



## **The Cuckoo**

*Sue Fortin*

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Two sisters. Only one is telling the truth.

When Clare Tennison is reunited with her long lost sister, Alice, not everything is as it seems and soon she's forced to question if blood really is thicker than water...

## The Cuckoo Details

Date : Published January 6th 2017 by HarperImpulse

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Author : Sue Fortin

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

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# From Reader Review The Cuckoo for online ebook

## Bookread2day says

Sister Sister is the best book by Sue Fortin that I have read. I very highly recommend this novel to all crime fans. Two sisters completely different. Alice is beautiful, kind manipulative liar. Claire Tennison a solicitor is intelligent loyal, paranoid, jealous. As a child Alice is taken by her father on holiday to America and both never come home they stay in America. Years later Alice makes contact and returns home to the UK. Claire who is married with two girls lives with her mother. When Alice returns home tensions builds up between Claire and Alice. When Claire tries to tell her family about her suspicions about Alice no one listens. Through out this nail biting crime story there are two sisters, but only one truth.

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## Amy says

All of my reviews can be found on [www.novलगossip.com](http://www.novलगossip.com)

Wow what a ride this book was! It had all the elements necessary to create a top notch psychological thriller; family secrets and betrayals, drama, intrigue, twists and turns galore, and a sense of paranoia throughout leaving you unsure who to trust.

Clare and Alice are sisters who were separated when they were very young. For twenty years, Clare and her mother have tried to find Alice and reunite their family. Their dreams have finally come true and Alice is home at last. But the happy family reunion that Clare has always imagined isn't the reality. Something is off with Alice, Clare can sense it, but no one believes her and labels her as jealous and insecure. Desperate to find out what's really going on with her sister, she begins digging into Alice's life but the consequences of these actions will be earth shattering for her.

Clare narrates the entire story and at first, I really liked her and so wanted her to reconnect with Alice. As things progress Clare becomes paranoid and starts behaving erratically and I had no idea if I could believe what she said or not. Was she a completely unreliable narrator? Or were there parts of her story that were actually true? I love not being able to pinpoint who I can trust in a psychological thriller and I especially love the extra layer of tension and dread this tactic adds.

There was a constant build up of the tension as Clare becomes more irrational the deeper she digs into her sisters past and everything comes to a head in an exciting conclusion that I didn't even come close to guessing. I made several predictions while reading this and I was wrong about every single one. I love being dead wrong and that feeling of shock and awe happened to me more times than I can count here. This was a really strong psychological thriller that's guaranteed to delight fans of the genre.

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## Chloe says

Clare and Alice, two sisters, were separated when they were young. Their dad decided to take Alice with him to America leaving behind Clare with her mom in UK. Years passed by but Clare and her mom never gave

up trying to find Alice going as far as hiring a private investigator for the job. Now Clare is an attorney in a private firm with two more partners and lives with her mom, husband Luke and two daughters. This year though after her dad's death Alice contacts her mom and Clare and wants to meet them. The much-awaited reunion though does not go as planned. Soon Clare starts feeling left out of the close bond Alice starts having with her mom and outings with Luke. Alice starts wearing clothes and her hair like Clare's ,even befriending her friends. Clare when objects ends up sounding paranoid and jealous. Is Clare losing her mind or is there a sinister plan behind Alice seeking her mom and sister out?

This is my first book by Sue Fortin and will definitely not be my last. Even though you could see where the book was heading the reasons behind it kept me turning the pages. It is a fast-paced psychological thriller with lots of twists and turns to keep you guessing

Many thanks to HarperCollins UK, HarperImpulse , HarperImpulse & NetGalley for an ARC of this book in exchange for my honest and fair review.

This and more reviews at <https://chloesbooksblog.wordpress.com/>

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### **sue says**

I have read two other books written by Sue Fortin and thoroughly enjoy her writing style. I love how her mind works as she tackles whatever subject she is writing about, I know I'm in for a good read once I start the first page right until the end.

This has been an anticipated read for me so I'm glad that Harper Collins allowed me to read this via Net Galley.

Two sisters.

But something happened to separate them.

The one left always missed her sister. But now she's married with kids of her own. All living in one big house along with her Mother.

Unexpected events happen.

Although I guessed the twists (yes....Twists...plural) I still wasn't absolutely sure until the end. But that didn't matter because you had to carry on reading to find out the where's and the why for's.

