



All She Ever Wanted

Rosalind Noonan

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Chelsea Maynard has spent her lifetime planning for the much awaited start of her family, the joy of caring for a new life in the world, the intimacy of bonding with a child. But after a difficult birth, her careful planning is shattered by exhaustion. Numbness replaces her connection to the people around her and the baby daughter who needs her. Her husband Leo Green, her sister Emma and friends keep telling her she's not herself, but no one can seem to help her find her way back to the happiness that had warmed her life before little Annabelle came along.

When Leo heads off for a business trip, Chelsea is overwhelmed by the endless duties of caring for a crying baby and the dark mood that pulls her down, immobilizing her. Her sister says it's postpartum depression, but the doctor passes it off as the baby blues and encourages her to get exercise and eat right. Easy for him to say. He doesn't have a soft, pink baby shrieking at the top of her lungs, eliciting looks of annoyance and horror at the park and the grocery store. Chelsea's collapse is inevitable, but what's the harm in letting a baby cry it out? She collapses in bed. Restored by sleep, Chelsea goes to the crib in the morning but finds it empty.

Her baby is gone?

Maybe she left her in the stroller...or the swing...or the bouncy chair? But her panicked search turns up no sign of Annabelle.

Her baby is gone...

And Chelsea doesn't have a clue as to who would have taken her away.

When the police respond with a thorough search and endless questions, Chelsea realizes she can't clearly recall the details of that night. Why can't she remember? Has she blocked it out? Could she have done something to make her own baby stop crying? Did she act on the dark visions that have paraded through her fractured mind?

The race is on to find baby Annabelle. Time is of the essence in a case like this. Her baby is out there...somewhere...and Chelsea is determined to cooperate with the police, even if the evidence points right back to her.

All She Ever Wanted Details

Date : Published December 24th 2012 by Kensington (first published January 1st 2012)

ISBN : 9780758274984

Author : Rosalind Noonan

Format : Paperback 352 pages

Genre : Fiction, Mystery, Womens Fiction, Chick Lit, Drama

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From Reader Review All She Ever Wanted for online ebook

Shyla says

All she Ever Wanted was a good read. The main character Chelsea is suffering from post-partum depression after giving birth to the baby she has wanted her whole life. The way the author wrote about Chelsea's experience seemed very realistic and also respectful of real women who suffer from this. It was quite eye opening.

When baby Annabelle is 3 months old and Chelsea is suffering immensely and can't seem to get any help, from her doctor or her insurance company she wakes one morning to find her baby gone. Has she harmed her baby and blocked the memories or has someone abducted the infant?

Once the police are called and arrive we get to watch as Grace, the detective methodically makes her way through a slew of potential suspects, some obvious and others a complete surprise.

I enjoyed the characters a lot, especially Grace who was my favorite. I also really liked Emma, Chelsea's sister who even in the midst of her own crisis is 100% supportive and non-judgemental of Chelsea, even when she can't remember what happened the night Annabelle disappeared.

The conclusion was fulfilling and well done.

Natashia Paiva says

I couldn't put this book down. Very interesting great plot. Well written. Can't wait to read another of Rosalind Noonan's novels!

Diane S ? says

I gave this 4 stars because it dealt with two important issues: postpartum depression and child abduction. I was so very fortunate that I gave birth to 8 children and never even suffered from the baby blues. I do know someone who did have postpartum depression and her newborn was also colicky which made it all the harder. I love the way this author wrote so sympathetically about what the mother, Chelsea was dealing with and also her willingness to get all the help she could. This book also flowed exceedingly well, there was not a time when I thought it needed to move along quicker. So many times moms are censored in our society for not being or acting like people feel they should, as if having depression is their fault somehow. Books like this make one aware of the fact that we are all different and do not all react the same but that all feelings should be valued and that help should be available.

Selena says

This book was beyond stupid. There was not a single likable character except maybe Emma. There was so

much going on in this book, but at the same time I found it boring and repetitive.

