

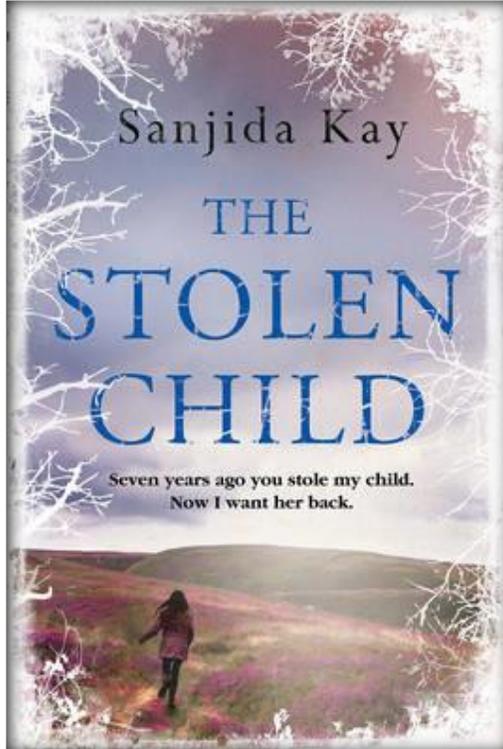


Helping you choose  
your next book



## LoveReading Reader reviews of **The Stolen Child** by Sanjida Kay

**Below are the complete reviews, written by LoveReading members.**



### **Vikki Patis**

*Unable to have children of their own, Zoe and Ollie adopted Evie (love this name!) from birth. They love her as if she was their own, but, a few years later, Zoe becomes pregnant with Ben. It doesn't make a difference to them, but Evie appears to be affected by the presence of her brother. She starts receiving gifts from her Real Daddy, left in places only Evie will find them. And then, Evie goes missing.*

*Who was sending Evie these notes and gifts - is it really her biological father? Do they want to hurt her? Where have they taken her? **Full of twists, 'The Stolen Child' is a thrilling, atmospheric***

**story.**

***Kay drip-feeds information to her readers, keeping them hooked until the very end. Kay is an incredible writer, and I've enjoyed both of her books. I look forward to her next work of fiction.***

<https://dracarya.wordpress.com/2017/03/20/the-stolen-child-by-sanjida-kay>

### **Sarah Harper**

***The tension mounts inexorably towards a truly gripping climax. This is a stunning thriller that grabs you by the scruff of the neck and doesn't let go until the last page.***

*Evie, with her green eyes and elfin features, is one of those otherworldly*

children. Zoe and Ollie adopted her as a newborn and love her dearly but the old scars of her birth mother's drug addiction and abandonment run deep. At 7 years old Evie becomes uncharacteristically distant, difficult to control and jealous of her younger brother Ben. The foundations of her world have been rocked by the re-emergence of her birth father and his insidious insertion into Evie's life re-opens all of the old wounds and leaves her confused and unsettled. Zoe tries to cope but as Ollie becomes more and more distant she turns to the enigmatic Harris for support. A kindred artistic spirit who just 'gets' Zoe, Harris seems to offer her the passion and understanding so missing from her relationship with Ollie but when she angers him he shows his true colours and leaves her questioning what he really wants from her and her family. As Evie's father escalates his campaign to retrieve her, events spiral out of control and Zoe's family is torn apart. Racing against the clock to save her daughter it's not clear who Zoe can trust and time is running out, fast.

*I felt Zoe's panic as if I was living through the events with her, not knowing who to trust or where to turn. The events were paced perfectly, creating a tension which mounted inexorably towards a truly gripping climax. This is a stunning thriller that grabs you by the scruff of the neck and doesn't let go until the last page.*

### **Susan Coleman**

***This is a tense, gripping page turner of a thriller which is almost impossible to put down. A brilliant read!***

*The novel is written in the first person so we feel that the main Character, Zoe, is addressing us directly and she draws us into her World from the outset .We share her joy as she leaves home to collect her adopted Daughter, Evie, from Hospital and later empathise with her as she struggles to combine her work as an Artist with her responsibilities as a Mother and to recognise the cracks in her marriage.*

