

LoveReading Reader reviews of One Step Too Far by Tina Seskis

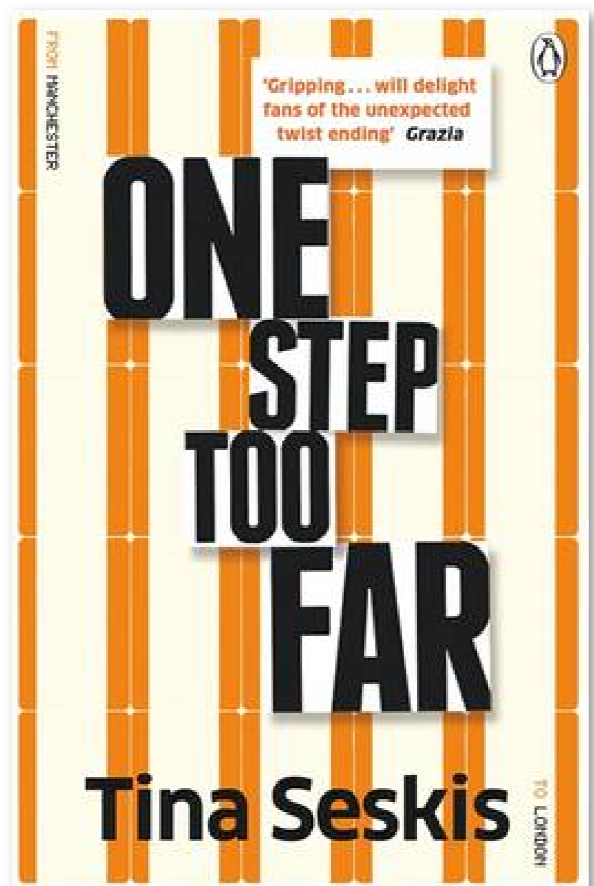
Below are the complete reviews, written by LoveReading members.

Sarah Harper

A very, very cleverly written book with a perfectly executed twist. 'One Step Too Far' is an extremely well written, enthralling read.

A very, very cleverly written book. 'One Step Too Far' effortlessly drew me in to the life of Emily Coleman. From the very first page I wanted to know more about her. What was she running from and why? Emily seems to fall into her new life by accident and it goes on to develop in a haphazard fashion. Her chance encounter with Angel becomes a close friendship. Given what we know about Emily's character, their bond seems unlikely at first but the two women support each other which is exactly what each of them needs. Emily's new life, alone in a strange city, progresses. She finds a comfortable home and a job she's good at. She almost seems to be holding it together until events and fate conspire against her and her past comes crashing back into the present.

The twist in the plot, the point at which the readers eyes are finally opened to the truth of Emily's past, could not have come as more of a shock to me. Wow! It literally left me with my mouth hanging open. It was absolutely perfectly executed. Tina Seskis has done a fantastic job. Extremely well written, this is an enthralling read.



Monica Hunt

Such a gripping plot. Seskis holds you with glimpses into the past that tempt and tease you; culminating into an emotional rollercoaster of an ending.

This book gripped me from the first to the last page. As expected, the plot was more than just the story of a bored housewife leaving home. Seskis cleverly dips into Emily's, the main character, history; drawing you into the emotional turmoil of her life and teasing you with endless possibilities that hint at the explanation for Emily's departure. Each character is beautifully and thoughtfully presented; exploring their personality flaws and examining their importance to the story. Central to the plot is the sweetness of the love story between Emily and her husband. A normal relationship amidst darkness. At times I felt anxious, almost desperate to know that it was all going to turn out okay. Seskis' descriptions pull you into the story. (I swear I could smell the horrendous odours of the shared house!) The glimpses into her past are then expertly gathered together, culminating into an emotional rollercoaster of an ending. There will be much debate on the satisfaction of the ending but I thought it was utterly brilliant. My only criticism is the scene that starts the big reveal. A footballer? Really? Not required or relevant, in my view.

Gavin Dimmock - <http://the-mustachioed-reader.blogspot.co.uk>

Loved it! Buy this book and enjoy a great read. A page turning "Why They Done It". HIGHLY RECOMMENDED

I'll come clean right from the off; I thought this book was superb.