We have our main character, Chelsea, who is suffering from postpartum depression. Okay. She goes on and on about how she doesn't want her baby. She's really in a bad way, and when she tries to get help from her doctor, he is an ass and blows her off saying it's baby blues. I found that very unrealistic because what she describes to him is clearly more than baby blues. She does several things, like leaving her baby in a stroller outside when it was cold (and a neighbor called the police, which for some reason the husband and Emma get upset about? What? A baby is left crying outside in 30 degree weather and they feel it's unreasonable to call the police???)

Then little baby Annabelle disappears one day after Chelsea has a groggy sleep. The last thing she remembers is telling her sister Emma to take her baby away. I'd already been annoyed about the repetition in the first few chapters. We get that Chelsea has PPD, we don't have to hear about it over and over and over again.

SPOILERS FROM HERE ON OUT

Annabelle disappears. The husband, Leo is on a business trip across the country. The police are called and we meet Det. Grace Santos who will be investigating. From the get go, Chelsea comes off as out of it, not remembering the events of the previous evening or how Annabelle disappeared. What bothered me is that at no point was any scrutiny put on Chelsea. Yes, she has PPD, but sometimes women who suffer from that actually do hurt their babies. It was not even a possibility for Grace, who also happened to have suffered from PPD 12 years ago when her son was a baby. Because obviously.

From there the husband comes home. He also has been bothered by his ex-wife, Jennifer, who has been stalking him and is a little nuts. He calls her because she had left repeated messages for him and he hears a baby crying and immediately suspects her. Jennifer is mentioned a lot in the first 1/3 of the book. Does he call the police and tell them to check her place right away? No! Because "he doesn't have time for that" **EVEN THOUGH HE IS ACROSS THE COUNTRY AND WON'T BE HOME FOR HOURS.** Come on! Turns out it wasn't Jennifer, whose sister just had a baby (the crying). After Jennifer is ruled out as a suspect, she is no longer mentioned. There are so many suspects: the crazy next door neighbor, the babysitter, the baby sitter's boyfriend. Then we head into crazy town and have everyone and their brother come over to the Green household for no reason, during which time the pumped breast milk from the fridge is stolen, so we get even more suspects: the Brazilian neighbor who happened to have taken her children illegally out of Brazil (???), the nanny who had cared for Annabelle several times, both of Chelsea's sisters, one of Chelsea's coworkers and another neighbor. So it could be any of them! Because they all randomly came over for some reason!

There is a lot of repetition from everyone. Chelsea and Leo: we miss Annabelle, blah blah. Grace and police people I can't remember: where could she be? Suspects are ruled out one by one. Oh and for some reason, a fling is hinted at between Grace and an FBI agent who is helping, which goes nowhere.

Throughout the book, Chelsea had been dealing with her insurance company which had been denying claims. WELL, the lady Janet, who had been helping her out gets really snarky saying the baby is better off because Chelsea had PPD. Very inappropriate. Then the lady mentions something that wasn't released to the press. Bingo!

It turns out the lady from the insurance company was the same person who was working as a nanny, using a stolen identity. What? Apparently the thorough background checks the agency did were not at all thorough.

She'd been using the identity of a nurse who had died six months ago.

The whole novel was awful. There were so many random things going on. Both sisters are suspected at some point. I managed to get through it only because I wanted to see who took Annabelle. I don't think I'll be reading more by this author. The book was very poorly plotted and the characters drove me nuts.

