Lovereading Reader reviews of
I Saw A Man by Owen Sheers

Below are the complete reviews, written by Lovereading members.

Catherine Bryce

Secrets, love, tragedy, guilt, death, acceptance, tragedy, affairs, suspicion, responsibility... and more all within this one compelling novel

A fantastic read which takes the readers deeply into the very personal lives and thoughts of the characters within the book. Each character is different but each one being very similar in having to cope with a host of personal problems within themselves whilst silently dealing with emotional and physical aspects of daily life.

Michael moves to London from New York to try and find peace after losing his wife in an horrific accident and thinks he has done so by befriending the family next door, but all is not as it seems regarding his neighbours, until the one Saturday afternoon in June when circumstances caused his world to stop and change and from then on things would never be the same. Still racked with troubles Michael moves back to New York, but this time far more capable to deal with the ghosts that still haunt him as he begins to move on with his life.

A brilliant read, the reader gets to know the characters in detail, their lives and problems and all blends into a fulfilling read which is light and easy to follow.
Pam Kennedy

**Very good, I read it in one sitting, well almost one sitting, brilliant.**

I read this book in 5 hours mainly because I wanted to know why the house was empty and then because I was well involved, I loved Michael, what a lovely man. More than all this though were the questions that I like what would I have done in the same situation, how could I have possibly led a normal life after it How Josh reacted. I still keep coming back to it in my mind I honestly do not know if I would have reacted like either of them. Great great book

Glenda Worth

**An unusual story by Owen Sheers including the depths of grief, the guilt of an accident and secrets to be kept or told. A gripping tale which keeps your attention.**

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Michael is a grieving widower who moves to London and quickly becomes involved with the family next door. The new friendship becomes all encompassing until a family tragedy changes everything forever while Michael is an innocent bystander, or is he?

Michael tries to keep the secret of the catastrophic event to himself, but the truth will out eventually as guilt takes over and he learns more from the couple next door.

Woven into this, the fate of his late wife, and the truth learned from the man ultimately held responsible, haunts him, until he turns to his writing skills to tell the full story of his life, holding accountable those that were involved.

Janice Maxwell

**OMG couldn't put it down, love love loved it.**

How wonderfully written, a master of the English language. I loved the in-depth explanations of all the characters especially the main one Michael. What a discussion point. Was he to blame? Should he have left the child alone? What controversy, I love it. I lent the book to my Mum and we had a right old chat about it and I loved her take on the incident and her view which was slightly different to mine. Read it in 3 days, couldn’t put it down.
Judith Griffith - twitter address @gogrygbi

Owen Sheers catches your attention with the book's opening sentence, compelling you to read on to discover the characters' fate; how their lives intertwine and then slowly unravel.

Owen Sheers knows exactly how to capture the reader's attention with the first sentence of his new book, 'I Saw a Man'.

'I Saw a Man' tells the story of Michael, who moves to London after the death of his wife and who becomes friends with his next door neighbours, the Nelson family. The story is told through a series of narrative flashbacks to Michael's earlier life, interspersed with the fateful day he steps inside their back door. I'm not going to spoil the plot - you'll just have to read it yourself to see what happens after he does!

I found the middle part of the novel (where the narrative shifts once again to America) to be initially confusing until I realised that character's relevance to the plot, and I particularly enjoyed reading about his world. What Owen Sheers does is write well about loss, guilt and people's attempts at redemption. Whilst the themes may not be new, the novel's structure makes you want to read on to find out what happens in the Nelson's house that day, and the repercussions.

I wasn't too fussed about the other characters in the novel, but Sheers' writing is good, and it's only as you read the final sentence that you fully appreciate just how good.

Phylippa Smithson

This book should come with a warning – be prepared to read words describing with exact precision, the devastation felt when losing someone very close, very suddenly. Powerful and amazing stuff!

When Michael finds love, he believes it to be life. Certainly by marrying Caroline and witnessing her own certainty to the relationship, there was no doubt this was it. But Caroline is an investigative journalist who prefers to be at the front line. And when she returns to that life after seeming to settle into a more sedentary paced (safe) role, she is killed and Michael loses the soul of his life.

In an attempt to start again, he leaves the marital home in wales and moves his unwanted single life to London where he be-friends his neighbours, the Nelsons
(Josh and Samantha and their two children Lucy and Rachel). Slowly, slowly, he finds he can move forward, albeit it one very small step at a time and it's the Nelson who pull each step.