Contemporary stories about relationships, especially those from a female viewpoint, do not usually appeal to me but I was hooked from the initial few pages of this gripping read. The writing style and pace of the story seemed, for me at least, to be a perfect fit with the characters we meet.

Emily/Cat is an interesting and intriguing character. I liked her very much and I wanted to know more about her; why is she leaving her life and family to start anew in London? What has happened to her to lead to such an upheaval?

The story is told predominantly from Emily's viewpoint, both in the current and the past, and we also get snapshots from other characters' lives as they intersect with Emily. This helps to build up our understanding of Emily but also adds different layers to the initial conundrum of why has she started her life anew.

The storyline develops magnificently and kept this reader guessing as to the

reasons behind Emily's life changing decisions. And the revelation, when it occurred, was a genuine "Wow" moment for me.

I liked Emily and rooted for her throughout. I will also keep an eye out for more from debut novelist Tina Seskis. Loved it!

Lesley Hart

This fast-paced and incredibly moving story gripped me instantly. The knowledge that Emily hasn't chosen to leave her family dangles a constant hook of wanting to find out why and follow her destiny.

This unputdownable book blew me away from start to finish. The characters and setting were so carefully and thoughtfully described that I felt I knew them and could almost picture myself alongside them as they journeyed through the story of why Emily, clearly an intelligent person, who clearly loves her family above all else, feels compelled to walk out on them and begin life anew in an unfamiliar city.

Throughout the story I kept trying to second-guess the ending, but wasn't even close. Tina Seskis keeps her cards close to her chest right up until the final raw moments of this brilliant debut and the ending has a finality to it that closes all the loops that are so beautifully crafted throughout the story.

I would definitely recommend this book and will be looking out for her next book with eager anticipation.

Anne Cater - <http://randomthingsthroughmyletterbox.blogspot.co.uk>

Does anyone else get that tingly feeling when they are just a few chapters into a book and they just know that they are in for an amazing read? I don't get it very often, although over the past few months I've discovered more tinglers than usual and 'One Step Too Far' by Tina Seskis is one of those. I'd never heard of the book, or the author before and made sure that I didn't read any reviews of the novel before I started to read it, so I really had no idea what to expect. I certainly didn't anticipate a tingly moment!

*Although it may sound like a cliché; 'One Step Too Far' really is difficult to put down. **Tina Seskis** is an extremely clever author, she **has produced a story that is so intricate and tightly plotted that the reader really has no choice to keep reading ... just another chapter, and another, and another.***

Not once did I guess how this excellent story would turn out, there were times when I thought that I'd got it all sussed, but Tina Seskis throws another spanner in the works many times, causing the story to take twists that I could never have imagined. It is these twists and turns that make the book so engaging, and made me keep reading and reading until finally every layer fitted together and at last the real story emerged.

'One Step Too Far' is intriguing and compelling, it is paced well and will most certainly stay in my head for some time. I was very impressed by the plot and by the writing and will look forward to Tina Seskis' next novel.

Julie Bertschin

Tragedy makes people change in many ways, forcing us to reevaluate our lives. Whether we choose to run from our past or battle on is something we will never know until it happens to us.

Emily leaves everything behind and runs away to start a new life in London. We do not know the full circumstances of why she leaves until the conclusion of the novel, but we can gather some tragedy is at the heart of it. She throws herself into forging new friendships, getting a job and yet she hides the truth from everyone. Only when her life spirals out of control and she finds herself on the news does her past catch up with her. I enjoyed this story but found it a little farfetched and felt slightly misled some references. Nevertheless it is an interesting subject to make us think how we would react if we ourselves were in her shoes.

Sophie Hedley - <http://www.reviewedthebook.co.uk>

Twitter: @ReviewedtheBook

With tons of mystery, plenty of twists and an intriguing main character, 'One Step Too Far' is great entertainment for fans of books which always keep you guessing.

I love books with twists in them, and 'One Step Too Far' definitely has a lot of twists. From the first moment in the book, you're wondering and left guessing about what has caused Emily to flee from her old life and then you're transported to Cat's chaotic life on the road to your discovery of what exactly has happened.

'One Step Too Far' was mysterious and compelling. The unpredictability made

for an entertaining plot which kept me turning the pages. As the book switches back and forth in time, we gradually learn more about Cat and her motives and I can't say I particularly liked her but I did find her story interesting.