Libby says

Very good read, especially about problems associated with postpartum depression. I enjoyed the book because of the very needed conversations it can spark about this topic. Noonan's main characters were just a wee bit shallow, lacking some refinement and believability. Leo never seems to get angry at Chelsea. He's always understanding even when their daughter is kidnapped away from their home while Chelsea is sleeping. This too, even before he learns that Chelsea was sedated by something someone put in the muffins she ate. Leo's ability to be patient, kind, and understanding against all odds does not pass the believability test. Most of the scenarios that are set up for possible suspects for the kidnapping are derived straight from the typical abductor description. They would have been more believable if they'd been shaken up a bit, and not straight from the playbook. Chelsea's symptoms of PPD seem pretty valid and Noonan did a good job of portraying her depression. I hope there are not many doctors around today who would poo poo a woman's description of her very real symptoms of depression as the doctor in this book did, however Noonan portrayed a valid picture of how a physician might do just such a thing, and of how a woman would feel once her symptoms were not validated. Noonan brings a lot of valuable ideas to the table on postpartum depression and it's obvious she's done her homework.

Alexis says

This was an interesting read. The writing wasn't my style -- lots of one sentence paragraphs and characterization was a little shallow-- but it was interesting.

I was thrilled Rosalind Noonan took on writing about postpartum depression & anxiety, which is so much more common than people realize-- it's about time someone wrote fiction about it! But then she combined that with stranger abduction of an infant, which is so statistically RARE but already oversensationalized in the media. In the end, it seemed to me a simplistic "you don't know what you got til it's gone" tale paired with an increased dosage of glibly labeled "happy pills" that brought the main character out of her dark place. But still... a page turner.

Erin says

I picked up Rosalind Noonan's All She Ever Wanted on a whim. I wanted to branch out, try something I'd never sampled and a contemporary piece involving a new mother's struggle with postpartum depression certainly fit the bill.

Though I didn't find her particularly appealing, Chelsea Maynard is quite a striking character. Her struggle to handle the day to day tasks of caring for an infant and the intense guilt she suffers over not being able to cope with her emotions makes for some very compelling reading. I think Noonan did a really nice job balancing

her intense emotions against the reader's needs, conveying just enough to make Chelsea's journey real without overwhelming or boring her audience.

While not a poorly constructed story line, I think the mystery surrounding Annabelle's disappearance falls short in comparison to Chelsea's story. I don't mean to sound overly critical, Noonan is the first author to stump me in quite some time, I'm merely observing this secondary plot didn't strike as strong a chord with me as did the first.

All She Ever Wanted certainly doesn't fall into my usual scope of material, but I enjoyed it all same. Definitely something I would recommend to fans of contemporary fiction.

Dianne says

Organized, successful, self-confident and goal-oriented, Chelsea Maynard finally has the baby she has always wanted, able to complete her loving family. She is married to a perfect guy, Leo, who is her best friend and rock, great dad, supportive, able to cook, clean, shop...so life should be perfect, right????

New baby, Annabelle cries constantly, Chelsea, in spite of her family's support and help, is overwhelmed, sleep deprived and struggling with post-partum depression. She feels like a failure going through life like a zombie, detached, not connecting truly with anyone around her. The unthinkable happens and Annabelle goes missing! Chelsea can't remember what happened, everyone, including Chelsea are suspects!

Riveting, intense, emotional, painful, heart-wrenching, vivid, intense. Rosalind Noonan has taken two nightmarish subjects and combined them for an incredible read that puts you in the moment, plays with your heart! This is writing at its best, telling a story that, sadly can all happen in 'real life.' Grab the tissues. 5 Stars

This ARC edition of ALL SHE EVER WANTED was given to me by Netgalley and Kensington Books in exchange for an honest review.

Sandra Valente says

E-Book copy received from Kensington Publishing Corp. via NetGalley

I loved this book, the story, the way the story was told, the characters, the plot - everything about it was just perfect. I've read a lot of Jodi Picoult books and I'd say this author writes along the same lines, although I feel I enjoyed this one a tad bit more. Could be the way it was written, or perhaps it has to do with the fact that PPD hit close to home making it that much more real and understandable where I'm concerned. It didn't affect me personally although I did find myself beyond exhausted for a few weeks after giving birth - but then it's a whole new world with interrupted sleep, constant feeding, trying to keep the house from falling apart, cooking, changing, bathing etc. - the list is endless. I will add that I do believe God took pity on me, and blessed me with the calmest and quietest baby ever! No crying bouts, no colic - nothing - just pure bliss, happy smiles and an even happier baby. I was very lucky; I know this. Had it been me I'm referring to though, I wouldn't have hesitated in adding that to my review. PPD (postpartum depression) is nothing to be ashamed of, or embarrassed about. We all need help with something at some point in our lives. We just need to be able to ask for it. I'll be adding my personal bit at the end of the review.

