

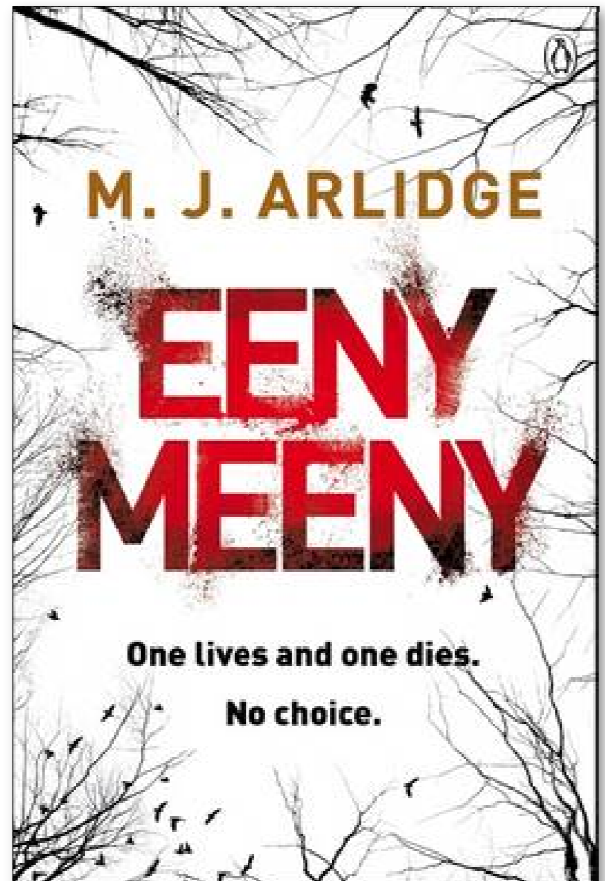
## LoveReading Reader reviews of Eeny Meeny by M.J. Arlidge

Below are the complete reviews, written by LoveReading members.

**Phyllis Avery**

***Fast paced, loads of action and a range of dysfunctional characters - I loved this book! The plot was well thought out and the reader subtly manipulated - what's not to love?***

*Instantly engaging characters intrigued me and although, all of the characters were pretty dysfunctional, they did all possess redeeming features allowing me to feel empathy for them. I willed them to survive this rollercoaster ordeal and come out unscathed – alas this was not to be. However, the fast paced journey they undertook was compelling drawing me back to the novel again and again when I really should have been doing other things. Arlidge builds suspense in masterly fashion and deals with the many twists and turns of the plot manipulating the reader with skill and apparent ease. I loved this book and would love to see more from this author.*



**Gavin Dimmock - [www.the-mustachioed-reader.blogspot.co.uk](http://www.the-mustachioed-reader.blogspot.co.uk)**

***Two victims; one choice. Kill or die.***

***A gripping, thrilling chase to find a devious and deadly serial killer.***

*Victims are being abducted in pairs. Each victim must make a terrible choice; will you kill in order to stay alive? DI Helen Grace and her team must find the links between each pair before a sadistic killer can strike again.*

*This is a terrific read. The plot moves along at a cracking pace and the characters are interesting, well structured and develop as the story unfolds. The crimes are shocking and the anguish that the tortured victims experience helps to build the sense of menace and suspense as the story builds to a gripping climax.*

*DI Grace, is an interesting and likeable lead character who I instantly liked and wanted to learn more about. Likewise, the supporting cast of Mark and Charlie are well defined and are not merely "fillers" as can sometimes be found. As for the killer? A wonderfully complex and grotesque villain!*

*The short, punchy chapters, evidence of the author's background in television drama, help to drive the action along and further crank up the tension of this thrilling read.*

*There was nothing about this story that I disliked; everything worked superbly together to create a thoroughly enjoyable read. I eagerly await further instalments.*

### **Magdalena Vidgen**

*This is a book for all the fans of Jeffery Deaver. **It has a mystery, suspense and... a truly sick serial killer!***

*I wasn't really sure if I wanted to read this book. The blurb promised the content reminding me of the movie "Saw", which I did watch, but with misgivings - this is just not my genre. But I decided to give "Eeny Meeny" a chance. And true enough, at the very beginning we have the abduction of a couple, who are imprisoned and given a horrible choice - to kill or to be killed. Seemed cruel and graphic, but I wanted to find out who was doing that. And when more victims disappear and are faced with the same choice, I was hooked and just wanted to find the killer.*

*Throughout the book we can find small clues to the mysterious identity of our perpetrator. They are cleverly hidden and never given straight out. They are hinted at and suggested, so nothing is easy. I picked up some notions about 3/4 through the book. And only guessed the identity of the killer towards the very end - at least before it was revealed by the author.*

