



## Cuts Like a Knife

*M.K. Gilroy*

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## **Cuts Like a Knife** M.K. Gilroy

Someone new has moved to town . . . and that means murder.

Chicago has new resident, a heartless killer with a long and bloody history. When a successful young woman is found dead in her fashionable town home, a red flag lights up FBI computers in Washington, D.C. The Feds know an elusive “organized killer” is at work again. The problem is they have only one tenuous lead to assist the Chicago Police Department in the manhunt . . . a most unlikely place the killer hunts for his victims.

Detective Kristen Conner is light as a feather but punches hard as a heavyweight. A cop’s kid, her life is built on faith, family, and catching criminals. She coaches her niece’s soccer team, the Snowflakes, when she isn’t fighting with her CPD partner or glamorous TV news reporter sister—or going undercover to find the man who is terrorizing the women of her city.

She’s a good cop but she’s never faced an adversary like this. From an opening chase that leads Kristen to a back alley where a punk with a knife awaits her, to the climactic and head-spinning ending where she goes one-on-one with the hauntingly familiar man who is killing innocent women in her city, *Cuts Like a Knife*, is loaded with action, suspense, and humor through the voice of its irrepressible lead character.

## **Cuts Like a Knife Details**

Date : Published August 4th 2015 by Mark Gilroy Creative LLC (first published October 23rd 2012)

ISBN : 9780991212446

Author : M.K. Gilroy

Format : Paperback 418 pages

Genre : Mystery, Christian Fiction, Suspense, Fiction, Christian

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# From Reader Review Cuts Like a Knife for online ebook

## C.J. Darlington says

I loved this book! There. I've said it. I'm a huge fan of character driven suspense novels, and there just aren't enough of them in the CBA. Kristin, the main character, is a real person who struggles with faith like all of us. She's strong (but not to a fault), funny, and a darn good detective. Mark Gilroy is an author to watch. He's written believably and honestly about a serial killer without dragging readers through every horrible cut of the knife. Crime scenes are described, yet leave enough to our imagination. I haven't read a book like this since Sibella Giorello's *The Rivers Run Dry*. Highly recommended.

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## Nancy says

Detective Krtisten Conner of the Chicago Police is hot on the trail of a serial killer known as the Cutter Shark, who's been targeting young women with successful careers. Either helped or hindered by her firey temper (depending on how you look at it), she is determined to bring the killer to justice despite interference from her mother, two sisters, and a guy she just met at her church who just does not seem to take no for an answer.

A fast-moving read with feisty Kristen very believable. Is is easy to relate with her in her dealings with her "helicopter" family who really mean well but whom Kristen often finds annoying. The Christian bent has a strong presence but not too overbearig. A satisfying read for those wanting fast-paced suspense but don't want the graphic sex scenes often found in other suspense novels; nothing of the sort is found here.

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## Joanne says

I really enjoyed 'Cuts Like a Knife'. It is an exciting book that kept me entertained throughout. It is very well written, and although the book is about a serial killer it is done in such a way that I didn't find it harrowing. I liked the fact that the lead character had her own problems to work through which made the story more realistic. Although the book is Christian-based it reads like real life and is not preachy. There were threads left suggesting that the series will continue where this book finished, and I eagerly await the next one.

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## Iola says

The opening chapter of *Cuts Like a Knife* is narrated by a psychopath planning his next event, and is spine-chillingly outstanding. The main narrator is Kristen, and her point of view is interspersed with short chapters from the murderer and from an online vlogger.

Kristen is a Chicago Police Department detective, soccer coach for her niece's team, and almost-ex girlfriend of Dell (it would be a lot easier to become the ex if Mom didn't keep inviting him home for dinner). She's just been appointed to a team investigating the murder of a young woman, because the FBI suspect she isn't a lone victim: instead, she is the 48th victim of a serial killer that has struck six previous cities.

Kristen is a very matter of fact narrator with a dry sense of humour. She's not a girlie girl, but that fits her tough persona, a hardnosed cop in a family where her sisters have achieved as stereotypical women (one is a pastor's wife, the other is a beautiful TVnews reporter). Kristen is not even close to perfect, unlike many Christian fiction heroines. She has anger issues stemming from her father's death, she disobeys orders and while she can hold up her end in a fight, she is not great with a firearm.

It soon becomes apparent to the reader that the killer is setting Kristen up to be his victim, which raises the ante and makes finding him even more important, but then there is a twist... I don't put spoilers in my reviews but I have to say that this one kept me on the edge. Gilroy is good at employing flashes of humour to cut through the tension, and at giving us a feel for the level of horror without needing to spell out the gory details.

As a Christian literary agent, Mark Gilroy will have seen thousands of manuscripts, and must have a pretty good idea of what is good and what sells. Knowing what is good and what is not does not automatically mean that you (or I) can write something that actually is good. But Mark has managed to cross this barrier, and I recommend *Cuts Like A Knife* to anyone who likes a good thriller. I hope the ending is setting us up for a sequel, because this is an excellent first novel, and I would certainly read more from Mark Gilroy. Just not late at night...