Chelsea Maynard seems to have it all; a fabulous husband, an awesome job - one she's so good at, a supportive and loving family, a gorgeous little house - always immaculate, and one she takes great pride in fixing up - a hands-on-hammer-glue-it-stick-it-nail-it kind of woman. All that was missing was a baby. A baby they both wanted so much. 'All She Ever Wanted' starts off with the first line recounting Chelsea's younger life and I quote:

"The first time Chelsea Maynard saved a person's life, she was seven years old."

A decade later, it happened again.

We are taken to present time, and on this day Chelsea has decided that she will save for the third time, only this time, she will be saving herself. She's on a downward spiral and she doesn't know why - not really. She knows she's exhausted, she can't wait for sundown, she just wants to curl up and sleep... perhaps to never wake up, she just wants some peace. What she's missing, too, is the much needed help, care and support her wonderful mother would have provided, except that before Annabelle was born, she passed away. Chelsea can't help feeling hurt and angry towards her mother although it's unwarranted. I mean, it's not like she decided she wanted to die - it's simply one of life's journeys. Chelsea feels all alone with a baby she needs to take care of, but just can't. She breastfeeds Annabee (what Leo calls her) and changes her, yet that seems to be the extent of her mothering. She just cannot bring herself to feel anything for her child. Why? She desperately wanted this baby, so why on earth can't she love it as it needs to be loved? Chelsea is overwhelmed by strange visions and nightmares where she constantly thinks she will place the baby in an oven, or drop her down the stairs - any number of horrific scenarios really. She's even asked her sister to take the baby. She packs/hides her kitchen knives away, just in case. At one stage whilst driving home, all she wanted to do was crash against a barrier, could feel herself steer towards it and horrified, called her sister Emma. Ah, Emma. I wish every woman who goes through this debilitating depression had a sister such as Emma. Not only a sister, but a wonderful, understanding and quite amazing husband such as Leo. This man deserved a freaking commendation!! Chelsea makes it home and by the time Emma arrives, she's still in her car and Annie is still in her baby car seat - thank God.

On one occasion, Annie wouldn't stop crying. Chelsea places her in the pram and although cold outside, pushes her up and down the driveway. Something that works and stops the crying/screeching. She then, not thinking clearly, goes inside promptly leaving Annie outside and falls asleep. Her neighbour (cold-hearted cow) - we all have one of these strange characters living in close proximity - reports her to the authorities. She's plain weird and has a shady history, so basically someone who should mind her own business. It was so wrong on Chelsea's part in leaving the baby outside, but it happened. Before the police arrive though, Emma and Jake find Annabelle safe and sound.

Chelsea not only struggles through what her insensitive, and in my opinion, stupid and moronic doctor describes as the 'baby blues', she has to fight with the health insurance to get all the medical bills paid. Here, too, there are problems, but then nothing is ever really simple especially when one is not in the right frame of mind. What else could possibly go wrong in her already upside down life? I'll tell you, but you already know from the blurb. She wakes up to find Annie gone. If she thought her life had been 'bad' before, she was in for a wake up call of note. Although I can't fathom what I would ever do if my child went missing, this is what seemed to pull Chelsea out of the black hole she was in, snapping her back to reality much the same as one would snap their fingers but also, I believe, with the help of a finally working and correctly lodged in the system 'happy pill'.

