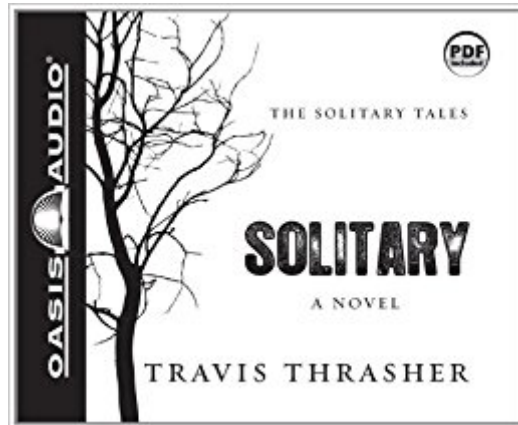




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Solitary: A Novel (Solitary Tales)



Synopsis

His loneliness will soon turn to fear. When Chris Buckley moves to Solitary, North Carolina, he faces the reality of his parents' divorce, a school full of nameless faces, and Jocelyn Evans. Jocelyn is beautiful and mysterious enough to leave Chris speechless. But the more Jocelyn resists him, the more the two are drawn together. Chris soon learns that Jocelyn has secrets as deep as the town itself, secrets more terrifying than the bullies he faces in the locker room or his mother's unexplained nightmares. He slowly begins to understand the horrific answers. The question is whether he can save Jocelyn in time. This first audio book in the Solitary Tales series will take you from the cold halls of high school to the dark rooms of an abandoned cabin and remind you what it means to believe in what you cannot see.

Book Information

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Children's Fiction > General

Customer Reviews

"The first in the Solitary Tales series draws listeners into the frightening story of Chris Buckley, a troubled youth from a broken family who has just moved into a town full of secrets. There he meets beautiful Jocelyn Evans, whose life is also full of mysteries. Narrator Kirby Heyborne brings this Christian thriller to life with an emotional detachment that contrasts with nightmarish story. His even-toned voice forces the listener's involvement and provides a thrilling experience. Don't listen in the dark." J.E. © AudioFile Portland, Maine

The author of a dozen works of fiction, including *Isolation* and *Ghostwriter*, Travis Thrasher has been writing since he was in the third grade. His writing is known for its honesty, depth, and surprising twists. Thrasher lives with his wife and daughter near Chicago.

Solitary was an enjoyable enough story, it wasn't hard to feel the loneliness of Chris's new found situation. Trying to fit in in the midst of his parents divorce and being forced to move away from all he had ever know, High School is hard enough but doing it without a friendly face just adds more pressure. The author filled in the background of *Solitary*, NC with just enough hints to show that something weird was going on. I didn't really connect or trust many characters here and some of the situation didn't always ring true to me. But then I remind myself that this is book 1 of 4, so not all my questions/doubts will be answered right away. All in all a solid start to this series.

SPOILER ALERTFirst of all, let me say that I think *Solitary* is beautifully and elegantly written. Unlike some, the nouveau paragraphing doesn't bother me. If anything, it makes the book easier to read. In addition, I wasn't annoyed by the insertion of Christian undertones in this novel like some other reviewers have criticized (or praised). My problem with this novel is with the ending ... The First 90% of the book is brilliant, the last 10% is just ridiculous. I get that this is the first book in a series, but the author spent so much time interweaving action, mystery, and intrigue only to leave the reader with even more questions than when the book first began. I found myself almost angered by the denouement. Ok, I get it. The author wanted to write a dramatic, up-in-the-air ending that foreshadowed, "This is a series!" I get it. I just think it could have been done in a less annoying way. I felt cheated at the end of the book. Who is behind all of the killing? Why did the killing start in the first place? Did Jocelyn die in vain? How can they make such a threat against his father? (His mother I get, since she lives in *Solitary*, but how can their crazy, unexplained plans and ruthlessness reach all the way to Chicago?) Is Chris just going to keep quiet, or will he finally understand the value of faith? And, does the murderer(s) just get away with everything? The ending frustrated me, to say the least. It's like the writer lacked the conviction to answer at least one or two of these questions. Why leave the reader in such a confused state at the end of the first installment, especially when you've taken so much trouble to develop characters and build up to an amazing climatic scene. I think the author should have trusted the reader with at least a little bit of information at the end of the novel. Instead of leaving every single thing a mystery (even at the end of the novel), the writer should have at least tied up a couple of the loose ends for the reader. However, the author decided not to do this, so I just finished reading the book feeling cheated and unsatisfied

and uninspired to continue the series. Don't get me wrong, I was hooked from the beginning ... The author does a great job of story-telling (although some scenes are excruciatingly overdone and over-the-top ridiculous). Yet, still, I had great hopes for this novel. Well-written book ... just not sure I have the courage to delve into the second installment just to be let down again. This book had great potential and held my interest until the last five to ten pages. Unfortunately, it fell FLAT at the end ...

3/5 stars

Picked this on a whim and what a good whim it was! As I read this I could see this as a TV series. What a great one it would make. The story captured the angst of the teenage years along with the yearnings that accompanied it. Throw in the underlying feeling of something is not right and you have a good meal to sink your teeth into. Can't wait to read the next story. Highly recommend. Enjoy

This is truly a different kind of mystery. A mystery that seems to continually heap loose ends on top of each other! Questions shrouded in mystery, questions left unanswered. If you are looking for a nice tidy mystery, one in which all of the answers somehow appear before the story ends, perhaps you should continue looking. However, if you can read and just allow the questions to continue, then this is a mystery worth reading!

I loved this series from beginning to end, although I certainly went through the gamut of emotions. Anything was possible and nothing was truly safe...kind of like the most chilling moments of real life. Mix in some Screwtape Letters, a little This Present Darkness, and simply Thrasher's own unique take on the supernatural for a kind of "wake-up call" in a chilling yet inspiring series.

I was looking for a good Christian fiction read. I honestly can't tell you what popped out at me about this book because I have several others on my "To Read" list. Nevertheless, I bought; I read; I regretted. Thrasher does an okay job with developing the protagonist and his love interest. Yet, especially throughout the development of Chris Buckley, the author states that so and so is such a cliché, what a cliché, if only it weren't a cliché. Saying a scenario, person, etc. isn't a cliché over and over is pretty much the same as using the cliché without pointing out the obvious. The Christian part of the series was fine; Chris' dad is a man of faith, and I hope he makes an in person appearance later in the series. However, if someone is looking for a clear gospel message, it didn't happen in Book 1, which again, is fine...author's choice. Lastly, it just seemed that the evil in the book is so overtly evil...demon dogs, clandestine meetings, sacrifices, cult churches, etc. If only everyday evil

did appear so clearly it'd be much easier to avoid. On a positive note, I think Young Adults (the book's intended audience) will enjoy...you've got star-crossed lovers, high school angst in all its cliched glory, parental issues, and weekend boredom...yep, I think they will. As for me, I'll move on:)

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