



Treacherous Strand

Andrea Carter

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A woman's body washes up on a remote beach on the Inishowen peninsula. Partially-clothed, with a strange tattoo on her thigh, she is identified as Marguerite Etienne, a French woman who has been living in the area.

Solicitor Benedicta 'Ben' O'Keeffe is consumed by guilt; Marguerite was her client, and for the second time in her life Ben has failed someone who needed her, with tragic consequences. So when local Sergeant Tom Molloy dismisses Marguerite's death as the suicide of a disturbed and lonely woman, Ben cannot let it lie.

Ben uncovers Marguerite's strange past as a member of a French doomsday cult, which she escaped twenty years previously but not without leaving her baby daughter behind. Disturbed by what appears to be chilling local indifference to Marguerite's death, Ben pieces together the last few weeks of the French woman's life in Inishowen. What she discovers causes her to question the fragile nature of her own position in the area, and she finds herself crossing boundaries both personal and professional to unearth local secrets long buried.

Treacherous Strand Details

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Author : Andrea Carter

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From Reader Review Treacherous Strand for online ebook

Marina Sofia says

Despite its ominous cover, this book is essentially cosy crime. Nothing wrong with that, obviously, and it's got a good dollop of Irish moodiness and dark atmosphere, so it never becomes cloyingly sweet like some of the US offerings in the genre. I found the ending somewhat rushed, and the description of the sect a bit stereotyped. However, there was a lot of small-town mentality and gossip, a bit of romance, untrustworthy characters galore to make up for it. It was fun to read, although perhaps the solicitor's legal details were a bit too much.

Janet says

Another good one!! :)

Lizzie Hayes says

‘Treacherous Strand’ by Andrea Carter
Published by Constable, 4 April 2017. ISBN: 978-1-4721-1854-7

Treacherous Strand is the second book in the series featuring Solicitor Benedicta ‘Ben’ O’Keeffe. I see that I said in my review of the first book, Death at Whitewater Church. ‘This one of the most intriguing mysteries I have read in a long time.’ And delightfully nothing has altered this author’s ability to weave a fascinating mystery.

The news of the discovery of a woman’s body on a beach in the Inishowen peninsula has Ben in a panic to learn the identity of the victim. When she does she is overcome with remorse. Marguerite Etienne was her client and for the second time in her life Ben has let someone down.

After a brief investigation the local police Sergeant Tom Molloy records Marguerite’s death as a suicide. But Ben cannot let it go at that. Although her initial investigation shows Marguerite to have been a quiet woman with no friends she is determined to find out the truth behind her death.

Spurred on by the casual and indifferent way the people that Ben speak to have reacted to Marguerite’s death Ben digs deeper and discovers that she had been brought up in a French Doomsday cult - The Children of Damascus. The unexpected delivery into Ben’s hands of some overlooked possessions of Marguerite’s discloses that she had escaped the cult some 20 years earlier leaving behind her baby daughter.

Despite discovering many odd coincidences and connections, nothing makes sense, but Ben doggedly continues to question anyone who had contact with Marguerite. This brings her into contact with Simon Howard, the sculptor who lives in the cottage next to Marguerite, and whom she said was a friend. But when Simon begins to pay Ben attention she is not certain that she can trust him. The one person she does trust is Sergeant Tom Molloy, but what had been for several years a good working relationship had changed nine months ago and Ben had no idea why, but was surprised at how much she cared about that.

As Ben continues to investigate Marguerite's life she finds there are people that could have a motive to kill Marguerite to keep their secrets just that – secret, and so the possible suspects mount up.

I loved this clever and ingeniously plotted book, but then I love a good mystery. And this intriguing mystery gripped me from start to finish. Most highly recommended.

Reviewer: Lizzie Sirett

Netti says

Ben(edicta) O'Keeffe ist auch im zweiten Roman zu selbstbezogen und zickig für meinen Geschmack. Es würde vielleicht schon helfen, weniger Rotwein zu trinken, Schätzchen! Dazu ist sie auch noch dämlich. Es nervt, wenn die angeblich intelligenten Ermittler in einem Krimi sich völlig unnötigerweise in völlig offensichtliche Gefahren begeben, aus denen sie dann - natürlich völlig berechenbar - in letzter Sekunde gerettet werden. Findet die Mainstream-Leserschaft es langweilig, wenn der Mörder mit kühlem Verstand und nüchternen Beweisen überführt wird? Das scheint mir doch zu einer Juristin (!) besser zu passen als damsels-in-distress!?! Noch schlimmer sind diese Szenen, in denen ein Mörder das Morden unterbricht, um sein Herz auszuschütten und minutiös all seine Beweggründe zu schildern - was dem rettenden Ritter ermöglicht, rechtzeitig einzu(sch)reiten. Das ist letztlich nur eine andere Version von "I suppose you're all wondering why I've gathered you here..." - und mindestens ebenso unrealistisch. Die Szene hat einzig den Zweck, dem Leser ohne viele Umstände in wenigen Absätzen alle Zusammenhänge zu erklären.

