



Caught

Harlan Coben

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17 year-old Haley McWaid is a good girl, the pride of her suburban New Jersey family, captain of the lacrosse team, headed off to college next year with all the hopes and dreams her doting parents can pin on her. Which is why, when her mother wakes one morning to find that Haley never came home the night before, and three months quickly pass without word from the girl, the community assumes the worst.

Wendy Tynes is a reporter on a mission, to identify and bring down sexual predators via elaborate—and nationally televised—sting operations. Working with local police on her news program Caught in the Act, Wendy and her team have publicly shamed dozens of men by the time she encounters her latest target. Dan Mercer is a social worker known as a friend to troubled teens, but his story soon becomes more complicated than Wendy could have imagined.

Caught Details

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Author : Harlan Coben

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From Reader Review Caught for online ebook

Deanna says

I read this book while on holiday last year and really enjoyed it.

Quite a few stories intertwining but focusing primarily on a missing girl and a TV program that carries out live child predator stings. Seemingly normal people hiding some very dark secrets. I have seen a few of the Dateline - To Catch a Predator episodes so I found that story-line quite interesting. There were times I wondered if perhaps the show had read the situation wrong (however unlikely). A person who may in fact be innocent can have their lives irrevocably damaged just by the accusation.

I enjoyed the multiple story-lines and many characters. Full of twists, lies, and shocking revelations. Though not always realistic still entertaining. With all of the different events going on I definitely had to pay close attention but for the most part I could keep up.

"Caught" is very fast paced with interesting story-lines and many dysfunctional yet entertaining characters.

Harlan Coben has a way of pulling you in and not letting go until the last page.

Barbara says

3.5 stars

WARNING: THIS REVIEW MIGHT CONTAIN (WHAT YOU CONSIDER) SPOILERS

Wendy Tynes is a television journalist for the program 'Caught in the Act', a show that lures in and exposes child predators. Dan Mercer, a divorced Princeton graduate who coaches troubled kids, is ensnared by Wendy's machinations and accused of targeting a young girl. However, the evidence is compromised and a judge lets Mercer off.

This infuriates Ed Grayson - whose son was abused - and he shoots and kills Mercer right in front of Wendy. However Grayson is a former U.S. Marshall - and a very clever guy - who gets rid of the body, obfuscates the evidence, and hires top-notch criminal defense attorney Hester Crimstein. Thus, it looks like Grayson can't even be brought to trial. And even if he could be, the jury would more likely congratulate him than convict him.

Meanwhile, a 17-year-old high school girl named Haley McWaid has been missing for three months....and new evidence points to Mercer (now dead) as the possible abductor.

There's a problem though. Wendy's been re-examining the evidence that Mercer was a pedophile and - in retrospect - it looks inconclusive. Hence, Wendy fears she may have 'outed' an innocent man....and

indirectly got him killed. Moreover, Wendy's not positive Mercer was involved in Haley's disappearance either.

Wendy's guilty conscience leads her to delve into Mercer's life, going all the way back to his years at Princeton. And lo and behold, Wendy discovers that something bad happened at the Ivy League University a couple of decades back.....something that might be connected to what's occurring now.

As Wendy's trying to uncover the truth she interviews Mercer's family and friends, some of whom have lost lucrative jobs because of the economy. One of Mercer's unemployed buddies - who's fashioned himself into a rapper called Tenafly - provides some comic relief from the darker parts of the story.

Wendy's investigation, helped by playboy/tycoon Windsor Horne Lockwood III (Win)- eventually leads her to the truth.....which is quite twisty and surprising.

Two themes in the book are revenge and forgiveness. Terrible wrongs have been done to some characters, and the issue of whether to forgive or not arises several times. To me the forgiveness motif didn't meld smoothly into the story and felt awkward.

All in all I liked the book pretty well, and it was fun to see Hester Crimstein and Win - who are recurring characters in Coben's books. I think most mystery fans would enjoy 'Caught' and recommend the book to them.