The suspense in this book was high – I really did not know what to expect next and the author did a great job of keeping the secret under wraps. I did have a slight issue with the plot though and that was that at times it felt too far-fetched and unrealistic. This book combined a lot of issues and I thought maybe it would have been best served cutting out a few of these to make the story feel more real.

Despite this, 'One Step Too Far' was completely enthralling and a great debut novel. There was never a dull moment and the book showcased a fantastically mysterious plot which is well worth a read.

Sara McLaughlin

An excellent read - very well paced. This is an emotionally charged story that is combined with twists and turns that keep you guessing and asking "Why?" - Definitely one I'll recommend to friends.

I really enjoyed reading this book. We know from the outset that Emily walks out of her old life, but what we don't know is why.

The story unfolds at a cracking pace as we join Emily in her new life, but we also learn about her past and the events leading up to her momentous decision.

This book just kept delivering surprises – and I love reading books where I think I've got it all sussed out only to find I was wrong.

The characters in the book were very well portrayed and so lifelike – I suspect I'll still be thinking about them and what they've been through even now that I've finished the book.

Ann

A story with a heart-breaking twist at the end.

*What made Emily, or Cat as she became known, leave her comfortable life and the husband she clearly loved? The writer skilfully tells the reader, through flashbacks but the twist at the end is heart-breaking and unexpected. Her descriptions of London and Emily's accommodation there are recognisable to anyone who knows the city. **It is a wonderfully written book that I recommend to everyone.***

Nancy Krois

This book makes the reader ask 'why?' many times. It is only at the end, when the answer is presented to us, that we can really understand what we've been reading.

I wholly agree with the reviewer who said this book was reminiscent of 'Sixth Sense' in terms of the twist in the tale, a twist which readers will berate themselves for not seeing. After Emily leaves home for London, and her behaviour begins to change dramatically for the worse, the reader will wonder at it, but the revelation at the end made this behaviour seem inevitable, and completely understandable.

The story is not told in a linear way, which serves to build up the suspense. The first voice we hear is in the present tense and is that of the protagonist, Emily, who recounts what is happening to her at that precise moment. This alternates with the narrator's voice, which gives us the back story, told in the past tense. There is a clear difference in these voices. Emily's is emotional, very descriptive and in places the prose is striking. In contrast, the narrator's voice is quite flat and almost monotonous, as if imparting mere facts and, because of this, it sometimes feels less like a novel and more like a report. It is up to Emily to furnish the signs of anger, despair, hope and rage so that the reader truly feels with her.

If at times the story is redolent of a modern-day fairy tale for women, with a glamorous job, expensive clothes, and rich boyfriends thrown into the mix, this is a slight quibble. The book held my attention the whole way.

Val Rowe

Unputdownable! I was totally hooked from the very first page and when the twist came ... and came again... I was speechless.

This is a novel I will never forget. The plot is so skillfully devised and woven that I was kept guessing until the secret arrived. Seskis then tempted me further so that I was never entirely sure of the outcome until the very last page.

The story is told through the main character, Emily, who leaves her home and family to begin a new life style although the reader is initially unsure as to the circumstances which have led to this. We are gradually introduced to aspects of Emily's present and past life in a tantalising way, creating a powerful, and at times heartbreaking, picture of her thoughts, feelings and actions.

I couldn't stop talking about this book and have already recommended it to

several friends and family members. Bizarrely, I was almost sad when I had finished it as I had been totally gripped page by page, completing it in three days.

If this is what Seskis is capable of in a debut novel, I await her future works with enormous anticipation.

Sarah Musk

What a rollercoaster of a book! The past and the present keep interweaving and hitting you in big emotional chunks all the way through. Tina Serkis does not let up all the way through. Just as you think Emily's life has settled for a while, something else major rears up to knock her and her family down.

The book is very cleverly written in that it starts in the present and then reverts to the past. As the story progresses the past and present gradually join together to explain the very painful present. The writer is very adept in concealing the big twist near the end of the book and when it happens you wonder how Emily and her husband will ever recover from the past.

