

## Lovereading Reader reviews of The 3<sup>rd</sup> Woman by Jonathan Freedland

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

### Lynda DeFreitas

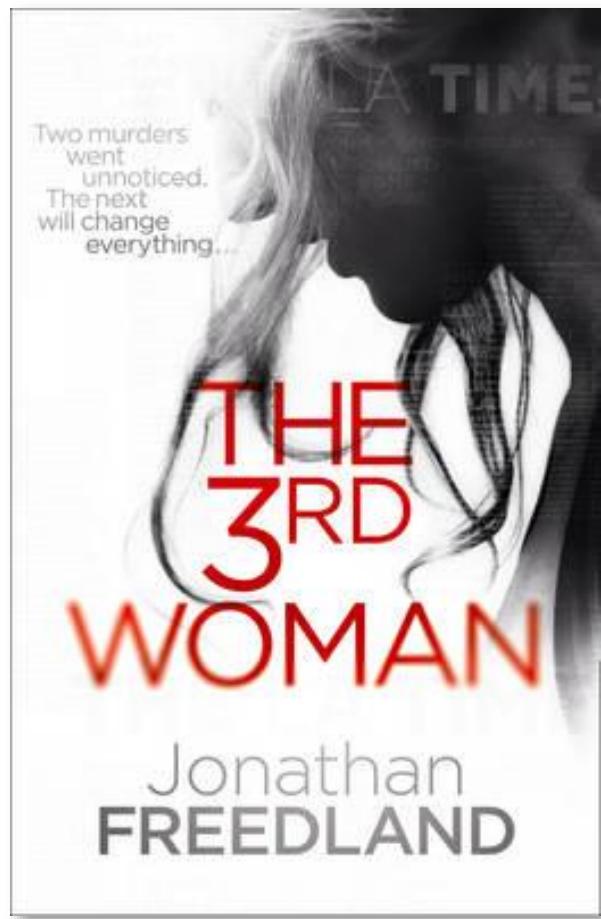
***Great read, pacy thriller that holds your attention.***

*Another author to add to my list of those who know how to write a good, complex crime thriller. The background research to this novel was obviously very thorough and introduces clever thoughtful concepts, particularly the political one.*

*Coming from a political background – although only at a local level, not a national or international one – I recognised the political characters – the candidates, the agents, the activists, the hangers-on and the volunteers. Jonathan Freedland has got them just right.*

*The story moves at a cracking pace and I thoroughly enjoyed reading this book. The twists at the end were great – one was expected but the other came completely out of left field.*

*I recommend this book.*



### Michelle McKernan

***A brilliant, fast-paced book that I struggled to put down. The story is full of intrigue with well-rounded characters. An excellent read.***

*Full of twists and turns which I couldn't predict. I really couldn't put it down once I started and was very pleased how the author brought it all together at*

*the end. I would definitely recommend this book for anyone who likes a good thriller.*

### **Suzanne Marsh**

*Jonathan Freedland is an award-winning journalist, author and broadcaster. He has published five internationally best selling novels under the pseudonym Sam Bourne. Five books later with over 1.5 million copies sold under the name Sam Bourne, Jonathan Freedland is finally putting his name to his new thriller 'The 3rd Woman'. This story is **well written with a clever idea for the plot.***

*The story opens up with Abigail Webb opening her front door when a gloved hand is placed over her mouth. Once Abigail is pushed inside her apartment, masking tape is expertly placed over her mouth and a strip of cloth was placed over her eyes with her wrist encircled by a plastic bracelet. A sharp puncture of a needle plunged into her right arm.*

*Journalist Madison Webb became light-headed as the sad news of her sister Abigail has been found dead with doctor announcing that Abigail died by a massive drug overdose of heroin. Madison refuses to accept that Abigail's death was an isolated crime. She believes that the horror of Abigail's baffling death was no accident. It was murder. Madison uncovers some evidence that suggests that her sister was the third victim in a series of killings that have been hushed up as part of a major conspiracy.*

*A chilling story to think that the crimes have been hushed up.*

[www.ireadnovels.wordpress.com](http://www.ireadnovels.wordpress.com)

### **Phyllipa Smithson**

***Quite simply, this is an addictive read. A traditional crime thriller, that is a right roller coaster of full on story.***

*From the get go the reader is hooked as we meet Maddy Webb as she goes undercover to expose the truth of the clothing 'sweat shops' of America. This reveals her focused, life endangering style as an investigative journalist.*

*And it is this absolute focus that she applies when her beloved younger sister is found dead. Not content with the verdict of the police – a drug overdose – she ruthlessly goes about exposing the truth. And at the same time alienating herself from her elder sister (and conflict already exists as a result of their mile-*