Ok, genug gemeckert! Denn die Handlung ist gut! Scheinbar zusammenhanglose Ereignisse und Fakten verweben sich immer dichter zu kausalen Zusammenhängen - dass ich einige "Puzzlesteinchen" schon früh in Position hatte, beweist, dass nichts an den Haaren herbeigezogen wurde, sondern sorgfältig konstruiert, mit fein positionierten Fährten. Auch Nebenschauplätze und -charaktere werden detailliert ausgearbeitet.

(view spoiler)

Insgesamt ein so erfreuliches Rätselvergnügen, dass ich es mit Bens Zickigkeit aufnehme und den nächsten Band kaufe. Trotz Haushaltssperre für den Rest des Monats?

Sally45 says

The book held my attention long enough to get to the end so that says something. I think I am more in love with the setting than any of the characters. I am getting a bit tired of the heroin, she is a very cold character and her habit of nearly getting herself killed all the time is a bit tiresome. However, the author writes well and the story keeps me guessing which is really what I like in a book of this genre.

Hans says

Again a compelling story. I rather like Ben as the nosy protagonist in a small fictional Irish community on the island of Inishowen.

Joanne says

Treacherous Strand is the second of Andrea Carter's Inishowen mysteries featuring solicitor Benedicta (Ben) O'Keefe. The story begins with an immediately gripping chapter which sees Ben driving at speed along a Donegal coast road to where a body has been found on a beach. The woman is identified as Frenchwoman Marguerite, one of Ben's clients, and Ben feels that she has somehow let her down. The police believe it to be a case of suicide but Ben isn't convinced and begins her own enquiries into what happened.

The front of the book has a quote from The Irish Times saying it's 'a real page turner' and I would have to agree that it really is. I do love a story where it seems everyone is hiding something and there were certainly plenty of secrets in this town. While carrying out her investigations, Ben was of course still working with her clients and although I knew there would be links between them I just couldn't think what they would be. The author, however, drew everything together beautifully as the book raced towards a very dramatic conclusion.

I really enjoyed this book and must mention that I thought the small town setting with the nearby brooding dark cliffs and stormy seas added beautifully to the atmosphere. I'll definitely be looking out for more books featuring Ben as I am keen to know more about this strong character. Andrea Carter has written a terrifically engaging mystery which was well plotted and had me guessing right until the end.

David Kilner says

Plot summary:

Lawyer Benedicta ('Ben') O'Keefe receives a visit from Marguerite Etienne, a French women who lives in the same Irish town, about writing a will. The next day, Marguerite is found drowned. Although the police believe her death was suicide, Ben cannot let go, and mounts her own investigation into what she believes is a murder. She uncovers an extremist religious cult and plenty of extra-marital carrying-ons. Her suspicions fall on the wrong person and she twice winds up in mortal danger before the true culprit is uncovered.

Overall:

I enjoyed this complex novel, although I had to write a name and relationship chart to keep track of it all. Carter packs a lot into a 300 page novel. As is so often the case, the past comes back to bite the present. Carter is good at tracing the complexity of human relationships.

Plotting:

It's well-plotted and many-stranded. I had trouble figuring it all out, due to the complexity. Carter keeps us well-distracted with Ben's own history and relationships as well as the others' going-ons.

Characterisation:

A strong feature of her writing - the characters come through sharply, although some of them stretch

believability.

Dialogue:

Beguilingly but not excessively Irish.

Setting and Description:

Convincing portrayal of the northern edge of the Irish Republic near the border with Ulster.

Readability:

It was an easy read until the last few chapters when the complexity kicks in.

Sub-plots:

Lots of them! Some were relevant to the main plot but the one involving Ben and her troubled past seemed gratuitous to me - adding tension to an already tense plot. This part of Ireland comes across as a hotbed of illicit affairs and people born on the wrong side of the bedsheets. Giving related people different family names added to the confusion.

Read another by same author?

Yes

Rating

8/10

www.davidkilner.com

Petrina says

Loved it! Andrea Carter didn't disappoint again. Looking forward to number three.

Ilonita50 says

I picked up this book out of curiosity as the setting is taking place in County Donegal, Ireland and I have not read anything so far from there. The book I found via library was large print edition. I haven't read the first part of the series yet, but now I am looking forward. The Treacherous Strand has been published on 2017 and I am surprised it has only 21 reviews and 114 ratings on Goodreads! Why people aren't reading this book, haven't picked it? It's an interesting detective and mostly have got 4 starred reviews. The overall read was interesting as it gave small Irish culture descriptions here and there, it is a fast read and I postponed everything else to later that day ^^

Treacherous Strand is about a French woman death at the coast of Inishowen, in North West county of Ireland. In plot the action mostly takes place in even smaller village Malin, and occasionally taking trips to Letterkenny, a regional centre. The main character, Ben, is a local solicitor and French lady was her client, yet to become one from previous night's visit to suddenly halt a will. But as the client was late and it was past the working hours Ben sort of didn't give much effort and postponed it to later... How often have we

had similar situations where we find rushing and not paying attention to something and later finding ourselves a little bit guilty? If you can relate to this, you know why Ben is feeling guilty and unsettled getting to know who's died...and what's more unsettling seems the fact that everyone, including, Garda (police) believes there's nothing more than the suicide. However, Ben feels she wants to know more and is genuinely curious as to what happened and who Marguerite was, what villagers thought of her and did she had any friends... Ben remembers she has once attended a yoga class but that's it, nothing more.