The only slight criticism I would have is that there is no clear explanation as to what happens to Caroline and how Emily felt about her after the terrible events in their lives. I think I would have liked a bit more written from Caroline's point of view - she seems to peter out somewhat.

*Apart from that, **this is a gripping, exciting book which is difficult to put down.***

Riki Gabrielle Bill – Twitter: @riki_gabrielle

This book is the emotional journey of one woman with a terrible secret that keeps the reader guessing until the end. I would highly recommend this book to anyone looking for a great read.

'One Step Too Far' by Tina Seskis is a journey of one woman with a terrible secret that keeps the reader guessing until the third part of the book and deals with the characters' futures as well as their pasts.

The writing is excellent and the story easy to follow. It's pacing is excellent and the story timeline easy to follow with twists and turns thrown in to make the story interesting! All of the loose ends are tied up by the end of the book and the structure of the book is awesome!

The novel deals with a lot of issues including grief, rebirth and loss but these are

dealt with in a sensitive manner which keeps the reader hooked. The novel's chapters are kept short and are separated into four distinct parts of the novel that helps the reader to navigate the subject matter.

The continuity is kept throughout the book and the characters are believable and credible.

I would highly recommend this debut novel to anyone looking for a great read from this author or something different to introduce them to women's contemporary fiction

Fiona Rothery

'One Step Too Far' is described as a thriller; however it is more of a portrayal of how people's lives can be governed and changed by accidental events. I found it to be slow paced with no compelling element of suspense.

It has a promising beginning with a good introduction to the childhood family of Emily, the central character. There is an emotional insight into the Mother's feelings after she gives birth. This has a huge impact on the family, the relationship between siblings and starts the catalogue of repercussions that continue way into the future.

The plot flips backwards and forwards in time between the series of disastrous events, which is often confusing. In the conclusion there are too many twists and turns involving too many characters which makes the unveiling of Emily's secret far too complicated.

I am sure many people would find this book with its emotional portrayal of the characters and the events that change their lives very moving but as a thriller it did not live up to my expectations.

Debbie Wood

A real page turner! Great story which kept me wanting to read more. Found it hard to put this book down!

I loved this book. Once I started reading this I couldn't put it down. The story of Emily/Cat was one that I wanted to read more about. The chapters about the different people involved in her life, the past and present tense all evolved to what amounted to a thrilling book with a secret revealed towards the end. I really felt for Emily/Cat and couldn't wait to pick up the book to read more chapters and find out her secret. Would highly recommend this book.

Peter Land

A really engaging read; love story, tragedy, social commentary, it's got the lot!

This is a great read, which made me eagerly grab for it every time I had a moment to spare. The narrative flies along and interestingly, whilst using the common technique of jumping backwards and forwards in time with two different story strands until both reach conclusions simultaneously, the book never quite feels like that, rather it reads like one tale. I always needed to know what happened next to these normal people dealing with abnormal events. It is the story of one person, Emily, but with two lives and the shattering event that caused her to jump from one to the other. This is a love story, certainly, social observation as well and a mystery story but mostly it raises questions about family relationships, emotional and physical abandonment, our need for love, companionship and forgiveness and how we can show those qualities to each other. It raises concerns about our society and how easy it is for a person to get lost in it and offers hope for things to work out better in future.

Judith Waring

Such a good book, excellent writing that pulls you right into the heart of the story and envelops you completely. You are swept up right from the start.

I totally loved reading this book. The writing is so evocative and from the start you can visualise and feel everything the author is describing - Emily's feelings, her surroundings, her emotions.

You are fed little droplets from the beginning that there has been a tragedy that she is escaping from but you are clueless as to what it actually is and there were several options jostling in my head as to what it would eventually be ?

The writing is so skilful and so powerful that once she starts to create a new life in London you get so totally wrapped up in it with her that you almost forget what she has left behind or that she even had another life before then. You can completely imagine the place she finds to rent, you can visualise the other tenants, her new job.

A superb story that I didn't want to put down at all. I never guessed the ending and once it was revealed I found myself then flicking back through to earlier chapters and yes, the clues are there but you just don't translate them.

This is definitely one book I will be keeping and re-reading and I do hope this author writes more; I will be looking out for her name.

Hilary

I really enjoyed this story. The twists in the plot kept me turning the pages wanting to know the truth!