You can follow my reviews at <http://reviewsbybarbsaffer.blogspot.com/>

Edward Lorn says

I usually cannot stand books with characters who're idiots or plots that rely on those characters being idiots, but this one wasn't so bad. In fact, I had a damn good time. I've met single-cell organisms with more going on upstairs than reporter and all around doofus Wendy, but Harlan Coben made her extremely easy to read about. There's no way she could've put any of the ending together by herself, but the journey was twisty enough that it kept my attention.

Oh, and I know Coben has a long-running series, but it was refreshing to read a thriller that wasn't part of a fucking series.

I made several updates while reading this book. I said I knew who Chynna was. I was wrong. I said I knew everything about Dan Mercer. I was, again, very wrong. In fact, the only thing I was right about what the level of stupidity of the characters. The plot was convoluted, but not in a bad way. I had to suspend my disbelief once or twice (more on that in the Spoiler Discussion), but what story doesn't call for a bit of suspension?

In summation: No reason you won't enjoy reading this one. If nothing else, it's a fine way to blow a dozen hours, that is, if you're slow reader like me. Someone like Shelbs or Kells would likely read this in an hour or so.

Final Judgment: Stupid is as stupid does, but, here, stupid is sure fun to watch.

Spoiler Discussion: Wherein I spoil *Caught*, by Harlan Coben.(view spoiler)

Stacey says

It really does not need to be said that this was an excellent read. One should only look at who the author is and then immediately would know that they are in for a treat.

This book (like all of this author's books) really packs a punch from the first page until, literally, the very last page. As promised, the author delivers another WTF ending that leaves you with adrenaline pumping and dizzy from excitement.

I absolutely LOVED the main character Wendy Tynes, although I admit I was not digging her at the get go. My first impression was that she was another self-centered, career-minded, don't care who I step on as I climb this very wobbly ladder, reporter. My impression changed swiftly as the plot unravels and my goodness does this plot unravel fast!

I highly recommend this book to...well just about anyone. Those who are new to Harlan Coben, life-long fans, and those who are still left standing in the dark wondering where have all the good authors gone. Look no further.

Michelle♥ says

There were two parts to this book. Mind you, I have been anxiously waiting for Coben to come out with a new book. I absolutely love him and think he might be my favorite author of all time.

I always get wrapped up and into the story and literally finish his book within a day or less, and that was the case with this one. Like I said there were two parts to this book.

It kind of threw me because I'm not used to that style of writing from him. There was the dark anticipation and then it spun you for a whirlwind.

I do not want to give away any details from the book, but this was just a little too far-fetched for me. Pedophiles, kidnapping, facebook, one annoying "reporter". I don't know.

The only thing I truly liked about this book was the fact that Win made an appearance. (I have a secret love crush on him. He's from the Myron Bolitar series.)

For me, this book didn't do Coben justice. It was not what I thought it was going to be, then again his twists and turns never are. But this was just TOO far-fetched this time.

One of the best quotes from the book that made me literally laugh out loud and say "so true!" was on page 319:

"I remember one time I heard this English professor asking the class what the world's scariest noise is. Is it a man crying out in pain? A woman's scream of terror? A gunshot? A baby crying? And the professor shakes his head and says, 'No, the scariest noise is, you're all alone in your dark empty house, you KNOW you're all alone, you know that there is NO chance anyone else is home or within MILES - and then, suddenly, from upstairs, you hear the toilet flush.'"

Rona says

Took me a while to get through this, because of various things happening in my life, otherwise I would have read this book a lot quicker.

While the premise was good, the story started becoming pretty unbelievable towards the end, and there were just too many characters and mini plots, obscuring the main story. It was OK, nothing special.