*As events begin to take a sinister turn Sanjida Kay subtly introduces us to new Characters and we become the Detective in working out who are the 'baddies' and 'goodies' and which clues we should discount as 'red herrings'.The bleakness of the subject matter in Zoe's paintings, the violent descriptions of the countryside and the weather build the tension further. We feel our adrenalin pumping as the story develops and we are compelled to get to the end to have our suspicions confirmed.*

## **Sharon McKinlay**

***Excellent story filled with more twists & turns than a country road!***

*Excellent book!*

*This book had so many twists & turns & so many suspects. I suspected everyone!*

*Little Evie the adopted daughter of Zoe & Ollie Morley starts to receive cards & gifts from 'her real father' & that is when the mystery goes full speed ahead!*

*This is one of those books that you want to read in one go!*

*Thanks to Lovereading for the review copy in exchange for an honest review.*

## **Angela Rhodes**

*Evie had a bad start to life, her mother was addicted to drugs, and only cared where her next fix came from, a bad mother by all accounts unlike Zoe and Ollie Morley, who for years have tried to have a baby, so adopting Evie was all they needed to make their dreams come true. Then Ben comes along, the baby they thought they could never have, now their world is complete...*

*When Zoe is seven, she starts asking questions, questions about her "daddy" the man who is leaving her gifts and cards, the man who says he is her "real daddy, her birth daddy" and now he wants her back/!*

***So begins a tense thriller, set in Yorkshire, with the Moors at the background. This is one book that will have you watching your children closer than you ever did before!***

## **Jayne Burton**

***Really loved this book – read it over one weekend, couldn't put it down. So many twists and turns and red herrings, it kept me wanting more.***

*Loved Zoe and her family, and felt part of it going through her troubles and pain whilst she tried to hold her family together. Not until the last chapter did I have any inclination who did what, why and how – I was enthralled to the end.*

*An amazingly well written thriller, which I think would make a great film. I have already ordered her previous book Bone by Bone with much anticipation.*

## **Rebecca Whymark**

***A great story, excellent plotline with twists and turns all the way.***

*Having never read anything from this author before I was happy to get a chance to try one of her books.*

*'The Stolen Child' was excellent!*

*Zoe and Ollie the parents in the story have this ideal life after adopting baby Evie and being able to conceive to have little Ben.*

*Things start to unravel when Evie starts to get letters and gifts from someone who appears to be her real father.*

*Throughout the story your mind flits all over the place trying to figure out who the father could be, is it someone they know?*

*The twists and turns keeping you guessing right to the end.*

*This is an excellent holiday read with a darker side that keeps you engaged and happy to have spent time reading it.*

*Pick this book up and give it a try, you will not be disappointed.*

You can follow Rebecca on Instragram: @windowstodifferentworlds

## **Sarah Borley**

*A book with mystery that gets you hooked from the start to the finish. Fantastic job Sanjida!! Defiantly recommend this book and would read it again. **This book is so amazing and when I started reading it I knew straight the way I was going to be hooked.** It's based on a family that adopt a little girl and then something happens. I started reading it and was so sure about one of the characters and as you get towards the end it hits you and I was completely wrong about this character but with the author writing it this way it was so good and makes you look at the characters differently. This book is certainly one of my top five and I would recommend to anyone wanting read something with an air of mystery.*

## **Doreen McKeown**

*This is the story of one family's nightmare when their precious daughter is abducted, and the effect it has on the stability of their relationship.*

*When Evie and Ollie's 7-year old adopted daughter goes missing, they*

*immediately suspect her biological father, who has been secretly contacting her, plying her with presents and cards. But there are other possible suspects, and as the story plays out, each one seems more likely. **The tension builds in this fast paced, gripping story, which has a really surprising twist at the end - I found it quite 'unputdownable'.***

### **Sally Doel**

*A very engaging story about a couple who adopted a girl, Evie (now aged 7) and had their own biological child (now aged 2).*

