Gaylin. I highly recommend for readers who like a well-written character driven mystery.

Thank you Edelweiss, William Morrow and Alison Gaylin for a copy of this title to read and review.

All of our Traveling Sisters Review can be found on our sister blog:
<https://twogirlslostinacouleereading....>

Cesar says

4 stars

"By the time you read this, I'll be dead."

When we hear in the news that something bad has happened in a small town where nothing bad happens, people jump to conclusions. They blame the mother. They blame the father. They blame that weird high schooler. They blame anyone who remotely looks guilty. But are they right to blame someone who didn't even have anything to do with said crime?

If I Die Tonight is a small town mystery where Amy, a former singer, was just carjacked and a high schooler, Liam, tried to stop the carjacker only to get runover. Soon, the town is quick to blame Wade, an outcast. Jackie, Wade's mom, is quick to defend her son even though most of the town thinks Wade is guilty. Connor, Wade's brother, is trapped in all the frenzy where he doesn't know what to believe. And there's Pearl, a local cop trying to figure out just what the hell happened.

I've always been a fan of smalltown mysteries and If I Die Tonight only solidified my love for them. Is the perfect small town mystery? No, but it definitely did a good job capturing my attention to the point where I stayed up till 2 in the morning just to finish the first half.

(Also anything Megan Abbott blurbs I'll read because I love her books.)

What I liked and what frustrated me the most would have to be the rumors and backtalk in the small town of Havenkill. As mentioned earlier, this is something that happens with every crime. We don't know the real answer to what happened in a murder and we are easy to choose who is guilty and who isn't. And when there is an answer, a lot will try to pretend they aren't wrong while others will feel like crap for believing something that isn't true. Gaylin implemented this so well that I got mad at some of the people in the book who are so quick to judge.

Along with that, we have Pearl, who is a complicated character. Since she's a cop, she has to figure out what caused the carjacking and her background, it makes her all the more interesting. With her no-nonsense attitude, she just wants to get the job done and is a character I rooted for.

My one complaint would have to be Wade's role in the story. Since the story does revolve around him, I'd figured he would get some pages dedicated to him, but there wasn't. That's what I don't like about most mysteries where they leave out the accused and not give them enough of a role in the story. I wanted to know

more about Wade other than just word-of-mouth.

Verdict

Alison Gaylin wrote a good story while portraying a great small town mystery and the mayhem behind them. If I Die Tonight had surprises waiting around the corner and its characters made the experience all the more fun.

Thanks for reading my review!

-Cesar

Amy says

THIS WAS ONE OF THOSE BOOKS THAT PULLS YOU IN RIGHT FROM THE START, IT HAS A POWERFUL PROLOGUE AND THEN FLIPS BACK IN TIME FIVE DAYS EARLIER. IT'S TOLD FROM A HANDFUL OF PERSPECTIVES BUT I ENJOYED HEARING FROM JACKIE, MOM TO TWO TEENAGED BOYS AND PEARL, A POLICE OFFICER THE MOST. JACKIE WAS RELATABLE TO ME AND I COULD FEEL HER ANXIETY AND FEAR FOR HER SONS, IT BROKE MY HEART TO PIECES AND THE AUTHOR DID A FANTASTIC JOB AT SHOWING A MOTHER'S WORST FEARS. YOU GET A SPRINKLING OF POLICE PROCEDURAL AS WELL WITH PEARL'S POV AND SHE WAS EXACTLY THE KIND OF COP I LIKE READING ABOUT, FLAWED AND DAMAGED WITH AN INTERESTING BACKSTORY BUT STILL HAS A HEART OF GOLD.

This book scared me and I don't mean that in the traditional sense of the word, it scared me in a realistic way as I can easily see this sort of thing happening in real life. Wade is an outcast at his high school, he's a social pariah and really has no friends. When's he's the main suspect after his super popular classmate is hit by a car, what little dignity and solitude he had is shattered. Social media played a huge role in this book, much as it plays a huge part in all of our lives daily and showcased the dark side of it and how powerful it really can be. The gossip, speculation and rumors after the small town of Havenkill are rocked by the accident is unreal, the author likens it to a virus, a disease and that's such a great comparison as these vicious rumors infect the whole town and impact so many people's lives.

This was my first book by Gaylin and I'm really impressed, she weaves a compelling story and one that kept my attention the whole way through. This would be a great book club read as it tackles many relevant and current issues such as peer pressure, mental health issues and the negative effects of social media. Recommended for fans of authors like David Bell and Harlan Coben.

If I Die Tonight in three words: Timely, Compelling and Tense.