Ellen Keim says

Not one of Coben's best. For one thing, a character who speaks in the first person in the prologue immediately fades into the background after I had become intrigued by his story. I think it would have been stronger if he had been the protagonist, a man trying to get out of his own predicament. Instead, Coben switches to a new character and I couldn't quite get into her. (For one thing, the book changes from first person to third.) He briefly introduces a character from other books of his, but that's unsatisfying, too, because he's a rather colorful character and here he's only given a bit part. In this book, he served only as an easy way for the main character to get information that she would have had trouble getting otherwise.

That was the main weakness of the book: the mystery (there was actually more than one) was convoluted and the main character solved it/them without the reader being able to see all her thought processes or problem-solving actions. She just suddenly "knows." I don't usually care whether I figure the mystery out on my own, but I like to have more clues along the way.

Not exactly a waste of time (it was a quick read), but I certainly wouldn't recommend it as an introduction to Harlan Coben's work.

Corey says

Wow! I had to take so many notes with this one and by the end I had to go back a bit until I had it figured out. Just when you think it's gonna go in one direction, instead it goes in the exact opposite!

Caught is about Reporter Wendy Tynes, who is making a living by bringing down sexual predators on TV

sting operations. When one who is accused of being a pedophile and is tied to the disappearance of a seventeen-year old girl, Wendy is drawn into a deadly mystery and discovering the choices of right and wrong.

The story also has a good message about forgiveness, to forgive others for their actions and to also forgive yourself.

A great plot, great story, great characters, and most of all, A GREAT WRITER!!

PS, I also forgot to mention that Win (Windsor Horne Lockwood) from the Myron Bolitar series (also by Harlan Coben) makes a cameo appearance in Caught, which I thought was pretty cool!

Daniel Audet says

I finished this book yesterday and as I read the last few lines I couldn't help remarking to myself that this had to be Coben's best one yet. The pacing was break neck, the characters though all different and some as dysfunctional as a human can get - were believable, some even sympathetic, and some NOT, which is as it should be. Our heroine is an investigative news reporter and a single mom who gets embroiled in job related issues (not good ones) and a murder mystery involving a major college, it's alumni, leaders in the community, the feds and local cops, the internet (good social media and techie detail here too), and predators of young girls. As a "plot" this one has it all. Sub-plots to die for, story arcs only a major leaguer like Coben could pull off, just enough narration and description to keep you on the edge of your seat and guessing WHO. I read a lot of mysteries and I gotta' tell ya', Harlan had me wondering until the end. You think you have it figured out and he throws you a 100 mile-an-hour curve ball, bang you're back to zero with no choice but to read on. Only someone with this authors skills could make the suburbs the deepest darkest jungle of the human soul, rip it from the headlines and kick your ass with it. You'll question your own values in areas of your mind, heart and spirit and like the characters in this killer thriller you WILL make choices, choices to live by that stay with you like this book will. Whatever genre you like to read or write in, I can't recommend this book enough. At 388 pages it reads as quick as a short story but you'll be glad it's not. Harlan Coben is at the top of his game with this one fiction fans. I very much look forward to his next release. He's on Twitter too: as @HarlanCoben - <http://twitter.com/harlancoben>

I was able to get my hands on Caught by major leaguer Harlan Coben so I'm slotting the reading of it before Kristin Kimball's non-fiction book The Dirty Life. This story, so far, and I'm just a dozen or so pages in, has the pacing and intrigue hints I love about Coben's work. I've read several of his books over the last few years and I'm sure this one will be a great ride. More soon as I dive into this story of a girl who disappears, the reasons WHY and the dirty little secrets revealed in a town, that tell us a bit about ourselves, and some among us, that we may not want to face. But we will.

Jenny Maloney says

The Premise: Reporter Wendy Tynes operates a *Dateline*-esque sting of a probable pedophile named Dan Mercer. He insists he's being set up. When the case against him is thrown out, she questions her conclusions.

When she witnesses Mercer's murder...she's not sure what the hell is going on. Of course, as she digs deeper, the troubles (job loss, death threats, etc.) mount up.

