



Title: Taken

Author: Kathleen George

Description:

The child was taken in broad daylight, on a warm June morning, in a crowded shopping area in downtown Pittsburgh. Marina Benedict first saw the baby with his mother. Then, just minutes later, she saw him again, in the arms of a man she was certain was not the child's father. In a single life-altering act, Marina followed them. What happens next will plunge her into a mystery that is both heartbreaking and chilling. Within hours of the abduction, the city is galvanized by the story: a child, the son of a pitcher for the Pirates, is missing. And soon a community begins to unravel ... Detective Richard Christie struggles with his own demons as he tries to solve a baffling mystery. And Marina Benedict, pulled from the safety of her ordinary life by a brutal crime, is at the center of the story. Because once, Marina tried to save a life and it changed her forever. Now she will risk her life again -- for a child who is still out there somewhere, still in need of saving.

Reviews

Kirkus Reviews: A gripping thriller with real emotional power and remarkably subtle characterization. **Booklist:** [T]his engrossing thriller [is a] lyrically written and fascinating tale. **Washington Post:** [I]t is George's grasp of the human factor that makes her novel such a pleasure. She understands the detective's anguish as he contemplates leaving a wife he does not love and children he does love; she captures the pain of the baseball player and his wife as the loss of their baby rocks their marriage. And Marina Benedict, intelligent and beautiful, brave in confronting criminals but uncertain in the face of love, is a heroine to savor. This is a thinking person's thriller, written with skill, self-confidence and sensitivity -- a fine piece of work.

Entertainment Weekly: George's off-beat thriller about an out of work actress who accidentally becomes involved in a high profile child abduction case boasts three ingredients too often missing from the suspense genre: irony, humor, and plausibly flawed, cliché-free characters. Marina Benedict may be young and beautiful, and the cop she falls in love with handsome (and married), but they've got beautifully delineated inner lives that are far from picture perfect. George is as concerned with the random relationships between her protagonists (and thugs) as she is with the investigation. A refreshingly un-gimmicky dénouement doesn't compromise these character-driven realities -- or the reader's intelligence. **Glamour:** A pretty, baby-lusting actress whose marriage is on the rocks; a kind-hearted, workaholic cop; a set of new parents, the father a rookie pitcher for the Pittsburgh Pirates; and some cold-blooded, baby-stealing crooks. These are just a few of the players George expertly juggles in her gripping, romantic debut thriller, which kicks off when the actress, Marina, notices a mother and a baby, then moments later spots the baby with a suspicious stranger. You'll pant with every plot turn as you revel in George's sensual, often profound prose. **Pittsburgh Magazine:** Summer is close enough to take an early start on your beach reading with a new thriller involving an actress, a kidnapping and the Pirates. *Taken*, by Kathleen George of Pitt's theater department, pairs an unusual heroine with a thoughtful hero

opposing some very well-drawn villains in a well-paced story that it would be a shame to give away. The plot is perfectly up-to-the-minute, the characters are engaging and the narrative will make it difficult to put down. Read it now before the pools open.

Abilene [Texas] Reporter-News: In this debut novel, acclaimed short-story writer Kathleen George brings to the reader ... a mystery that is both complex and heartbreaking. *Taken* is fast-paced and original.

George Pelecanos: *Taken* is that rare thriller that gives as much weight to its characters and prose as it does to its ticking time-bomb plot. The story drew me in, but it was the author's fallible, very human cast that kept me coming back for more. I look forward to reading anything that Kathleen George writes.

Nicholas Pileggi: *Taken* is wonderful tautly constructed, complex. The criminals are as interesting as the heroes.

Margot Livesey: From the opening pages of *Taken* to the final heart-stopping paragraphs, I was transported by Kathleen George's complex characters and masterful storytelling. It's a rare pleasure to read a novel so brilliantly plotted, so richly peopled, and so elegantly written.

Perri O'Shaughnessy: A writer who knows the world of the heart as well as the world of crime.