Liz Barnsley says

Having loved What Remains of Me I was really looking forward to this and it was one of those books I devoured - although it has a mystery at the heart of it and it'll get tagged as a psychological thriller, this was much more family drama with a small town vibe, digging deep into themes of parental responsibility, sibling relationships, school and community hierarchy and the dark depths of humanity.

A boy dies - run over during a carjacking, a town mourns and focuses in on Wade - a loner of sorts, who is struggling with things he can't describe. His mother no longer knows who he is, his brother doubts him and the beauty of this one came in the depth of the characters, the layered relationships and the obfuscated and twisted motivations of a community seeking answers and closure.

My heart ached for them all in a way - A L Gaylin brings a strong emotive edge to her descriptive tone and dialogue - shining a spotlight on those we meet, peeling away their realities in a tense and atmospheric read that promises no salvation but might give you some anyway.

The ultimate resolution when it comes is beautifully embedded into the previous narrative, it is both heart wrenching, traumatic and in some ways unexpected - there are scenes throughout that will have you gritting your teeth and others that will make you catch your breath.

Really beautifully done. In all the white noise of this genre at the moment, its a true thing to say that clever, talented and beautiful writing tells - If I Die Tonight has all three, making you feel every moment and live it right along with this fractured town.

Definitely recommended.

Gare Billings says

Let's be honest - I LOVE thrillers, mysteries and suspense. Within those genres, there is a sub-genre that I feel does not get enough love and that is domestic suspense. Domestic suspense thrillers are hard to come by and some really fall flat for me even though I do love them. This is not one of those cases. IF I DIE TONIGHT by Alison Gaylin is not only an intense binge-worthy read, but it's plot is taut, morose, and engaging.

What I especially loved about this story (okay, I loved basically all of it), is not only is this well constructed and minutely planned, but the atmosphere within this novel is so gloomy and superb. I swear, even though I live in upstate New York and I know what the fall can be like, this novel just engulfs you. Everyone always talks about the beauty of fall in New York and I personally love it, but like everything else in life it's not always as glamorous as it appears. Gaylin brings forth the dreariness New York can offer in October. As a reader, I could feel the cold dampness in the air that you can never warm up from, the chill in your bones once the sun goes down, and the sharpness in your lungs as you breathe in. I'm a sucker for atmosphere and Gaylin did a spectacular job building the scene. Not only is this a highly immersive read, but the details alone in just the plot are ones that immediately had me hooked. We have a domestic suspense thriller about a family who's son may or may not have killed one of his classmates, but there is so much more. Bring in a tough-as-nails police officer with a dark past and an amazing backstory and a has-been pop star from the 80s and you have yourself one dazzling read. Seriously, this one is a winner.

I loved the balance of this novel jumping back and forth between the domestic suspense and police procedural. The amount of time between the two is meticulously done, foreshadowing darker things to come and having just enough small cliffhangers to keep telling yourself "one more chapter..." I had a lot of "one more chapter..." and basically devoured this read in one day. I could not get enough. These characters that bring this story to life are so honest and poignant that it's heartbreaking to read about them, but you have to because you want what is best for all of these damaged and alluring people. Little by little the truth begins to come to light and Gaylin does a fantastic job of giving you one puzzle piece at a time as you approach the end of this novel into finding out what the big picture is. What I really enjoyed was how complex this novel is, but you don't get a good realization into that until it's too late. As I approached the ending and was

grasping at the tidbits of information I was given, trying to piece everything together, I was shocked at how wrong I was about what really happened that night. The last 75 pages just flew by like I was only reading 75 words and I could not put it down if I wanted to. I absolutely loved how Gaylin wrote the ending to this novel and I was left with no questions, no loose ends, and was shellshocked as I found out the truth. This novel is masterfully done and I can assure you, it's definitely one that should not go unnoticed. Congratulations, Alison Gaylin, you have one unforgettable read on your hands. I cannot wait to see what you do next.

*Special thanks to William Morrow for providing me with this copy in exchange for my honest review.

Liz says

****3.5 Stars**** rounded up. This is my first book by Alison Gaylin. I really enjoyed it! Although it was tagged a psychological thriller...In my opinion it was more a family drama/suspense told in different perspectives. It took me awhile to get drawn in completely (at about page 190 I was finally hooked)...the ending brought some "wow's!" And some.."I saw that coming!" But all in all was a entertaining read! :::Disclaimer::: I bought this book not really knowing anything about it..but a good cover always sucks me in!! This time it was a win!!!

Reading.Between.Wines says

????????? / 5 rounded up.

First of all, many thanks to William Morrow and Company for providing me with an advance review copy of this book via Edelweiss. All opinions are my own.

This book has been on my list for AGES, and I had actually just preordered it from Amazon when I found out that I had been lucky enough to get approved for an ARC on Edelweiss. So glad I was! This book lived up to the hype for me, which I am very thankful for in a time where books don't always do that.