Thanks to Worthy Publishing and NetGalley for providing a free ebook for review. You can find out more about Mark at his website [www.markgilroy.com](http://www.markgilroy.com).

This review also appears on my blog, [www.christianreads.blogspot.com](http://www.christianreads.blogspot.com).

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## **Fiction Aficionado says**

Whew! What a great read! It took me a couple of chapters to get into the first person, present tense point of view for the main character, but once I did this was one of those books that constantly called to me, asking to be picked up so I could read 'just a few more chapters'. I'm tempted to say it was an intense read, but I think that's just the lingering effects of the last quarter of the book! The rest of the book wasn't so much intense as it was compelling.

The story intermingled Kristen's personal and professional life well. She's not the most affable character I've come across—she tends to be cynical, sardonic, quick to anger, and not at all prone to smiling—but there are plenty of hints that this is not who she really is underneath it all, and for some reason... I like her. She's not unaware of her own faults either, and I get the sense that we're going to learn more about her (particularly the effect her father's recent death has had on her) as the series continues. I'm looking forward to seeing how her character grows, and will also be watching to see how things develop between her and a certain FBI agent...

The other thing I thought worked really well was the journal entries of the serial killer. It was a chillingly authentic voice, and gave the reader enough insight into his mind and actions to build anticipation and tension without revealing who he was. So often it seemed like the pieces should have fit together, and yet... they didn't. But when they finally did... Oh boy! Then did it get interesting!

I should add that, while the subject matter is gritty, it wasn't graphic.

This was a great beginning to the series. I'm hooked!

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### **Donna says**

This is my first book by this author. This was a christian fiction mystery. Overall I liked this. The mystery was entertaining. It felt a little light, but it still worked. The one thing that makes this three stars and not four is that some of the dialogue for a few of the different characters was kind of cheesy. It just made me groan a little. I have the second novel in this series and am ready to give it a go as well.

I liked the MC. She was funny. She also had her flaws, but I had a hard time understanding them since her family upbringing sounded kind of perfect without dysfunction.

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### **Nicole says**

Cuts Like a Knife was a fairly quick read for just over 400 pages, but I just didn't ever really feel all that engaged with the characters or the story. This is an issue I seem to have a lot with books that fall into the Christian fiction genre. I don't know if it's too much trying to keep things PG, but yet again, there is an edge that is lacking.

My biggest problem with the story was the lead character. Kristen is, to be completely honest, annoying. She is angry and judgmental and not particularly likable. She's also one of the most cliched tough-girl detectives ever. Add to that the ridiculous number of potential love-interests and serial-killer red herrings and could no longer suspend my disbelief.

The serial killer himself was a slight twist, but very two-dimensional. There's only minimal back story for him and no motive. There's little detective work throughout the book - everything that leads to the killer is literally happenstance. And there is no way this killer has committed the number of crimes attributed to him. He's not that organized.

And to round out the negatives, we spend WAY too much time with Kristen's family, who are also annoying and judgmental.

Basically, I wouldn't recommend Cuts Like a Knife, and I didn't enjoy the first book enough to read any further in the series.

Full review here: <http://ennleesreadingcorner.wordpress...>

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### **Gail Welborn says**

\*\*\*From a 30-year veteran of the publishing industry, his debut suspense is not one to miss\*\*\*

M.K. Gilroy, 30-year veteran of the publishing industry, uses years of experience and writing skill to craft this accomplished debut suspense—Cuts like a Knife. There he draws readers into a tale of mystery, romance

and intrigue with a dash of humor rarely seen in introductory books; his well-done characterizations served up with fast-moving schemes that keep readers involved.

Readers first meet Chicago's Kristen Conner, a bright and sassy detective who loves her family, coaches her niece's soccer team, loves her mom and makes time to attend church on Sunday. It's a routine of normalcy that adds sanity to a life that otherwise revolves around homicide, bad guys and chaos whether petty punks, thieves, murderers or serial killers.

Especially a serial killer recently moved to Chicago from California ready to end his "self-imposed limbo" from six months of tortured self-restraint, something he would never get used to. Still he knew his season of self-discipline would soon end after his "signature artistry" announced his arrival. For today, he was content to sit "...at the precipice of his next great work..." because "tomorrow was April Fool's Day."...Full Review: <http://tinyurl.com/bu9opjh>

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### **Teresa says**

Loved the book. Kept me guessing. I thought I had it figured out early on. I was WRONG! Kristen made me laugh because she said the same things that many of us feel.

This was a story about a regular person who is a Christian living out her life with real problems and how she deals with them. Just like us.

Can't wait until the new book comes out in October(?)!

I recommend reading this book.

