

Blindspot

Maggie Smith

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A careful prosecutor with a stormy past is faced with a stalker in the exciting thriller Blindspot.

A winding thriller, Maggie Smith's *Blindspot* is a testament to the consequences of past choices and unhealed wounds.

Rachel, a single mother and a prosecutor, worked hard to build a good life for herself and for her daughter, Charley. Now, with the possibility of a promotion looming, Rachel feels both optimism and pressure over what her future has to offer. But when a stalker's vague threats begin to escalate, they derail Rachel's and Charley's senses of safety and security. Rachel decides to take matters into her own hands before she becomes like one of the victims she advocates for on the stand.

As a prosecutor, Rachel interacts with a multitude of people in her daily life. Thus, many people become suspects, including her colleagues and some attendees at a black-tie gala. But Rachel's initial rush to cast a wide net subsides as clarity about who the stalker could be sets in. And the text is intentional about withholding the specific details that would make the identity of the stalker obvious early on, securing investment.

Indeed, the book is paced to deliver revelations at pleasant intervals, and it does an able job of maintaining momentum and intrigue throughout—both related to Rachel's stalker and on other topics. The identity of Charley's father, for example, is obscured by Rachel until later in the novel, which is also indicative of her narrative style and personality. Guarded and somewhat uptight, Rachel's fixed focus on her career at the expense of her personal and romantic lives is made more understandable once the pieces of her past come together in a clearer chronology of events.

Though the story is fueled by themes of vengeance, the prose is tidy and logical. Its balanced characterizations are an able reflection of Rachel's internal control: just enough background information is disclosed about each person to understand their roles, and other people's page time is also restrained. The audience's attention is directed accordingly: the introduction of a couple at a fundraiser, for instance, is attended to with interest and space (she is "the kind of woman a man would fight to keep," with Rachel wondering if "that type of beauty came at a price"; he has a booming voice and wears a "self-satisfied smirk" before which his wife turns into a "quivering mouse," leading to the suspicion that "her life wasn't so perfect after all"), whereas Rachel's father, brother, and brother-in-law, in the comfort of their familiarity, are mused over less. The Milwaukee setting is also captured via sparing descriptions that avoid emotional attachment.

Working toward an exciting final confrontation, the twisting, cerebral thriller *Blindspot* follows a careful prosecutor's attempts to uncover her stalker.

CIERRA TAYLOR (April 30, 2024)

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