*The book is written well and avoids predictability, which makes it a good story in my opinion.*

## **Ray Orgill**

***A very fast moving serial murder investigation with a most unusual twist.*** *With every murder the mysterious offender drugs and then kidnaps two people, each known to the other, and they are then incarcerated in an impenetrable place where they are presented with an horrendous decision where one must kill the other and will then be allowed to go free or they will both stay where they are until they starve to death.*

*The assigned senior investigator, Detective Inspector Helen Grace, has her own problems and demons to deal with but does set out to solve the mystery even though this can only be resolved through interviews of the recovering survivor.*

## **Suzanne Marsh - [www.ireadnovels.wordpress.com](http://www.ireadnovels.wordpress.com)**

*'Eeny Meeny' is very fast paced, laden with a very tense atmosphere. **'Eeny Meeny' is a heart pulsing cracking crime thriller.** It is horrific that pairs of victims are being abducted, imprisoned then forced to make a terrible choice. DI Helen Grace will not stop at anything she wants the killer hunted down. Sam and Amy hitch a lift back home from a gig in London. They thought their luck was in as a van pulled over. But drastically it appears the next thing Amy knew of her head was pounding hard and all she could see was that she was in a cold dark space, in a disused derelict diving pool. Amy's phone began to bleep as she connected to the call she begs for mercy, but if Amy wants freedom she is told find the gun on the floor with one bullet in. If you want freedom you must kill Sam or herself. For Amy and Sam there seems escape is not an option. I highly recommend readers to read this thriller 'Eeny Meeny'. I hope that many readers will enjoy 'Eeny Meeny' as much as I have.*

## **Barbara Goldie**

***So many twists and turns, just when you thought you knew what was happening....***

*A great read. Two victims each time locked in a game of choice. Either kill the other and survive or die. It is a great story with many twists and turns and just when you thought you knew who had done it, and why, there was another twist leading another way. I enjoyed the storyline although it was very chilling in places. It had very short chapters which twisted and turned and built up the tension. I thought the characters were great, especially the crime team and hope to meet them all again in a new story. A recommended read.*

### **Sue Burton**

*I have just finished reading the above book and can thoroughly recommend this book to other readers. The main character Helen is someone who you want to get to know better and to make things happier for her. **The book is a fast paced and very interesting read with lots of twists and turns along the way.***

### **Susan Wallace**

***An entertaining and at times gripping read. Pairs of people are abducted and given a choice - live by making the other one die.***

*Two people who have been kidnapped awaken to find themselves in a disused diving pool, with only a mobile phone and a gun. There is a message on the phone to the effect that the gun has one bullet and that one of them must kill the other. The survivor will be released. I found this beginning very gripping and was motivated to read more. However, I was irritated by some of the inaccuracies in the account of the kidnapees, for example, after 11 days without food or water their bodies were still, apparently, producing urine and faeces. I find this extremely unlikely. The story continues with the introduction of Helen Grace, the police inspector in charge of the case. A few days later another desperate, starved and terrified survivor is found and it becomes clear that there is a pattern here. Pairs of victims are abducted, imprisoned and then forced to choose to live or die. Eventually, she figures out who the kidnapper is and there is the usual final thrilling confrontation. I wouldn't say this is a great book, but it's OK. It's an easy read, not requiring any effort on the part of the reader. It doesn't contain any great insights and is fairly entertaining.*

### **Phyllippa Smithson**

***Took me a while to warm up to 'Eeny Meeny' and then I could not put it down.** A real win of a book that my being disabled by a bike accident meant I had no guilt in reading it over 2 days.*

*I love mystery books but the downside is that in reading so many, some plots are familiar. Different authors but similar story lines. It is just 'wow' then when you find one that is credible, fast-paced, extremely well written and full of twist and turns.*

*The basic premise is that the murderer actually admits the crime. He or she simply walks in to the police station spontaneously and owns up. There is no investigation needed - arrest for murder and sentence.*

*Except, what the investigation team quickly realise is that whilst they have the killer, the killer has been maliciously put in a situation where it was either kill or be killed. The real investigation is to find, and find quickly, the link between the different killings to identify the serial murderer who, in fact, has not actually pulled the trigger.*

*Helen, the lead investigation officer is selfishly focused and wholly dedicated to her job. However, the barriers she puts up to fiercely protect her privacy are forced down in order to solve the crimes.*

*Where is the link? Is there an informer within her team who is trying to make the job even harder? Why does the reader reach chapters that stand out by being written in italic and describing what on the face of it is totally unrelated to the plot?*