*Zoe is an artist and is married to Ollie and as the story unfolds, you are introduced into all the psychological undercurrents that exist within their relationships. Whilst they know some of the circumstances around Evie's birth, they don't know all the facts and then Evie starts to receive messages and gifts from somebody claiming to be her 'real' father. This throws the family into turmoil and meanwhile, a stressed Zoe is developing a friendship with a fellow (male) artist...*

*Things take a sinister turn eventually and it leads Zoe to question everything and everybody in her life and she must try and figure the puzzles out to save her family.*

***This book is a really good read, full of twists and surprises and keeps you guessing at who is the real villain, until right near the end.***

### **Josie Barton**

***The Stolen Child is a fascinating psychological suspense story which looks at the emotional wreckage of a family torn apart by suspicion and danger.***

*Zoe and Ollie Morley live with their adopted daughter, Evie and small son Ben, in Ilkley, a pretty town set against the backdrop of the Yorkshire moors. Zoe tries to balance the responsibilities of motherhood with her passion for painting and uses the drama of the wild and windswept landscape of the moors as the inspiration for her work. Life should be idyllic for the Morley family; however, there are profound undercurrents of discontent bubbling away beneath the surface. Ollie seems to be working far too many long hours leaving Zoe to cope with the children and her burgeoning artistic career.*

*When Zoe discovers that someone, claiming to be Evie's birth father, is leaving*

*hidden messages for her little girl everything suddenly changes. What then follows is a tight and tense psychological suspense story which, very quickly, gets right into the fragile heart of a family going through a really difficult time. Zoe's fear and uncertainty is beautifully expressed, as is the mercurial nature of seven year old Evie, for whom life is challenging. The convoluted plot holds the imagination really well and there is a palpable feeling of panic and alarm when the true nature of the story starts to be revealed in dramatic detail.*

*This fascinating psychological suspense story kept me guessing right until the end.*

<http://jaffareadstoo.blogspot.co.uk/>

**Karen C**

***A family drama full of suspense and intrigue. With twists and turns throughout, it kept me guessing all the way through.***

*The story starts with parents-to-be Ollie and Zoe rushing to a hospital for the birth of a baby, we then jump to 7 years later and to their son Ben's second birthday party. Zoe is frazzled, having to cope on her own without Ollie's support and Evie, their oldest child is behaving strangely, is she just jealous of Ben getting all the attention or is there another reason for her bad behaviour?*

*'The Stolen Child' is a really enjoyable suspense story that kept me intrigued all the way through. As well as seeing the main drama unfolding, we hear the voice of another person with their own short chapters and I was trying to gather clues from this as to who the voice could belong to. I did feel frustrated with Zoe over some dubious decisions but do have to commend her for following through with her intuition and gut feeling – she could sense some things were wrong even when others, for example the police, thought they knew better.*

*The plot is very cleverly structured with one or two red herrings and maybe just a little bit of misdirection? – or that's the way it seemed to me. I was feeling a bit smug as I thought I had worked out who was responsible however a clever writer always has a trick or two up her sleeve and the twists and turns in this story meant that by the time the big reveal came I had suspected everyone in turn. A recommended read.*

[www.myreadingcorner.co.uk](http://www.myreadingcorner.co.uk)

**Catherine Dugmore**

*Zoe and Ollie Morley could not have a baby, turning to adoption, they adopt a longed for child - their daughter Evie. Life is good, until Evie's natural father wants her back, at any cost.*

***This is the first book I have read by Sanjida Kay, and I thoroughly enjoyed every page, despite the disturbing subject. A parent's worst nightmare. A thriller, that gets you gripped from the first page. You get completely enthralled into The Morley family's life.***

*The Morley family: Ben, Zoe, Evie (adopted daughter) and Ben (surprise biological son) are a happy family unit living in Yorkshire.*

*Seven years on and their lives are turned upside down with events that happen relating to their adopted daughter Evie. Truly superb writing that makes you feel the true pain the family are experiencing. Many 'breathe holding' moments as the story unfolds, so many twists and turns to the final page. You spend a lot of time wondering who you can trust. You are hoping and praying for a happy ending.*

*This is a fast paced, deeply moving, unputdownable book that you simply must read.*