I would purchase this book for anyone who likes a good psychological thriller that's mixed in with family drama.

Loved it.

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### **Rachel Gilbey says**

I'm sitting here gobsmacked at what occurred in Sister Sister. It starts as a rather nice story, about a family who have always been splintered, and developed into a far more sinister storyline, complete with betrayal and secrets.

Claire and Alice had been separated as young children, when their father took Alice on a long holiday to America and never came back, splitting the family. As Claire grew up and became a solicitor she was able to afford to high private detectives, but they never found Alice. Suddenly this year though, Alice makes contact with her mum, and shortly afterwards she is back in the family house, and everyone is making up for lost time trying to reconnect.

However Claire can't really feel much for Alice, and despite being happy her sister is home, also suspects something is fishy, but the way everything is presented, the rest of her family think she is going mad.

The question I had to ask was whether I was reading a story with an unreliable narrator, or was everything that I was seeing true fact, and that Alice was the one making things up. There were points during the story where both of these possibilities seemed equally true, all the while I was gripped by what has occurring and had to keep reading to find out, just how the events in the first chapter really came about.

At points during the book I genuinely did feel that Claire may be on the brink of a breakdown, but at the same time everything she was saying seemed quite believable. Other times, I was curious to know more about the sister that had returned. I also quite liked Claire's husband Luke and his reactions to the circumstance seemed initially logical but then he seemed quite keen to believe his wife was not quite coping, while seemingly getting closer to the other sister.

The whole story developed until it was caught up in a thrilling finale, where I really couldn't have predicted the final outcome. maybe I am just too trusting of facts at face value! There is a lot of action in this book, and I think the story definitely got under my skin a bit. It definitely had me thinking how I would feel if a sister returned after such a long absence.

There are many revelations in the book, and most of them seemed quite unexpected when I first read them, but thinking back afterwards they are the sorts that make a lot of sense, what you think them through, and I was wondering why I hadn't thought like that myself.

Sister Sister, is a another top quality story from Sue Fortin, an author who is becoming reliable for producing books with lots of drama, suspense, relatable to characters and a romantic element to them too.

Thank you so much to Netgalley and Harper Impulse for this copy of the book which I have reviewed honestly and voluntarily.

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### **Sherri Thacker says**

This book grabbed me from page 1 and kept me very interested until the very end. I did figure out parts of the book until the very end and then I saw "WOW. I did not see that coming!" and I would've finished it in 1 day but there's something that got in the way called "SLEEP" and I had to put off the end until this morning. LOL It was a very fast read for me since I could not put it down!

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## Jen says

So much potential, thrown away because the author decided to turn the heroine into a complete moron 70% of the way through the book. Clare is a married solicitor who lives with her husband, two young daughters, and Mom in the home she grew up in. Pretty happy life, except for one thing, when she was little, her Dad took her younger sister Alice away to America for good, against the will of the Mom, and, after years of searching, Clare and her Mom finally hear from Alice, and the family is quickly reunited. But, of course, all is not what it seems.

Here's the thing, the mystery here isn't that hard to figure out, it's actually pretty basic Lifetime movie plot. However, I think the author did a good enough job building the story and characters in a way that made me want to continue reading, to see the story carried out to the end. While not a page-turner, I genuinely was interested to see the plot fully realized, and enjoyed reading it....

Until about 70% of the way in, where Clare turns into an imbecile. I'll get more specific below, but let's just say, Clare is supposed to be a smart lawyer, yet she had multiple opportunities to gather solid proof to prove her case, but instead goes about asking questions, while overlooking the most obvious things. Long analogy here, but it's like in the movies/TV when someone finds out a secret, and in the process of trying to tell that secret to someone else who doesn't want to hear it, they decide, instead of just blurting out what they know like a normal person, to waste time arguing w/the other person that they have something really important to say, and just keep repeating that, pleading to be listened to while the other person refuses to listen, leaving without ever hearing the big news. All the time you, the frustrated viewer, are screaming at the screen, "Just friggin say it!" But of course, they never do, because it's a cheap plot device to drag out the secret and build tension. Those are Clare's actions (or inactions) the last 25% to 30% of this book. A cheap plot device.