If I Die Tonight by Alison Gaylin is set in a small fictional town named Havenkill in the Hudson Valley, and focuses on what happens after a high school senior is put in the hospital after being run over during a car theft. Or was it a car theft?

The viewpoints hop around a bit, but the majority of the book is told from the perspectives of Pearl a local police officer with a complicated past, and Jackie the mother of 2 boys - Connor and Wade - Wade being a high school senior along with Liam the boy who gets run over and put into intensive care.

If I Die Tonight was a bit of a police procedural at times, but I would say only about 25% of the total novel was like this (if not less, math isn't my strong suit!). The book also played with some different formats, like chapters that are comments and posts taken from Facebook and Instagram. It added something extra to the story and I really enjoyed the deviation from the norm. I've actually been seeing this more in recent books and I love it!

I did think it could be a little slow at times, especially in the beginning - middle, but not to the point where I was ready to abandon it. There is a lot going on in this book and definitely some heavy subject matters. It touches on cyber bullying, bullying in general, and how in a small town where everyone knows everyone

rumors and speculations can have a huge effect on how people treat you. The use of social media is also a very prominent theme in this novel. Luckily, Gaylin added some humor into the book which ended up being a nice respite from some of the heavier parts.

Now the characters; I wouldn't say that I really connected to any of them, but I definitely felt for Connor, Wade and Jackie. And also Pearl as we get to know her story. All of the characters in this book felt very real and human to me.

Final Thought: The ending gave me chills, and I had no idea what was going to happen overall. There were a few revelations that I definitely wasn't expecting, and one thing I kinda saw coming. I cannot BELIEVE this was my first novel by Gaylin, and now I want to read her backlog ASAP to see what else I have been missing. She definitely has an instant fan in me!

If I Die Tonight in 3 words: Engrossing, Touching, and Surprising

This title is expected to be published on 06 Mar 2018

DJ Sakata says

Favorite Quotes:

Nobody's perfect... What gets us in trouble is when we try and pretend we are.

I dated a guy once who wanted to know how far drive it was from Miami to Florida... He also thought Rosetta Stone was a civil rights leader. Thank God he was cute.

Mason Marx was short and squat, with mean little pig eyes and the personality of bad cheese.

... Jackie could not stand that mustache. Her eyes were drawn to it whenever Wacksman spoke, so thick and luxuriant she couldn't help but imagine him grooming it, using a tiny tortoiseshell comb and a rack of imported oils as though it were a pet.

I hope you can find it in your heart to forgive me... Such a strange expression – as though the heart were a messy closet you dug around in, forgiveness stashed in some long forgotten shoe box.

My Review:

If I Die Tonight initially appeared to be a slowly developing tale of family drama with a divorced single mother raising two teenage boys, one of which appeared deeply troubled and even more so when a tragic fatality struck the small town and it seemed a foregone conclusion that the troubled youth was involved. The characters were not immediately likable or admirable so it wasn't a tale I was instantly sucked into, yet it held my attention and continued to draw me in. Notice I said initially, it wasn't until the plot exploded with a confluence of twist after twist that I appreciated the subtlety and care the author had taken in crafting and planting the various elements of several mysteries that compounded and converged. The buildup was incremental and deftly devised, like a spider weaving a web. It was ingenious. I was so wrong in my hypothesis and would never have suspected the end result, and I was more than thrilled with the satisfying conclusion and reading experience. The stealthy and clever wordsmith Alison Gaylin has a new fangirl.

Kristy says

Havenkill is a pretty quiet town--mostly focused on its football team. So when a washed up 80s rockstar named Aimee En stumbles into the police station in the middle of the night, claiming someone carjacked her Jaguar and then ran over a teenage boy who was trying to help, it receives a lot of police and media attention. The young teen's name was Liam--a star on the football team--and he's quickly portrayed as a hero for trying to save Aimee and her vehicle. Suspicion turns fairly soon to another local teen, Wade Reed, a social outcast, who is vilified by his peers and the local media. His younger brother, Connor, struggles as his own friends distance themselves in the wake of Wade's alleged actions. And Pearl Maze, a member of the Havenkill police force, who was there when Aimee arrived, isn't sure how real Aimee's story actually is.