Will her baby ever be found? Who would do such a thing? I won't say, but I will tell you that throughout the whole book, I changed my mind so many times, I gave up trying and just went with the flow. 'All She Ever

'Wanted' is riveting, sad, heart-wrenching and amazingly described. Chelsea's thoughts and feelings took hold of me and did not let me go until the very last word on the the very last page. I was exhausted, but relieved once I reached the end. This story gave me goosebumps, made me angry, made me gasp but mostly made me nod because I knew exactly what Chelsea was going through. This happens, this is real and this will deeply affect you. One of the best and realistic stories I've read this year.

To get back to what I touched on earlier and this is flat out open honesty, my sister went through a similar situation just not as bad. I've asked her permission to share this, so here goes. I remember (as does she) the night she called me - late - like around midnight late. My son, Ayrton, was just over three-years-old when Sonia had Reece. All seemed fine and a few weeks had passed until the night she felt so overwhelmed, she could take it no more. You see, Reece was a colicky baby. Coupled with said exhaustion, a screaming baby (all hours of the day and night), trying to just breathe felt like an impossible task. I can still hear her words over the phone while she cried, "Sandra, please take my baby, I just don't know what to do anymore - I can't - please take him." My heart broke but only for an instant, because I knew my sister and I knew how much she wanted her baby. She needed to relax, and she desperately needed rest. Just a little bit of help. So, I told Sonia to get her husband to bring her over right then and there. When they arrived, I said, "Right, you are staying, too. I will look after Reece for the rest of the night while you have an uninterrupted night's sleep, and tomorrow we will do it together." She agreed. She was thankful she was able to pass out without any worry, and I do believe this did her a world of good. The colic didn't go away as it normally lasts for three months, but we supported each other, drove from chemist to chemist, found a few remedies and took it one day at a time. As I've mentioned, Sonia wasn't close to anything as bad as Chelsea was although it could very well have gone that way. Thankfully, she didn't go deep down into PPD hell, although when I received that call, it sounded much the same. Sonia was lucky, got over it quickly and stepped into her role of being the mother she wanted to be. In fact, she had a second baby, who by the way also suffered with colic. By the time Aydon was born, she was better able to cope with it, knew what she had to do and is one of the most loving mothers I know (although too lenient as far as I'm concerned, lol). She would and will do anything for her boys. I'm very proud of her, actually. Although I escaped PPD unscathed, a few years ago I suffered from depression, too, hence knowing what it's capable of doing to a person. I'll leave this here.

I highly recommend this book. I highly recommend this author. At the end of the book, there is a Q & A with the author who after her first baby, felt much the same as most new mother's do. Also, the author mentions that although this is a work of fiction, abduction and murders made her more aware of these types of cases reported in the media. She also goes on to mention two high profile celebrities who at one point 'came out' with their stories; Marie Osmond and of course, Brooke Shields. I'm sure, like me, you all read those stories, too.

Without a shadow of a doubt, I know I'll be reading more of Rosalind Noonan's work.

Carrie says

Heart-wrenching tale about a mother, Chelsea, who suffers from Postpartum Depression and her infant daughter Annie that suddenly goes missing. Chelsea not knowing if she is the cause of the disappearance or if there is another suspect. She can't remember anything of that evening. Once I started this book I knew it was going to be roller coaster ride with twists and turns and my emotions all over the place. I never really knew anything about Postpartum Depression or how very dark your thoughts can go. An eye opener for me on that regards. Very Good Book! Highly Recommend!

Pooja Jeevagan says

It was a nice book...with a plot-line different from what I usually read, and I could have easily given it a 4, if only by the end of the novel I didn't feel confused....I wasn't sure if this was supposed to be a book about a women suffering from PPD or this was a mystery novel about the search of a baby...

Although the story went on the line as was mentioned in the blurb, you can't help but feel a little cheated....I would have loved to have this novel delved a little more in PPD or how it was fought rather than it miraculously have been gone in few days...