The plot goes into depth of small village life, drawing out "lifestyle" and "who knows whom" setting, creating Marguerite's personality and personal life from fragments and complex the whole picture of her. Her past as being a member of religious cult only stress the mystery and a reader gets to know more about it as well as those who have escaped, often face traumatized experience to life and adapt to change. The finale and finding who did the murder was unexpected, as well as rushed a little bit.

Not only we learn more about the victim and her family, but also about Ben and she has a strong, leading personality who aches to be loved and be into a relationship, so there is a pinch of romance attached to the plot. I am looking forward to read the first and the third book in the series.

Karen wadey says

I enjoyed this book and look forward to reading more. My only criticism is that it was rushed towards the end. It was like a who's related to who and who did what to who all in the last 5 pages. It was a lot to take in and work out why certain people had acted in an unlikely way. But I would read more just for the Irish scenery of Donegal.

Ruth says

A woman's body washes up on a remote beach on the Inishowen peninsula. Partially-clothed, with a strange tattoo on her thigh, she is identified as Marguerite Etienne, a French woman who has been living in the area.

Solicitor Benedicta 'Ben' O'Keeffe is consumed by guilt; Marguerite was her client, and for the second time in her life Ben has failed someone who needed her, with tragic consequences. So when local Sergeant Tom Molloy dismisses Marguerite's death as the suicide of a disturbed and lonely woman, Ben cannot let it lie. Read the first book which I enjoyed and I really enjoyed this too.

The remote setting of the books is really great, and the town and its inhabitants so well drawn . Benedicta (Ben) is a great character as are some of her friends.. She's feisty and smart has a troubled past which can come back to haunt her and a big crush on the local policeman Molloy .

Ben just can't help snooping when she thinks there is a mystery to solve and she gleans much of her information from the inhabitants of Glendara, as they are a close knit community ,with their own history. They like to gossip but also look out for one another.

A really good read and hope there will be more in this series.

Ciaran Monaghan says

I have seen other reviews call this one a 'cosy' mystery and I think that is a pretty good description. I can

easily see this being adapted into a 2-hour Sunday evening ITV crime drama and, for UK readers, I hope that would tell you all you need to know. For non-UK readers, however, this is a murder mystery set in a small town on the west coast of Ireland, where everyone knows everyone and they all have history with one another which means that, as the story unfolds, it seems like anyone could have something to do with the murder. Our detective is a local do-gooding/meddling solicitor, balancing her crime solving with defending drink drivers and attending local charity waxing events. It is nicely paced and structured with new information dripped into the story to keep the interest (Perfect for those ad-breaks, too) and has a couple of moments of jeopardy at the climax to wrap it all up. There's also some romance sprinkled in for good measure if that's your thing. Overall, a bit formulaic but good nonetheless and I can see a lot of people enjoying it.

Rob Kitchin says

The Treacherous Strand is the second book in the Inishowen mysteries series featuring solicitor Benedicta 'Ben' O'Keeffe. This outing sees Ben investigating the suspicious death of one her clients, a troubled French woman, which the police has ruled suicide. Her unconsummated romance with a local policeman is on rocky ground, so she is pursuing the case solo. Inevitably, her nosing about unearths secrets and unsettles the small rural community. The cosy-feel to the story, the close rural village set-up, the colourful community and mix of characters, and a blow-in lead character reminded me of the TV series Ballykissangel given a mystery spin. The result was a certain charm to the storytelling, with a plot that jaunted along. While there was strong telegraphing as to the denouement, there is also a nice twist. My main issue with the tale was the over-use of two plot devices to make everything work: interruptions that led to information not being passed on or the deliberate holding back of things when they should have been shared regardless of any personal romantic strife. There were also a couple of things that made little sense to me. Nonetheless, this is a story carried along by its charm and lead character and was an enjoyable read.

Petra Beck says

I won this book in one of the Goodreads giveaways (many thanks). This is a very decent whodunnit of the old-fashioned kind, by which I mean it doesn't feature blood, gore and serial killers - of which there seems to be quite a lot recently. It still features some genre stereotypes however. For instance, the "investigator" not being an actual detective/police person, and in fact not being taken seriously by the police initially. Also it seems to be a given thing that all protagonists of whodunnits need to have encountered a family tragedy in their past and be racked by guilt and/or lonely and/or drinking too much. Sigh. Apart from these clichés, the story is well written, has some good twists and turns and keeps you guessing, and I enjoyed reading it a lot.