The novel's story is told via short snippets of narrative from a varied cast of characters, including Pearl, Aimee, Connor, and Connor and Wade's mom, Jackie. It's effective--and effectively frustrating, as you find yourself wanting to know more about what happened the night Liam died. *The book sucks you in immediately via this format and its excellent, well-drawn characters.* These characters are complex, as are the relationships between everyone in the novel. Nothing is as it seems, and everyone is hiding more beneath their surface (and the past). *I was shocked at how well-done these interconnected relationships were and how much I wanted to keep reading.* I felt such allegiances to particular characters and such distaste for others. Pearl, Jackie, even Wade and Connor--they were magnificently written and the book was just so well-done. *I was really impressed by this one.*

Pearl, for instance, was such a complicated character, with such a nuanced backstory. She was an excellent cop, and I found myself immediately rooting for her. She was so smart. *Gaylin did a wonderful job of portraying how small towns deal with tragedy and how social media can influence opinion--and how it can affect teens. It was really powerful.* As the novel wears on, you're not exactly sure who to trust--or exactly what happened the night Liam died--and *I couldn't stop myself from obsessively turning the pages, trying to figure out what happened.* Even though the novel is very character-focused, it's suspenseful too and focused on the Liam mystery.

Overall, this was great and such a pleasant surprise. I love requesting an ARC of an author I've never read before and discovering such a great story. *This was a suspenseful read, with an excellent, well-written cast.* I'm looking forward to reading more of Gaylin's work. 4.5 stars.

I received a copy of this novel from the publisher and Edelweiss in return for an unbiased review (thank you!); it is available everywhere as of 03/06/2018.

Blog ~ Twitter ~ Facebook ~ Google+ ~ Instagram

Ellen Gail says

"I can trust you, right, buddy? You won't say anything?"

Do you ever get really excited when you're reading a mystery and you realize it's genuinely good? Like the characters have layers on layers, the plot is twisty but not frustrating, and gosh darn it you're just having a good time reading it?

If I Die Tonight is unpretentiously exciting and Ellen Gail certified good. (the EllenGail certification means absolutely jack, unless you liked this. Then I will take all the credit)

And did I mention the layers!?

So from the blurb: "**Reminiscent of the bestsellers of Laura Lippman and Harlan Coben—with a dose of Big Little Lies or Stranger Things.** I've yet to read anything by Lippman or Coben, but as a fan of Big Little Lies and Stranger Things, the blurb got me on this one. And my two cents? I can kind of see the BLL connection, with the family drama. But *Stranger Things*?

The Stranger Things connection is lost on me. However, I will say that both Joyce Byers (and if you don't know who I'm talking about go watch Stranger Things right now please) and Jackie Reed are *awesome* moms.

If I Die Tonight starts with a suicide note; catastrophe, emotional and physical, pinwheels from there. The plot is smooth and exciting; a carjacking gone wrong, a washed up 80s pop star, and a town brewing with suspicion and secrets. I managed to figure out some elements of it, but plenty of surprises were waiting for me.

A big plus is the characters. Especially Jackie Reed, who is my faaaaaave. Like when one of her sons is having a rough time (to put it lightly), she makes him his favorite meal with a note that says "I believe in you." She literally fucking *growls* at reporters when they don't back the hell off. She admits her own flaws and shortsightedness.

I honestly can't say anything bad about Wade and Conner, or Officer Pearl Maze either. (Like I would 100% read a sequel starring Officer Maze and Paul the hunk, solving cases and being sexy.) Even the characters who weren't so likeable still felt like people. These were complex believable people.

This is definitely an above average mystery and one that makes me excited to read more by Alison Gaylin.

I'm ready for another great mystery. Bring it!

Thanks to William Morrow and Edelweiss for the drc!

Quote taken from proof copy

Laura says

Alison Gaylin left an impression on me with *What Remains of Me*, so I was thrilled to get my hands on *If I*

Die Tonight. This one was a bit more of a family drama, which isn't a bad thing. Just different from the type of story I fell in love with in the first novel I read of hers (murder mystery with a Hollywood feel).

Beginning with a Facebook post written by Jackie's son Wade that works as a suicide note, we know things must get pretty tough for Wade immediately wondering why. The story goes back five days earlier where Jackie discusses how hard it is being a modern day parent with the addition of all these screens. It's just a fact of the matter - kids shut you out now more than ever. This feels like a theme throughout, as Jackie can't quite find out the truth surrounding her sons.

One night, there is a hit & run leaving one of Wade's classmates in critical condition. Wade finds himself a suspect. It doesn't help matters that he has a hard time fitting in. He can't say where he was that night. And Jackie doesn't know whether to trust her son or not.

Add in another layer...the POV of Wade's younger brother Connor. Connor cares about Wade, only wanting to protect him. But at what cost? Connor's life and relationships are deeply affected by how other's view Wade. This may have been my favorite aspect of the novel. Gaylin captures the voice of a 13 year old boy and his emotions very well. It was unexpected, but truly excellent.

To allow us into the investigation, we get the perspective of police officer Pearl Maze. And there is also the owner of the car involved in the accident, Aimee En.

Overall, I enjoyed the novel. It is insightful, emotional and well-written.