Plus, if I'm really honest, she was starting to get on my nerves before then for how she responded to her husband, Mom, friends, boss, and Alice. She behaved like an overly emotional child instead of the rational thinker she should be in her line of business. And why do people in books so easily doubt themselves? Sorry, but pretty sure I'd remember committing a very violent act. You'd have to be pretty insecure to be so easily convinced against yourself, no matter how emotional you are. And don't get me started on her husband. All marriages are based on trust, for him to turn on her so quickly and thoroughly, especially after being skeptical initially...I would have thrown his butt to the curb. Her ready forgiveness, to me, made her look even more dumb. At least make him grovel.

## POSSIBLE SPOILERS

Here are my big gripes with this book:

- again, she lets her family, boss, friends walk all over her. Stand up for yourself. How do you let your husband convince you that you violently attacked a painting, or think you made things up you KNOW you saw? I can be convinced, in my stress, that I forgot to send an email I thought I did, or pick something up from the grocery store I swear I did. But knife a painting???
- she's a lawyer who doesn't know how to build a case or properly collect evidence. She writes down a list of questions, but instead of meticulously gathering proof just yells out random accusations, even though it was so easy to gather obvious evidence. She put herself in a position to let Alice get the better of her. She was too easily manipulated.
- Trip to America: she was already suspicious of the picture due to the clock (and sorry, but dyslexia explained for mixing up an image? Maybe I'm uneducated, but red flag,) yet it never occurs to her to show the picture to the neighbor, waitress, or Roma? She never asks Roma about the dyslexia? She doesn't share

her suspicions with the woman who could be her witness that Alice was not who she said she was? She had three people who KNEW Alice and/or Martha, but doesn't ask them to back her up?

-Luke: so she lost her evidence, but, again, hello, tell them to call Roma or the neighbor. What about the eye color. She could have told Luke, in a rational way, what she learned, but she behaves so irrationally, pleading with him not to leave. Plot device.

-Tom: seriously never occurred to her she was drugged in college? 3-day "hangover?"

-The cliché plot device where the main character decides to confront the bad guy at a time/place that leaves them completely vulnerable. Why, when he went to get the wine, and she heard the first 30 seconds on the call, did she not just grab it & run, before he got back?

-the nudes pics: what was the point of those? And her 1st thought when she sees Leonard is to worry about him seeing the pics? Huh? How about being rescued???

-There's more, but you get the point. If Clare had been written better, this could have been 4 stars...

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## **Heena Rathore P. says**

*"Sometimes the coldest places are not in the midst of winter, when your breath puffs white, your feet are numb from the cold and your fingers are stiff and frozen. Sometimes the coldest places are in the warmth of your own home, surrounded by your family."*

*Sister Sister* by Sue Fortin is a gripping page-turner of a novel that'll leave you craving for more.

I picked up this book impulsively and having nothing better to read in the first week of the year, I decided to go for it. I was hoping to fill up my entire lazy week with this book as I was on a vacation on a beautiful hill-station, but when I started reading this book, all hell broke loose and I was up in the night at 4 o'clock trying to read the book and finish it as soon as I could.

The best part about this book is the pacing. The book was proceeding with a blinding speed and I started to feel really anxious whenever the lead character was faced with a dicey situation.

The characterization is beautifully real. I could totally relate to the main character, though at some places she behaved rash considering that she was a lawyer by profession, but I still understood as behaving with a calm mind in every situation is almost always next to impossible for impatient people. I loved how beautifully the relationship between the lead couple was shown and how over the period of time it was shown getting weak by the chapter due to the situations and "incidents."

*"Sometimes the darkest places are not in the pitch black of the night, when the moon is clouded over. Or when you close your eyes and track the sparks of colour dancing behind your eyelids. Sometimes the darkest places are when your eyes are wide open. When the sun shines brightly and the dust motes float into the beams of light"*

The beginning was good and I was pulled into the story from the starting page itself. The ending was perfect and even though it was predictable, the pacing and the tension buildup totally made up for it.

The writing style of the author is brilliant and it made this fun a really memorable experience. I still can't get the story out of my mind. This was my first book by author Sue Fortin, but I'm sure I'll be buying her other books soon as I absolutely loved her writing style.

I'd recommend this book not only to all the mystery and thriller lovers but also to anyone who wants to read a nice book with strong characters and a powerful story.

