



The Missing One: The unforgettable domestic thriller from the critically acclaimed author of THE NIGHT VISITOR

By Lucy Atkins

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In this gripping debut, *The Missing One*, Lucy Atkins takes us on one woman's terrifying journey to the beautiful and rugged Pacific Northwest to discover the dark secrets of her family's past so that she can understand and accept herself. Kal McKenzie was never close to her mother Elena, whose coldness towards her spoiled any chance of a good relationship. When Elena dies of cancer, Kal feels forlorn: how do you mourn a mother who, inexplicably, just didn't seem to love you?

While clearing out Elena's art studio, Kal finds a drawer packed with postcards, each bearing an identical one-line message from a Canadian gallery owner named Susannah Gillespie: "Thinking of you." Who is this woman and what does she hold the key to her ruined relationship with her mother?

Conflicted by her grief and shaken up from recently seeing a covetous text from an old girlfriend on her husband's cell phone, Kal impulsively sets off with her toddler Finn to Susannah's isolated home on a remote British Columbian island. A place of killer whales and storms.

Soon Kal quickly realizes she has made a big mistake. The striking and enigmatic Susannah will only share a few scraps of information about Elena. Unbeknownst to her, she discovers that her mother was a pioneering orca researcher—an activist trying to save these powerful and dangerous creatures.

As Kal struggles to piece together her mother's past and what happened between Elena and Susannah in the 1970s, Susannah's behavior grows more and more erratic. Most worrying of all, Susannah is becoming increasingly preoccupied with little Finn. Kal's uneasiness soon proves true and Kal must confront the biggest threat to her family she has ever experienced.

Told in two competing narratives, *The Missing One* intermixes Kal's present day journey to with that of her mother's awakening as an independent woman, scientist, and activist. As these two narratives converge the novel transforms into

a white-knuckle thriller where the secrets of the past imperil the lives of the present.

Interweaving local lore of how orcas protect those who travel away from home, and guides them back safely, in *The Missing One* Lucy Atkins wrestles with the question of how the past influences the present, and who has the right to own one's history.

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Editorial Review

Review

"A gripping page-turner." —*The Sunday Times*

"This novel is brilliantly gripping."—Closer

"A moving and suspenseful tale of the secrets a family keeps." —*Rachel Hore, author of The Silent Tide*

"A page-turning and suspenseful tale . . . I read it in three sittings . . . a compelling emotional mystery."
—Lucy Clarke, author of *The Sea Sisters*

"Beautifully written and compelling . . . a wonderful thriller that is also such a strong portrayal of motherhood. —Sabine Durrant, author of *Under Your Skin*

About the Author

Lucy Atkins is an award-winning feature journalist and author, as well as a *Sunday Times* book critic. She has written for many newspapers, including the *Guardian*, *The Times*, *The Sunday Times*, and the *Telegraph*, as well as magazines such as *Psychologies*, *Red*, *Woman and Home*, and *Grazia*. She lives in Oxford.

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