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### **Nicole says**

Detective Kristen Conner, the newest detective with the Chicago PD, is after a ruthless serial killer dubbed The Cutter Shark. The killer targets young women with successful careers.

Kristen is a tough girl, she grew up in a cop's home and takes intense hand-to-hand combat training.

Faith and family are important to Kristen. She coaches her 7-year old niece Kendra's soccer team, The Snowflakes, she always shows up to family dinners, and almost never misses church.

But things get crazy when she's assigned to the Cutter Shark case. Kristin is a good cop, but she's never faced anything like this before. Will she be able to stop the Cutter Shark before he kills again?

I really liked this book! Kristin, the main character, is pretty cool. She's tough, funny, and not too girly, so I identified well with her ;)

I liked that Kristin struggled some with her faith and didn't come across as too perfect or preachy. She has anger problems, but tries hard to overcome them. I felt like I really got to 'know' the characters.

I never lost interest and was left guessing who the killer was until the very end! Which is a great feat if you ask me, because I'm not too easy to fool ;)

This book is very well written, realistic, and relatable. I can't wait until the next book!

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### **PopcornReads says**

I may not be a woman who can literally kick butt but I certainly love to read about women who can. So when I read the publisher's short description for *Cuts Like a Knife*, Book #1 in a new detective mystery series by publishing veteran Mark K. Gilroy, I knew it was probably going to be my kind of novel. After reading it, I was shocked to learn it was a debut novel. Gilroy's writing feels effortless, as if he had been doing this for decades. Read the rest of my review at <http://popcornreads.com/?p=3537>

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### **yoksan says**

I received a copy of this book through NetGalley.

I think it would be fair to state that:

1) I dislike first person POV in my books, so this review would probably be a bit bias...okay, make that a lot bias.

2) it was converted from PDF to Kindle file, so the format and stuffs might not come out as intended, which should be noted because this book seemed to be told entirely in first person POV, and the POV shifts might not be very distinct after the conversion

Now, on with the review...

(Since the private note became too...crowded, I moved my note up here)

At the time of writing this (Jun, 1), I'm not yet done with the book.

(view spoiler)

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### **Glenajo says**

Full of Tension!

Kristen Conner, the newest detective on the force, does not know that a new serial killer in town focuses on

her. Attempting to live up to her father's reputation at the police department, Kristen pushes herself to go the distance, with her family, in the department, and during self-defense training, but not at personal relationships. The FBI lists AA meetings as a place where the killer met some of his victims, so Kristen begins attending, meeting some others there that help her grow, but all the while the killer watches. Where will he strike next?

This is a great read! Kristen relies on her family, but also on the Lord for her strength. Maybe I am slow, but Gilroy kept me guessing almost until Kristen figures out the identity of the killer, and I was on pins and needles with the ending. I would recommend this for anyone who enjoys a hunt for a serial killer, but the Christian adds to the depth. Though there is violence, there is no profanity or sex.

Received Galley from NetGalley.com

Published by Worthy Publishing, April 3, 2012.

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## **Lisa Johnson says**

Title: Cuts Like a Knife (A Kristen Conner Mystery #1)

Author: M. K. Gilroy

Pages: 410

Year: 2012

Publisher: Worthy Publishing

Kristen Conner has anger issues; just ask her family and friends! She is a detective with the Chicago Police Department, lives alone and goes to church. Now, she has been assigned a new case. There has been a grisly murder of a woman by means of a knife. The manner of the murder has alerted the FBI, which then sends a task force to work in conjunction with the Chicago Police Department. This may be the work of a serial killer who has used the same method of murder in several other cities, then goes underground for a little while and pops back up in another city months or even years later. Chicago could be the sixth city where the killer has struck. Another body is soon discovered killed in the same manner. Another thing in common in all the murders is that the killer never leaves any evidence, so the task force has very little to investigate.

As the pressure to solve the case mounts, Kristen's anger and keeping herself at a distance from others increases. She spends all her time working the case, trying to catch the killer. Her love life takes a down turn, but she doesn't seem too upset by this. She has no time for a relationship right now, even though she is quickly approaching thirty as her family points out. As the killer continues to evade the police, Kristen discovers a clue that might solve the case.

I really liked this character. She has a great sense of humor and is grounded in her faith. She is a gritty, sometimes in-your-face person who is also well-versed in defending herself the old school way...with her fists. She will do anything to protect her family and pushes her bosses to the limit by ignoring their orders. Her father was on the Chicago police force and she feels honored to follow in his footsteps. The story is full of action, tension, loyalty, family devotion and much more. Kristen will make you laugh and sometimes make you cringe at some of her more direct comments or observations. I can't wait to read book two in the series, Every Breath You Take.

My rating is 5 stars out of 5.

Note: The opinions shared in this review are solely my responsibility.



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**Amy says**

Debut Inspirational -- A little slow to start, but then the action really takes off. This story reads like a thriller and is light on the religious aspect.

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