*wide different personalities and sense of what is important in life), her very few friends, the police, her employer. Basically anyone that tries to get in her way, including those who are responsible for the cover up (it's election time in LA and the politics to win votes is a most intriguing complement to Maddy's investigation) and the murder of her sister. She is not going to give way to her bereavement until the truth is exposed and in so doing she identifies her sister is not the only person to be murdered by what she reveals to be a serial killer.*

*Maddy is not someone you want to get on the wrong side, nor is she someone you want on your side if she does not agree with you but boy, she gets results.*

*Not sure I quite got the relevance of the story's underlying theme of America being subservient to China, largely because this was the only futuristic side to the story. However, this did not deflect my enjoyment of 'The 3rd Woman'.*

*This will not win any awards (its open to criticism - Maddy seems to have access to people who can bailer her out in an emergency) but it's a good crime thriller leaving you guessing to the end.*

### **Helen Lowry**

***Murder, lies and corruption confronts journalist Madison Webb when her own sister is murdered and she begins her own investigation.***

*I found this book to be an enjoyable read, murder with a political twist. It was well paced and kept my attention, what's known as a page turner. Madison Webb, a talented newspaper reporter, after being told her sister has died of a heroin overdose, does not believe this at all. Unlike the police, she cannot accept her sister died in such a manner, and using her investigative skills, sets out to prove this.*

*Madison, a likable and credible character, faces cover ups, lies and complete corruption every step of the way, as well as discovering several connected murders. But, despite a beating, torture at the hands of the Chinese and her best friend being attacked, she cannot give up.*

*Her insomnia hides her own family secret, as she discovers a few less than savoury secrets about her murdered sister on her journey to uncovering the truth. By this time the story has come full circle and it wasn't the outcome I expected!*

*There were odd occasions I found it a little heavy going, but overall, the pages kept my interest and I had to keep reading, as I wanted to know what*

*happened.*

### **Pauline Fraisher**

#### ***Excellent book - a real page-turner.***

*I loved this book! It ticked all the boxes for me – a whodunnit with twists and turns in the plot, political intrigue, corruption in high places and believable characters. There are also quite a few red herrings. The story moved at a good pace without getting bogged down in irrelevant details. It's a long story and the reader needs to concentrate, otherwise clues will be missed. I had several very late nights because I was enjoying it so much, I didn't want to put the book down. It was interesting to see which group was cast as “the bad guys”, is this the start of a trend? Based on this book, I would be keen to read more of Mr Freedland's books.*

[www.ilovebooksandcats.wordpress.com](http://www.ilovebooksandcats.wordpress.com)

### **Rachel Bridgeman**

#### ***A brilliantly breathless thriller that you will carry around with you until it is finished!***

*The author, Joanthan Freedland, has worked extensively in journalism which brings a high level of veracity and believability to this thriller set in an America which could very easily exist. An uneasy alliance between America and China based on financial obligation has allowed certain privilege to the Chinese population of a garrison based in Los Angeles. An awkward balance between political correctness and the American way of life is expertly captured simmering under the surface of a political election campaign, coupled with a female protagonist (a journalist, Maddie Webb) and a potential serial killer. You are not sure, as the reader, whether the killer is politically motivated in bringing down the alliance, undermining the election process, or simply just evil. The third woman refers to the concept that a serial killer's pattern is identified after the third killing, therein is exposed his/her patterns of murder. Mr Freedland has captured the pace of a thriller with the whodunnit of a traditional murder mystery, a narrative with a female protagonist (not always an easy task for male writers) with her own slowly revealed back story. The pacing is terrific, I really, really enjoyed 'The 3rd Woman'. Many thanks Lovereading for this recommendation!*

You can follow Rachel on Twitter: @RACHELb75

### **Joan Sidwell**

*Madison Webb's younger sister, Abigail, has been found dead, reportedly from a heroin overdose, but Abigail has never been involved with drugs. Madison, a journalist on the Los Angeles Times, sets out to find out what happened to her sister in the last hours of her life and try to prove that she was murdered. However, this isn't the usual murder mystery, Los Angeles isn't the glamorous city we are familiar with, the city is smog laden and people wear masks to alleviate it. There is a big Chinese military presence as a result of a treaty signed between the USA and China and rules and regulations are in place for the citizens.*

*Madison's investigations lead her into the world of politics, local government, corruption and the military and it soon becomes apparent that she is being followed and hunted, but by whom? Who can she trust? Her privacy and home are invaded and all the time she is trying to come to terms with her sister's death and her own family issues, both past and present.*

***This is a gripping, sinister book, a real page turner with many twists and turns and red herrings,*** leading the reader to believe that the murderer will soon be unveiled, but as another girl is murdered in similar circumstances Madison realises that he will stop at nothing to avoid capture. Using high tech computer systems and with a relentless determination can Madison bring justice for her sister and the other victims?

