

Fiction

**Spiderwise Evaluation**

**Date of Evaluation:** 01/01/01

**Evaluated by:** Jenni Harrison

**Book Title:** A Novel

**Author:** A U Thor

**Brief overview of the plot/subject:**

Joe Bloggs is an aspiring author. He inadvertently stumbles over a conspiracy and it's the burst of inspiration he needs. A few years later and his first novel is a bestseller and he's in the middle of writing a follow up. But someone has made the connection between his fiction and reality and they are determined that the next instalment will never be written.

Meanwhile his wife Jane is trying to settle into their new, quiet life on the Cornish coast. Being an unemployed wife of an author who shuts himself in his office for days on end is starting to grate on her, and she looks for distractions elsewhere. But she doesn't realise that Alison, her new found confidante, has an ulterior motive for befriending her.

**Give the book a mood/genre:**

Contemporary thriller

**Give a description of the book's target audience (gender, age, hobbies etc):**

Male or female, over 18 due to language and generally adult themes.

Anyone who likes contemporary fiction.

**Where is it set?**

Initially London, and then Brockleton - a town in Cornwall and the surrounding coastal area

**Who are the main characters?**

Joe Bloggs

Jane Bloggs

Alison Aspy - Jane's friend

Nick Laffaire

An anonymous character who is seemingly following Joe

**What did you enjoy about this book?**

The characters are well drawn and defined - each has distinct traits, characteristics and voice.

The moments of humour are well executed and offer welcome lighter moments without breaking the overall tension of the plot.

I liked the device of having several different character threads - the reader gets to see the differing viewpoints of the characters, which gives the novel a rounded feel, and isn't restricted on one track or one character's narration.

**What could be improved?**

In places the sentences are short and sharp. Eg pg 23 - 'She was so unhappy. Village life didn't suit her. She was meeting Alison at 9am.' This is effective for action, but in general narrative it comes across as abrupt and there is no flow to the story. I'd suggest lengthening the sentences using commas or conjunctions to connect clauses together.

The chapters that are from the point of view of the anonymous 'fixer' let the reader know that something darker is going on beyond Joe and Jane's life. However, after his first appearance we don't see any of his narration between chapters 7 and 19. This thread of the story could be weaved in throughout more of the book, to keep up that undercurrent of threat. I believe you could add at least one chapter in amongst these with an update on this 'fixer' without giving away too much of this plot too early.

Look out for passing of time, or lack of it. In a couple of places I noticed an action, followed by a conversation, followed by another action but further on in time without any reference to time

passing. Eg pg 44 the waiter brings their meal, they have a line or two of conversation then the waiter is back asking if they want dessert.

As a reader I felt there was an unanswered question at the end - how did Joe feel about Jane's near infidelity? It feels like the consequences of this plotline aren't addressed.

**Any proofreading/editing needed:**

I would recommend a full edit. There are grammar and punctuation errors throughout, and I feel it would benefit from a closer edit to pick up on any continuity errors and inconsistencies in the timeline, especially given the different viewpoints of the same events.

**What rating out of 10 would you give this book?**

7

**Any further notes?**

The overall plot is well thought out. With a bit of tightening of the prose here and there and ironing out the few continuity errors I think it will be a very good book.

**Office use only**

**BISG Category:**

FIC031010 FICTION / Thrillers / Crime

**Word count: 154,057**

**Editing: Full**

**Hours: 40**