Page turner it was...for though one sure knew that the mum wouldn't be convicted, but there was a good mystery for a 100 page trying to figure out who the real suspect was....however, it deserves a 3 for it got confused between being a thriller novel or a emotional one...

I ♥ Bookie Nookie (bookienookiereviews.blogspot.com) says

What happens when all you have ever wanted is a baby to make your family complete, then when that little bundle of joy arrives, all you can think about is getting as far away from the baby as you can?

ALL SHE EVER WANTED is a heart-breaking tale of a new mother suffering from postpartum depression. Chelsea Maynard was a firecracker in her former life...her life before motherhood. She had a sense of self-worth before the days of total exhaustion and dread due to being the primary caregiver to a screaming, colicky baby. She had a sense of purpose before the darkness consumed her every waking moment.

Chelsea knows she is not behaving as a normal healthy new mother should behave, but her pleas for help fall on deaf ears. To say that witnessing her despair and downward spiral is gut wrenching is a colossal understatement. Finally, when her worst nightmare as a parent becomes her reality, she begins to doubt her own mental stability and the lines between the dark thoughts in her head and actuality begin to blur and she cannot discern fact from fiction.

ALL SHE EVER WANTED is an unabashed glimpse into the mind of a woman suffering from severe depression following the birth of her child. This story will stay with you long after the final page is read and will leave you guessing until the very end. If you are searching for an emotional read, then look no further, because this is it!

*** Copy provided by the author/publisher for an honest review.*

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Menage Readers

Erotic Enchants

Bookie Nookie's Erotic Lending Group

Grace says

great book. couldn't put it down.

Deanna says

I really enjoyed this book and it has stayed with me long after I finished it last year.

All She Ever Wanted is a heart wrenching and heart warming. New mother Chelsea Maynard who is suffering from postpartum depression. Never before having dealt with depression the new feelings are scary and she

knows she is not behaving as a normal healthy new mother would behave. Overwhelmed and exhausted. Then every parents worse nightmare - Annabelle goes missing. Chelsea cannot remember what happened and is the prime suspect.

A very emotional read.

I highly recommend this book.

Stephanie Tracy says

This novel had an interesting premise, and one that was understandably dark (and definitely not the genre I typically go for). It follows Chelsea Maynard, a new mother who's dreamed of having a little girl for as long as she can remember. She and husband Leo Green have only ever wanted to be parents, but as soon as little Annabelle comes, Chelsea is plunged into a deep dark depression. She knows she has postpartum depression, but her health insurance and doctor won't take her seriously.

Much of the beginning of the novel follows Chelsea as she tries desperately to navigate through the cloud of hopelessness she feels while caring for her new baby. We get dark looks into her mind, and some of the frightening things she thinks about. It's disturbing, to say the least, and having never had children of my own (and obviously never suffering from PPD), it makes the reality of that illness a very scary one.

One day, Chelsea lays down for a nap, and when she wakes up, Annabelle is missing. She knows she's been neglectful before - leaving her baby outside in the stroller because she forgot to bring her inside - but could her carelessness and depression have caused something horrible to happen to her baby? Suddenly, this novel becomes a crime drama, featuring a very interesting cast of characters and suspects: the elderly neighbor who constantly complains about the baby's crying, Chelsea's own sister who yearns for a baby herself, and Leo's jealous ex-wife who's just recently moved back to town (to name just a few).

While this is a captivating plot (and a scary one!), I have to say it felt drawn out during the middle portion. There are a lot of interviews with persons of interest, and a lot of Chelsea and Leo reliving happier times. I will say that the author did a great job with the suspense, because I did not expect the guilty person at all. In

the end, it was a very cleverly-woven story and one that definitely makes you think. I'd imagine if you have a baby of your own while reading this, it'll make you want to hug them a little tighter.

Overall, not my usual genre, but an interesting read. I definitely enjoyed it and would read more by this author. The writing style was very good, and while none of the characters were particularly easy to connect to, they were well fleshed out. I definitely recommend!