### **Phylippa Smithson**

#### ***Disappointing thriller.***

*Zoe and Ollie adopted 7 year old Evie from birth having not been able to have children of their own. Evie's birth mother was a drug addict and her father was unknown.*

*When Zoe fell pregnant with Ben, it seemed to trigger an inconsistent change in behaviour for Evie – sometimes a loving sister and sometimes somewhat distant and disruptive. When notes and gifts are found that Evie claims are hers it becomes apparent that her birth father has been in touch and as things progress, ultimately wants to take her back.*

*When Evie disappears, there is a frantic search to find her with a number of red herrings steering the reader down different paths as to who is actually the kidnapper.*

***Just felt this could have had a more engaging and convincing plot. Something was missing and I found myself losing interest in what should have been a very emotionally driven story given its focus on a child in trouble.***

## **Trilby Humphryes**

***Fast paced, edge of your seat read that leaves you hanging right to the end. You'll want to grab your children and keep hold of them!***

*'The Stolen Child' by Sanjida Kay is a dark and stormy book, perfect reading for this time of year, which draws you into the wild and rough moors of Ikley.*

*When Zoe & Ollie Morley's daughter goes missing, their lives are turned upside down and their seemingly perfect family life starts unraveling. Everyone is a suspect.*

*It is a fast paced read, full of suspense and tension, which makes you keep turning the page. I loved the two voices which tell the story and could read quickly enough to get to the minor voice!*

## **Vicky-Leigh Sayer**

***A twisty atmospheric literary thriller that will have you gripped and left wanting more. Meet 7 year old Evie Morley. Adopted at birth by besotted parents Zoe and Ollie who had tried for years to have a child of their own. They are obsessed with their perfect little girl, and think that life couldn't get any better. Until little Ben is naturally conceived. A miracle of a Brother and another child to cherish and shower with love and affection. Evie and Ben are equally loved by the Morley's. But not everyone shares this opinion.***

*Evie begins to receive gifts from an unknown person claiming to be her Birth Father. At first Evie hides this from her parents, thinking that they will take the presents away. Slowly Evie's Father begins to poison her mind against her adoptive parents and Evie begins to misbehave, claiming it doesn't matter what she does because they're not her 'real parents' and Ben is not her 'real brother'.*

*When Zoe discovers that Evie has been on the receiving end of some cards and gifts she is relieved, as it offers an explanation for Evie's sudden and dramatic change of behaviour. Sadly Zoe's relief doesn't last for long, as Evie vanishes after school one day, whilst Zoe is at the hospital with Ben.*

*The school are claiming Evie's Father picked her up, but Zoe knows that isn't true because she was with him at Ben's bedside and asked the teacher to keep an eye on her daughter. At first there seems to be one prime suspect - Evie's 'real' Father.*

*But how on earth could he have tracked them down? Is he really Evie's Father?*

*Or is he just someone who likes to prey on young girls?*

*Zoe and her Family, together with the police must find the answers, and fast.*

<http://thewelshlibrarian.blogspot.co.uk>

### **Victoria Goldman**

This is an enjoyable fast-paced psychological thriller, covering some interesting themes. It's well written and cleverly plotted, with lots of red herrings, twists and turns. I couldn't put it down. 'The Stolen Child' is an enjoyable fast-paced psychological thriller. It covers some interesting themes (including adoption, a child's sense of belonging and alcohol foetal syndrome), with a more in-depth feel to it than many other books in this genre.

The book is fast paced, with high suspense, and lots of emotion. It's also beautifully written with atmospheric descriptive narrative and realistic dialogue. I read over three-quarters in one sitting late one evening. I couldn't put the book down, trying to figure it all out. I thought I knew what was going on, but then I wasn't sure, and changed my mind yet again several times by the end.

'The Stolen Child' is cleverly plotted, with red herrings strategically dotted all over, so that everyone becomes a suspect. I didn't particularly like Zoe or Ollie, the main characters, but that didn't spoil my enjoyment at all.

**This is a very twisty tale and was an easy one-sitting read for me. I enjoyed the author's first book too, so I'm interested to see what she writes next.**

<http://off-the-shelfbooks.blogspot.co.uk>