The Big Issue: This is one convoluted story, with subplots within subplots within subplots. While Coben walks a fine line here, I think he *basically* pulls it off. Any of the plots/subplots separately would've made an interesting book - after all, most of them have graced the headlines of national newspapers. And, in my opinion, that's the weakness of the story. I can buy Wall Street traders ripping retirees out of their retirement. I can buy a reporter questioning her headlining pedophile story. I can buy shadowy figures out to seek revenge for any of the following: a child who has been abused, a man falsely accused, or kidnapping a teenager. I can buy a schizophrenic man holding the clues to everything in his broken psyche.

Way harder to buy all of that in one novel. And, oh yes, the above situations are all in there, plus some that I haven't mentioned....But I'm not giving anything away. I'd have to rewrite the book in order for anyone reading here to understand the different levels going on.

In the book's defense, however, the various layers - which make the story rather incoherent when you try to explain it to a stranger - do not let you put the book down. The pages keep turning. I finished this book in a one-page-turn-after-another day. But, if you're anything like me, you'll be left with a little tinge of: Really?

Lesser Issues (a.k.a. My Personal Pet Peeves): The way technology is presented. For example, I don't buy for one *iota* of a second that any reporter - local, national, international, or alien - worth their salt (as main character Wendy is portrayed) does *not* have a Facebook account...or that they would not know, at the very least, how to use the world's largest networking site. And I'll leave it at that.

The Good Stuff: The side characters rocked my world. I loved the "Fathers Club." I'm probably with the vast majority of the music business when I say that I don't think middle-aged white men should be trying to break into the rap sector, but as a reader I appreciated that Ten-a-Fly made the effort. (Yeah, I didn't list it above, but middle-aged-white-man-rapping is in this book too! Huzzah!)

Some of the other reviewers have mentioned Win. Only a few pages, but he's there and he makes an impression.

I adored the cartoony lawyers: Flair Hickory and the Judge Judy-esque Hester Crimstein. (Though I do have an issue with how Crimstein is portrayed as rather 'brilliant'. Mostly she was like a bulldog - any police department would've pushed charges with the evidence stacked against her client...so it struck me as strange that her questionable arguments had the cops in awe.)

Overall: Enjoyed this one. It's a good, quick read with (literally) a million points of interest. Definitely worth your time if you're in the market for an entertaining weekend.

~Jenny
Place for the Stolen
Under Ground Writing Project

Suzanne says

I think if I'd read a paper copy I'd have rated more highly. True to form though, Mr Coben has delivered an

enjoyable romp into quite a windy sojourn of twists, turns and cul-de-sacs.

Ultimately this book was quite satisfying in terms of the ending, but in getting there I felt it was just too slow. In a way, it felt like it kept going and going.. In saying that though, I did like the epilogue, that was satisfaction for me.

Whilst this is not my favourite of this author, I still very much look forward to all the books I've yet to read by one of my top authors, probably the paper version! The voices from female to male were just eeew!

Love Fool says

Harlan Coben is my mystery/thriller writer like Sophie Kinsella and Emily Giffin to my chick lit books. This man keeps getting my attention with his twist and turns. Everyone needs to read his books! Like now!!!! I'm not even going to get into detail about this book because I'm the worse person to explain a mystery without ruining it. Just take my word that you will enjoy it.

Debra says

3.5 stars

Review to follow

Jean says

“I knew opening that red door would destroy my life.” Those are the opening words of Harlan Coben’s Caught. Dan Mercer, a dedicated child social worker, is caught in a TV sting operation by Wendy Tynes, a reporter who has made a career of taping and broadcasting supposed pedophiles caught in the act.

Wendy comes off as pretty stereotypical at first, like a female reporter who has no scruples. As the story progresses, however, she seems to find her conscience. Dan claims that he was set up, and Wendy wonders if perhaps Dan really was innocent. Dan is an enigma. I didn’t know what to make of Dan through most of the book. Before long, things become, much more complicated than just Dan’s pedophilia charge.