***'Eeny Meeny' is a full on and absorbing book. BRILLIANT.***

### **Emma Barton**

*'Eeny Meeny' is a fast paced crime thriller that follows DI Grace as she tries to discover the identity of a serial killer and eventually finds them closer than she'd like.*

***This is an enthralling book that you will hate putting down until the end.*** *The story moves at a fast pace and follows DI Grace as she tries to discover the identity of a serial killer who abducts two victims at a time before imprisoning them and forcing one to kill the other in order to keep their own life. The narrative spares no details of the horror these captive victims endure before one of them makes the decision to kill the other. DI Grace is in charge of the team who are hunting the serial killer and it is with this character that I feel the book is let down at times. We are given snippets of her horrendous childhood abuse as the book continues, which are included to help us understand what a damaged person she is. I found parts of this thread to be clichéd and wondered if the author was aiming to mop up some of the 50 shades of Grey readers from a few years ago as the DI enjoys some S&M domination in her spare time. When DI Grace is heading to find out the results of an autopsy the line 'she had a date with a corpse' was included which almost made me abandon reading the rest of the story as it sounded so trite. I would recommend the book as an easy*

*read that you will look forward to picking up and will be sure to look out for the follow up 'Pop goes the weasel' in September 2014.*

### **Kerry Bridges - [www.iamalwaysreading.wordpress.com](http://www.iamalwaysreading.wordpress.com)**

*A fast paced introduction to DI Helen Grace - a policeman with a very troubled background. Is her past about to catch up with her?*

*Couples are being abducted and locked up together without access to food or water but with a gun and one bullet. The choice is stark - kill or be killed.*

*'Eeny Meeny' is described as a rocket-paced and electrifying serial-killer debut and it is certainly true that **it rockets along at breakneck speed**, helped I think by the structure of the book which is written in very short, sharp chapters which jump from character points of view at breakneck speed. This meant that I was able to read it quickly **which added to the pace of it I think, and helped with the enjoyment**; it is not an intellectual read but it is an enjoyable one.*

*I did get the sense that this novel is the vehicle for the introduction of DI Helen Grace and apparently there is a sequel published in September which sounds relatively soon for a new author so perhaps they were written together. Because of this, quite a lot of the other characters were apparently expendable in various ways, so I would be interested to see whether the series settles down and develops a bit more, or whether they are all like this. I did find this one an enjoyable read, but it was very light reading with not much substance; to continue with the series there would need to be a lot more to it for me.*

### **Carol Peace**

***A great fast paced read, make time to read the whole book as you will not want to put it down.***

*When a girl is found just outside the woods starving and filthy she tells DI Helen Grace such a tale of being imprisoned with her boyfriend by a woman but the whole story just doesn't ring true especially as the girl said she had to kill to escape but when another 'survivor' emerges from another location and tells a similar story then she begins to realise there is a very calculating killer behind this. DI Grace has to solve the mystery before there are any more victims. She also has the problems her team seem to keep throwing at her, DI Grace has her own way with dealing with stress and her demons and it's not conventional. Who is the instigator of these crimes and how many more 'survivors' will there*

*be before she can put an end to it.*

*I was amazed that this was the debut novel by MJ Arlidge as the book had me held right until the last page and I cant wait to read more.*

### **Daran Bellingham**

***Move over DCI Jane Tennison, DI Helen Grace wants your job.***

*Imagine waking up in unfamiliar surroundings with a close friend or colleague like a cellar or freight container with no escape, there is a gun with one bullet in its chamber, you will only be set free when one of you uses the gun, what would you do?*

*A serial killer is doing this and DC Helen Grace has drive, ambition and team to do this, Oh! also there is a skeleton in her closet that may help her.....or kill her.*

***This novel is a fast paced thriller that's well written and believable.***

*Our heroine DC Helen Grace has credibility and can sit in the company of DCI Banks, DCI Jane Tennison, and Vera to name but a few.*

*A great first and do hope to hear more from DC Grace.*

### **Joy Bosworth**

***This is well written and pacey but wasn't something I actually enjoyed.*** *There are only so many descriptions of excrement and desperation that one can take and overall it was quite nasty. As it was meant to be. This is actually as a result of a good author, but it was very depressing, quite apart from the central theme of the story - even incidental characters had tragedy and lives made worse by ill- thought out actions of others. So in addition to man's inhumanity to man on a grand scale there is the same in petty ways too.*

### **Bethany Dimmock - @BethanyAmber94**

***A captivating thriller; fuelled by a sharp writing style and intense plot which kept me absorbed until the final page.***