And then Michael witnesses a tragic event and all that he had achieved in those early months since losing Caroline comes crumbling down. He knows something he cannot share, and most certainly not with the neighbours who had been so stimulating in helping him to breathe again.

This is a haunting, powerful, enormously credible story capturing in the most poignant prose, the horror of bereavement, the impossibility of keeping secret that which was a devastating accident, and the hopelessness felt when factors beyond your control stop you living the life you want to live.

Owen Sheers, you are a remarkable writer.

Liz Bloomer

A wonderful read, keeping you immersed from beginning to end. This is a story about the tragic loss of life and love and the impact on everyone around the central character.

I picked this book up and could not put it down! The story has so many facets to it that once you start reading, you need to keep going to find out what happens next! The author cleverly weaves the story through the lives of those who the central character, Michael, has a direct impact upon. Michael is an accomplished author who tells the story of other people's lives in his books. Owen Sheers uses that same method to describe Michael in this book. It touches on a whole range of human emotions - love, grief, fear, guilt and deceit. The moral dilemmas that arise as the story progresses are very thought provoking, making you argue with yourself as to the other choices available to the characters and, in turn, what the consequences of those decisions would be. The book is well written and I wouldn’t hesitate to recommend it!

Lisa Hall - www.reading-room-with-a-view.blogspot.co.uk

Well-written, and with a fairly shocking storyline this is good read.

So, this book is very well-written, with extremely rounded characters. They are completely fleshed-out and you feel as though you know them inside out. HOWEVER - in this case, I found them to be a little TOO well-known. There is a good plot contained in the pages of this novel, but it took until over halfway
through the book before it showed itself. The big event that is alluded to in the blurb, and throughout the first half of the book doesn't show itself till half way through, and for me, that was just a little too late. There was a LOT of backstory involved - which is great, and really helped to flesh out the individual characters, but for me there was simply too much. Although I did enjoy the read, it took me a lot time to get into it and I did consider giving up several times. Definitely one for the more patient readers!

Lynne Morgan

This is a book about losing someone, and how this affects everyone around that person and everyone connected to them.

The book took a very long time to reveal its surprise, and as such I felt it was spread too thinly, it didn't seem to dig deep enough, or really explore the effects of loss properly. I always felt as though the author was just skimming along the surface.

I found the central character – Michael – very annoying and quite selfish after the loss of his wife and when he moves back to London. I preferred his character when he was living in the country, where he seemed more natural and at tune with his surroundings.

After he has moved back to London, he becomes very close friends with a family who live next door, who take him under their wing, feed him, become his friends and generally help him to try to recover from his loss, they couldn't be nicer to him! All the more shocking then when the event happens which changes their lives so dramatically. What is more appalling though, is the fact that Michael hides the truth from this family, and then tries to justify in his own mind that what he is doing is the right thing, if he is ever going to recover from loss himself.

Even though this story did not make me feel empathy for Michael, it did make me feel annoyed with him instead.

Tracey Poulter

This powerful book explores the nature of grief and how one moment, one action, one small decision can change our lives forever.

Michael Turner has returned to London, from his remote cottage in Wales, to rebuild his life after the tragic loss of his wife. He forms an unlikely friendship
with the family next door and, gradually, starts to live a normal life again. Until, that is, the day when he decides to call in at his neighbor’s house to retrieve something as mundane as a small screwdriver. This one, simple action starts a chain of events which has a catastrophic effect on all their lives.

This story explores cracks & lies in our daily lives and how we all live with the consequences of other people’s actions. The opening sequence is tantalizingly written with tiny details which provides insights into the characters and immerses you into their lives. From then on, you are hooked and feel compelled to read the best of the book to find out what happened and why. Owen Sheers has carefully constructed this novel to gradually reveal the characters stories, giving the reader an insight into what they have done and how they attempt to redeem themselves.

Read this book and then think – what would I have done?

Sarah Tilley

One of the best written books I have read in a long time.

One of the best written books I have read in a long time – absolutely enchanting and the story is told with such passion and tenderness.

It is an unusual book and explores several main characters, all of whom are described in such a way as to give the reader a real insight in to their personalities.

The writing flows wonderfully with an ending befitting the unfolding storyline.

It has certainly made me want to seek out more novels by the author.