As the story progresses, it may very well be the reader who is caught. The plot races from Dan to his ex-wife to a missing high school girl to Dan’s college buddies to, back and forth, all with Wendy in the middle. I found this book to be filled with lies, deceit, and characters I wasn’t quite sure I liked but didn’t exactly hate.

While I’ve read much better books, I enjoyed the story telling, and this book was quite a ride. There are folks in this tale who learn some hard lessons. There is also some stuff that is pretty unrealistic. I did get a few laughs at the sarcasm, but the attitude of the lawyers was over the top. All in all, though, I was happy to be caught up in Coben’s *Caught* for a day.

Mandy says

It was hard not to get "caught" up in this novel (excuse my corny pun). If you haven't read a Coben novel you're missing out. This guy can write books like no one's business. He is to mystery writing as Reba is to country music. Coben is one of the best, if not THE BEST mystery authors out there. My life goal is to read all his books! :) his books are my happy place!

This book was another one of his that had twists and turns and at the very end knocks you back and does a one eighty and I FREAKING LOVE THAT!

In the beginning of this Dan Mercer goes to a house with a red door.... and after he opens it he can't shut it. His life spirals out of control as does everyone else's that is somewhat associated with him. Wendy Tynes, a high-profile reporter is who was behind that door... she has something on Dan but Dan says he's innocent... but is he?

From there, Harlan Coben takes you down a yellow brick road that even Dorothy would be confused on. Everything from scandals to murder, to a missing teenager that seems to have nothing to do with the plot, enters the story and it will keep you on the edge of your seat until the very last page.

Harlan's books make me want to sit down and read them and try as I might I can never figure out his ending, he ALWAYS throws me a curve ball, but that is why I love him!

Highly recommend! I will probably always recommend a Coben! :)

Matthew says

Wow! When you read this one you will need to take notes, create a flow chart, etc. and I bet you still won't see anything coming. Not only did I keep thinking that I had guessed where the story was going, Coben had me convinced I was right and the BAM! nope . . . wrong again! This happened about 10 times. Only 4 stars because it didn't blow me away, but it was very good.

Also, the mid-life crisis men's club was pretty funny. And, bonus appearance by Win from the Bolitar series.

Sherri Thacker says

This took me a long time to read but I really enjoyed it. It kept me guessing till the very end.

Fuad Al Fidah says

Jenny says

This book was well-paced and I loved the character of Wendy. In some places the focus was kind of all over the place (we had narratives from a variety of characters like Hester) but it all fell into place. The ending made sense and there were many twists and turns throughout the story. This is why I love Coben's books!

Linda says

Harlan Coben takes on the issue of vigilantism in this story about a high profile TV reporter, Wendy Tynes, who entraps men suspected of being child molesters. Wendy has been successful with these ploys until she catches one Dan Mercer, who protests his innocence and is acquitted, only to find himself the target of outraged parents. After all, everyone now knows he's a pedophile. Wendy is fired, and devotes herself to further investigation when Dan is murdered. This promises to be an engaging plot, but it becomes so complicated with a conglomeration of ancillary characters that the plot gets lost in the shuffle. Among these are a middle aged white rapper named "Ten-a-fly", a missing teenager, a group of Princeton alums who keep getting involved in scandals, a TV judge, and the woman who killed Wendy's husband in a DWI accident and who wants Wendy's forgiveness. As a result, no one character, not even Wendy, is given much depth, and it's difficult to care about what happens to any of them. The point of all this is that Wendy may indeed be guilty of fingering an innocent man, and she longs for his forgiveness, and she must reconcile her anger at the drunk driver with her guilt over her mistaken judgment. This is an honorable theme, but Coben takes his readers all around Robin Hood's barn to get there.