*I read 'Eeny Meeny' remarkably quickly. In fact, I couldn't put it down, yearning to know the next revelation in the case.*

*This novel provides a thrilling introduction to the world of DI Helen Grace*

*which delves into the dark reality of human psychology when faced with desperation, guilt and the ultimate choice between life or death.*

*Helen Grace is a DI for Southampton Police and has a new case; a series of abductions in which innocent pairs are taunted and left to decide their own fates: who should live and who should die? The story follows the team as they race against the clock to find the serial killer, leaving me enamored as to the next twist in the story.*

*Arlidge's use of short, snappy chapters highlight's his screen-production influence and allows the reader to experience the plot from numerous vantage points, making this a fast paced and intriguing novel. However, I felt this style sometimes detracted from the development of characters such as Helen and Mark. I found myself anticipating a deeper emotional attachment, meaning some characters failed to evolve, sometimes appearing one-dimensional.*

*Interestingly, the sub-plot of Helen's past is cleverly intertwined with her current case, providing a page-turning introduction to DI Grace's career.*

*Although I felt some characters lacked depth, the overall plot redeemed this novel, and I very much look forward to joining DI Grace and her team for the next installment in the autumn.*

### **Sharon Matthews**

***A well written, punchy, serial killer tale with a twist.***

*Someone is kidnapping two victims at a time and giving them a choice- one of you must die for the other to live. What would you do in that situation? How do you decide? I really enjoyed this debut from M J Arlidge. The combination of short descriptive chapters and the pace of the book meant it was easy to read and very enjoyable. The right mix of violence and description. **Brilliant, can't wait for the next one.***

### **Clair Chaytors**

*A more sophisticated version of Saw...The perfect thriller...*

***Wow! This book sent a shiver down my spine from the very first page.*** *Immediately thrown into the chilling action from the first chapter I was hooked on this book and all it took was three pages!*

*Arlidge has wasted no time in taking us to the action and although the nature of the killings were horribly uncomfortable at times I did find myself at a loss as a*



*reader as to why such random killings were taking place. The sign of a great thriller is when the reader is kept completely in suspense as to who-did-it right until the end of the book and this was definitely the case with 'Eeny Meeny'.*

*Helen Grace's character was a breath of fresh air, a no-nonsense emotionally detached character who I couldn't help but warm to as she strived to solve the horrendous cases before her. Arlidge's chapters are very short which not only makes for easier reading but creates the need to just read that 'one more chapter' until you realise you've almost read the whole book in one sitting!*

*I'm now first in line for Arlidge's follow up to this book, 'Pop Goes The Weasel', and I can't wait to see how he can improve on such a great success as this. I'm now a huge fan!*

### **Jennifer Merville**

*This is a book of a series of murders, of people traumatised and deprived of every day needs - and the right to choose to live or die. First one murder, then days later another. People are being abducted in twos and then given the choice of live or die or be killed - which would you choose?*

*This book is a perplexing one to review.*

*On one hand I don't like the very short chapters - you just get into that part when the next chapter suddenly changes and if not reading carefully you can get confused with the characters.*

*On the other hand this is a book you want to carry with you at all times to see how the characters survive the next pages ....or not!!*

*The writer has very cleverly thought out the story behind the killer - plenty of clues but not too obvious - plenty to leave you wondering WHY.*

***This is one of those books that I'd say if you love a good mystery with a bit of gore and murder involved then go for it - if not then leave alone.***

### **Linda Birt**

*I watched 'Undeniable' by M J Arlidge and was completely addicted. When I realized that 'Eeny Meeny' was by the same person, I knew that this debut novel was going to be exceptionally good. DCI Helen Grace explodes onto the scene in more ways than one.*

*Investigating murders where one person has to sacrifice the other in order to survive. The murders start to become personal for Helen, she has worked on cases involving the dead or the ones who have survived.*

*The only way to solve these murders is for Helen to readdress her painful past and those she left behind, only then will she find the murderer.*

***This book held my attention from the very start and as the plot twisted and turned, I was completely captivated. I thoroughly recommend this book and cannot wait until September for the next outing with DCI Helen Grace.***

### **Alison Greenacre**

*A great fast paced thriller.*

***A dark gritty thriller, investigating the very worst aspects of human nature.*** *It's a fantastic story based on a great premise kill or be killer; "what would you sacrifice - your life or your conscience." The plot is very thorough and well thought out.*

*My only criticism would be around DI Grace's character. Her perception, particularly amongst her work colleagues changed through the novel - she was liked, then she wasn't...*

*It's a great debut, and I'll certainly be looking out for more by this author.*