### **Amy Maggs**

***Set firmly in my favourite genre; I've now got a new fantastic author to keep my eye on. Absolutely gripping stuff - and most importantly to me - nothing that I've seen before!***

*Absolutely could not put this book down once I started it. The interruptions left me longing for more and I found myself addicted to the storyline. You will breathe, live, dream this book until you've completed it. The story unfolds initially as you'd expect, but the curveballs are unexpected and exciting. A fabulous fast-paced thriller for all crime lovers!*

### **Victoria Goldman**

***The 3rd Woman is a brilliant fast-paced intelligent thriller, with***

***short snappy chapters that keep the book moving at a fast pace. I thought that the underlying political background was fascinating.***

*The 3rd Woman is the first novel that Jonathan Freedland has written under his own name - his previous five novels were written under the pseudonym Sam Bourne. I really enjoyed all of the Sam Bourne books, so I wasn't surprised to discover that The 3rd Woman is another brilliant fast-paced intelligent thriller.*

*I was hooked from the prologue, which describes the last few living moments of a young woman in Los Angeles. This woman turns out to be Abigail Webb, the younger sister of journalist Madison 'Maddy' Webb. The police maintain that Abigail died of an accidental heroin dose, but Maddy insists that her sister's death was completely out of character. Her investigations reveal that her sister could be the 3rd victim of a serial killer, as another two women have died in very similar circumstances.*

*The 3rd Woman is filled with suspense and intrigue, with short snappy chapters that keep the book moving at a fast pace. I thought that the underlying political background was fascinating. Imagine that the USA is no longer a top world power, now dependent on Chinese finances; corruption is rife, the Chinese control the ports and smog fills the air.*

*I was intrigued right until the last page. As Maddy continues her investigations, she realises that she is being watched, leading to a deadly cat and mouse game. She is feisty and determined, but her vulnerable side emerges when it becomes clear that those closest to her may be in danger too. As the police struggle to find answers, Maddy wonders whether a major conspiracy could be at work.*

<http://off-the-shelfbooks.blogspot.co.uk/2015/07/the-3rd-woman-by-jonathan-freedland.html>

### **Anne Rhodes**

***This powerful story is set in America – but an America that is working hand in glove with the People's Republic of China.***

*Madison Webb is determined – whatever and whoever might try to stop her – to find the killer of her younger sister Abigail.*

*She is an investigative journalist who has a deservedly good reputation, however, she quickly realises that she is being thwarted at every turn – fighting authority - somebody is determined that she will not succeed. Facts are being hidden, information is being withheld, glossed over or simply ignored. But, Maddy being Maddy, she is even more determined that whoever it is who is*

*blocking her won't win.*

**We follow as Maddy, exhausted both physically and mentally, gradually works out the who, what, and why of the web of secrecy.**

### **Lee Ruddin**

*A political thriller that is set in the near-future and which is written by a BBC broadcaster is a winning formula, arguably a bestseller waiting to happen – or so readers previously thought. The publication of Andrew Marr's Head of State compelled the majority to revise their thinking and regrettably, a year on, only the thoughts of a minority will be revised by Jonathan Freedland's The 3rd Woman. Let me explain why after first outlining the plot.*

*The story opens with the murder of Abigail Webb, the sister of chief protagonist Madison Webb. As an investigative journalist who plies her trade at the LA Times, Madison refuses to accept the official cause of death (drug overdose) and endeavours to dig deep. Being a work-obsessed singleton she quickly uncovers evidence that suggests her sister was the third victim in a spate of killings which appear to have been covered up as part of a conspiracy. The question now is who, if any, the conspirators are?*

*Having a permanent military garrison at the port terminal puts the Chinese military firmly in the frame, which is not unoriginal, and the backdrop of an election campaign for Governor of LA is certainly not unimaginative either. The same cannot be said, alas, for the cast of characters who are neither original nor imaginative as they help or hinder Madison in her quest.*

*While The 3rd Woman does not come second best to Marr's novel, it should not be the first choice for fans of Robert Harris.*

### **Neil Williams**

**A clever 'whodunnit' set in an alternative reality.**

*A great read in which I had to get my head around all of the Chinese references, where I was expecting more Western elements.*

*It is a gripping tale that kept me holed and intrigued as the story unravelled. A tale of an enemy embraced out of necessity and the problems it brings.*