'A Step Too Far' is a really clever story. Tina Seskis manipulates the reader and we believe without questioning, that a mother has left her husband and child. We read thinking surely it can't be that bad, she could go back. But when the twist in the plot comes and we learn the truth, she immediately has our sympathy.

This could've been a hard story to end and I did wonder if the ending would do justice to the rest of the plot.

Stephanie Blakey – Twitter # librarylovely

This is one of the most compelling books I have read this year. I raced through it and the characters stayed with me after I had finished. Great imagination and characterisation.

Working in a public library, I read a lot and love to try new authors. I loved this book, it was compelling and I couldn't put it down. I felt cheated when I had to take a break from reading it - if I could, I would have read it in one go! It's hard to believe this was a debut novel - I thought the imagination and characterisation was brilliant. It evoked all sorts of emotions, truly heart breaking in places but believable! I think it would make a fantastic film.

Rachel Aygin

The plot gripped me right from the beginning. We are given a tantalising glimpse into Emily's past then left dangling as we desperately want to find out her secret.

'One Step Too Far' is the story of Emily, a young wife and mother who is running away from her family. The plot gripped me right from the beginning as I immediately began to wonder what had happened to make Emily take the drastic step of leaving her family. We discover that Emily wants no contact with anyone from her past and has decided to reinvent herself as a new person, making her secret even more intriguing. The story is told from two angles: on

one hand we learn how Emily goes about creating a new life for herself and the adventures she has. From time to time this is interspersed with snippets of her old life giving us a tantalising glimpse into her past then leaving us dangling as we desperately want to find out Emily's secret. The plot has some surprising twists and turns and makes for a thoroughly enjoyable read. Definitely recommended.

Phylippa Smithson

Talk about unputdownable! I read this book in two days. To delay in learning the answer as to what was that 'one step too far' was NOT an option.

'One Step Too Far' is a book of constantly asking 'why'? Why is Emily running away? Why is she running from her marital home, a husband, Ben, who adores her and Charlie? Why is she prepared to get a train from a house and location she loves; leave a part of the world she knows so well, having been born and brought up near Manchester where her Mum and Dad live, her friends and her life has always been? Why abandon that life for London and the anonymity only the capital City can bring? Why is Emily in so much pain?

I could go on with listing more and more 'whys' but the ultimate one is: Why does the reader have to wait to the very end of the book to find out?

The answer is, so that Teskis can provide a page-turning story that is largely a mystery embellished with family drama and modern world realities. It is also darkly humourous at times which adds to the frustration of not knowing the answer before the final, shocking, unforeseen why is answered.

Read this book as the answer really is worth waiting for. It's brilliant and the author needs to be thanked for playing with her reader in such a clever way,

Celia Cohen

Intriguing and enthralling.

*Oh to be able to write like this. A book you won't be able to put down. I read it in two days. It's full of twists and turns that you just don't see coming and keeps you guessing right to the end. The various characters are likeable, loathable, funny or sad but memorable. **I found myself still thinking of the story long after I'd finished the book. Definitely recommended.***

Lisa Faulkner

Thrilling and engaging, 'One Step Too Far' by Tina Seskis is a great read.

The characters are well crafted and the plot has the reader guessing right through to the final pages. This book is well paced, well written and thoroughly enjoyable.

A real gem of a book! I loved it!

Ruth Carson

This was a very compelling book which held me from the first page to the last. Why would a young happily married mother leave her home and move to another city to live in squalor?

A must read. I would highly recommend this book.

Sarah Jones

This is a story that takes hold of you and makes you keep reading.

It showed how the relationship between siblings can reach extremes of emotion. The bitterness and jealousy felt and her mother's role in this was upsetting and provided a chance to reflect on how patterns of behaviour set in childhood can be so hard to change and how they impact on adult life.

The story moves intriguingly between a series of narrators with each revealing more about themselves and about Emily.

I thought I would guess Emily's secret but I didn't and when it was finally revealed it was shocking and heartbreaking. I had to read the passage again straight away.