You can also read this review at [The Reading Bud](#).

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### **Maxine (Booklover Catlady) says**

**This is a really great twisty psychological thriller. The twists kept coming right to the last page. Loved that. This is an easy to love book.**

The plot in this is fabulous, it's gripping and you will be well fooled by much of it. Expect the unexpected! Characters that really pop and have depth (hooray). Some you will love, some you will hate and I'd like me, you might fluctuate on that more than once.

If you want a book that's going to keep you intrigued, entertained and then suitably satisfied with great reveals then don't go past this brilliant book. You really can't beat a good psychological thriller. This is just that.

**5 stars! Remember, just when you think you've got this one all worked out...well...**

*An ARC copy was received from the publisher. All review opinions are my own, honest and totally unbiased.*

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### **Laura says**

An enjoyable, page turning psychological thriller of the domestic variety. When Clare's long lost sister Alice suddenly appears back to within the family fold, initially all seems well as Clare and her husband Luke her mother and her two young daughters delight in her return. But when Alice begins acting odd, Clare begins to suspect that she isn't all she seems.

I found the authors writing to be easy on the mind yet it kept me intrigued from start to finish. There were some clever twists and although I found some parts a little predictable, overall I did enjoy the book. I will continue to read this author and recommend it to friends who are fans of decent thrillers.

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### **Mandy White says**

not at all what i expected.... but in a good way! great book

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### **Kim says**

I can already tell this is going to be a strong contender for my book of the year. The opening scene sets the scene - with the main narrator in hospital for an unknown reason, sending out little hints that all may not be what it seems.



The blurb suggests that 2 sisters who are reunited after over 20 years apart have many issues to deal with. Who is paranoid and who is hiding something? Just what lengths will they go to to protect themselves and what are we about to discover?

With Claire starting the book in hospital we begin to wonder whether her paranoia has tipped her over the edge. But is Alice all she seems? Is Alice trying to destroy Claire's family and take her place?

I was trying to second guess the story all the way through and it had me gripped throughout. It must be awful to be separated from a family member in childhood and this book shows how it can affect everyone involved. The Mum in the book has never got over the pain- and the reunion has put the sparkle back into her eyes.

I really would highly recommend this book and would like to thank Net Galley for the opportunity to discover Sue's books. I just know she's going to join my list of favourite authors and already had a couple more books lined up to read.

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### **Liz Barnsley says**

I enjoyed this psychological thriller thoroughly and read it fast, it has an addictive pace and an interesting theme - long lost sister returns home and ends up completely mucking up the family dynamic. Are there more nefarious plans afoot? Finding out makes for a fun read.

I did have a few bugbears - first Clare, in my opinion, over reacted to small things way too early, it was almost LOOK LOOK SOMETHING IS GOING ON before anything really WAS going on. It felt a little unlikely especially given how her character is set up - a bit of a plot device maybe to ensure nobody listened to her later? Also I did find it very predictable in its twists, there were no surprises at all I had it pegged from very early.

But you know, those things are things that come when you read widely in one genre and Sue Fortin has a lovely touch to her writing that keeps the story addictive anyway - of course there was always the possibility that I was wrong you never know with these sneaky author types so on I went, it was still compelling and intriguing and the resolution was solid.

Overall a good example of its kind. Readers who love these twisty tales with unreliable narrators and sudden what the heck moments will love this. The Sisters have it this year it seems.

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### **Yellagirlgc says**

I've read too many similar books and even seen a movie or two with the same plot. Claire acted brainless and I wouldn't have had her pegged as a solicitor if I didn't read that she was. Most of the book was slightly unbelievable. Claire's actions, the families disbelief and many other things. I knew what was going to happen within the first 5 chapters or so. The pace was decent until the middle where I was bored for a few chapters

before improving. It ended up being an okay read.

I received a copy from Edelweiss and the publisher for my honest opinion.

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### **Lynn Mccarthy says**

I really Liked the writing style of this author.

An easy read with enough drama to keep you reading and guessing.

A husband leaves his wife and takes one of his daughters with him to America to start a new life.

Twenty years later the sister returns(Alice), the other sister Clair doesn't have a good feeling about her from the start alic makes clair look bad all the time is Alice trying to alienate Clair from her family?

A good twist at the end.

Thank you netgalley the Author and Publisher for a free copy to review.

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