Annette Woolfson

*I have to say I wasn't sure about this book for quite a long time as I couldn't quite figure out the main character. However, once the killer twist puts in an appearance, the whole story came together. **A very accomplished first novel and I will definitely look out for future titles by this author.***

Sallyann Spittle

Wow, wow and triple wow! This book had me transfixed from the moment I started reading it. *I was warned that there would be twists in the storyline and I have to be honest – they got me every time. The story about Emily who uproots her life and moves to London, leaving everything she knows behind is impressive and totally believable. Why would someone leave their wedding ring in a railway station restroom in Crewe without a very good reason and what part does her twin sister have to play (if any)? The plot gives you hints all along as to her reason for leaving her home which seems on the surface, a happy one and I just had to keep reading to find out more. The thing I liked was that there were little shocks along the way so I wasn't kept until the end of the book to be utterly surprised.*

A very well written story and I really enjoyed it – a real page-turner which has made me buy Tina Seskis's other novel, 'The Serpentine Affair'.

Marjorie Lacy.

An exciting beginning, a train journey to a new life... We are not told why she leaves her husband and Manchester home. Or why she chooses to adopt a new name and identity. Her old self as Emily Brown, her new persona as Cat Brown. She meets Angel, who becomes her new friend and flat mate.

Gradually, through flash backs, bits told by other family members and friends, we find out about Emily's life. We are also told about Angel's unconventional background.

The focus and pace increases as she settles into the new role. In parallel lines, we find out about the childhood home, her matrimonial home, we can only guess at what prompted her to leave.

When the 'reveal' or 'twist' comes, it is a shock, it makes you think 'In those circumstances, I would have run away too'.....

This is a well written book and easy to read. I shall look forward to read her next book, when it is finished.

I always like the books published by Penguin, they feel good in your hand, cover designs are always impressive, and this one in particular is very striking and draws your attention to it. The print was 'easy on the eye', for reading, I read the book in two sittings!

Yvonne Reynolds

Why would you leave your perfect family and home to start a new life from scratch?

I started this book with trepidation – a woman running away from the perfect husband and her son didn't sound like entertaining reading to me but I was completely wrong – I was hooked from the start.

*As the main character Emily/Cat seems sensible and even coldly rational in her planning something terrible must have happened to her, so while you are reading you're trying to work out what has happened. I can't explain the plot, or even the characters, without spoiling it, but each chapter added more information and moved Emily/Cat on in her new life while filling in more details about her past. **It was so cleverly written**, with all this added information **leading to a wonderful finale and plot twist**. My only advice would be to read it straight away!*

Emma Smith

Gripping reading right through to the end.

*'One Step Too Far' was a gripping read right through to the end. I wasn't too keen on the main character, Emily, to begin with, but I was intrigued about her history. As I read on I began to identify with her and think about what I might do if I needed to reinvent myself. The outline of the book gave me the impression that it would be a very sad, and perhaps hard to deal with, story. I actually found myself willing Emily on, hoping she could do well for herself and get over her tragedy. The twist was completely unexpected, and heartbreaking, but it made me identify more with the characters than I was first expecting. **Some sensitive topics, but they were approached with respect and care. I look forward to her next book!***

Katie Dickinson

Gripping right from the start, guessing at what has happened but never quite getting there. When all is revealed it makes you want to re-read to work out how you missed the secret. Excellent!

She appeared to have it all, a husband that she loves, a beautiful son who she adores so why would Emily leave her seemingly happy life one morning and get on a train to start again. Praise for the author Tina Seskis who keeps you

guessing. I felt compassion for Emily/Cat as she survives and even as you grow doubts about her morals/way of life. You like her enough to want all to be ok in the end but she has a rebellious streak that makes you wonder if she has been the cause of this mysterious secret.

A fantastic book, well written and compelling, a definite re-read and recommendation to friends.

Karen Clark

Had me hooked right from the start- Emily is such a believable character and you need to know why she has done what she has. It will make you cry!

This book had me completely hooked from the start and I could not put it down. I loved the constant movement between different stages of the characters' lives and Emily was such a likeable and believable character, despite the enormity of what she had done. That said I could not understand how she could leave her son and apparently idyllic life, especially when her new life seemed so shallow and empty in comparison but that just made me want to read on to get to the answers. I did guess at Charlie's identity about half way through but even so the truth of what Emily was running away from was still a shock. I would thoroughly recommend this book, though it will leave you with a sense of unease and sadness even at the end.