



## The Silent Sister

*Diane Chamberlain*

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## **The Silent Sister** Diane Chamberlain

"Chamberlain's powerful story is a page-turner to the very end." -*Library Journal*

Riley MacPherson has spent her entire life believing that her older sister Lisa committed suicide as a teenager. It was a belief that helped shape her own childhood and that of her brother. It shaped her view of her family and their dynamics. It influenced her entire life. Now, more than twenty years later, her father has passed away and she's in New Bern, North Carolina, cleaning out his house when she finds evidence that what she has always believed is not the truth. Lisa is alive. Alive and living under a new identity. But why, exactly, was she on the run all those years ago? What secrets are being kept now, and what will happen if those secrets are revealed? As Riley works to uncover the truth, her discoveries will put into question everything she thought she knew about her family. Riley must decide what the past means for her present, and what she will do with her newfound reality. Told with Diane Chamberlain's powerful prose and illumination into the human heart and soul, *The Silent Sister* is an evocative novel of love, loss, and the bonds among siblings.

"Enthralling and gripping...Chamberlain has a gift for telling stories about families whose good intentions go awry in difficult circumstances. Her characters are always portrayed with an understanding that sometimes life's most tragic mistakes require heroic strength to survive." -*Book Reporter*

## **The Silent Sister Details**

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Author : Diane Chamberlain

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## From Reader Review The Silent Sister for online ebook

### Dale Harcombe says

After the death of her father, Riley MacPherson returns to her childhood home. While clearing out her father's possessions she finds out more than she bargained for about her father and also the sister who she barely remembers. Lisa was 17 when newspapers reported her death and Riley 2 so it is hardly surprising Riley doesn't remember her, especially when there seems to be so much mystery surrounding Lisa's apparent suicide. But could there be more to the story? There certainly is. Some families are good at covering up the truth and Riley's family had certainly done that. Riley's brother Danny is suffering from post traumatic stress that is not all to do with his tours in Iraq. He wants nothing to do with the family home or the past and certainly doesn't want to talk about Lisa, who he blames for the problems in his family.

This story sucked me in as others of Diane Chamberlain's have done. Once I started I had to keep reading even though I had a fair idea I had figured out the family secrets. I was happy to be proved right.

I liked the character of Riley but found Danny hard to get a handle on and I wasn't completely convinced by the way it left the end with Danny. Some of the characters are very unlikable but are necessary to the story while others are lovable and just as necessary to the plot. Others seem to be one thing and then end up being different as you learn more about them. This was an absorbing read, although once again I could have done without the use of the f word.

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### Deanna says

4.5 stars

I really enjoyed this book. I have read all of Diane Chamberlain's books and was anxiously awaiting this one. I was not disappointed. I read it in a very short time which is unusual lately. However, this book kept me interested. I am excited for her next book!

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### Jennifer says

The Silent Sister is a standalone novel written by author Diane Chamberlain. This novel features two parallel storylines: one that reveals a past family drama and one that shows how the present-day family is dealing with slow discoveries related to it. While reading this type of writing style, I usually have a favorite storyline, and "the past" was my favorite in this one. But with both, I was caught up in the intrigue, the mystery, even some light suspense, and I experienced a great amount of emotion on behalf of the characters. I was so eager to soak up every little detail. Once the storylines intersected, even more was revealed and the novel built up for a perfect climactic ending...the only thing was the ending was far less than climactic. The truths that were revealed were unfortunately very predictable in my opinion, and with so many possible scenarios available for the ending, I couldn't help but be somewhat disappointed with the author's decision. The Silent Sister is by no means a bad book. I thoroughly enjoyed this novel (the audio is excellent!) and I had a hard time putting it down, but a more dramatic ending could have made this a very memorable, 5-star experience for me. Regardless, I am going with 4 stars (although I considered 3) because I really did like it. I just didn't love it...especially the ending!

Here are some of the possible endings that floated through my brain in the final chapters:  
(view spoiler)

### **My favorite quote:**

*“No matter how many people care about you, she thought, if you can't be open with them about who you truly are, you're still alone.”*

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### **Christine says**

I was lucky enough to win an ARC of this book through a Goodreads Giveaway in exchange for an honest review. I want to thank St. Martin's Press for the gift.

This novel was a real pleasant surprise for me. I usually read thrillers, but I entered the Giveaway contest for this book as the plot looked interesting. It wasn't long before I was pulled into the story and was totally engrossed thereafter. I read the book in 4 days which is really fast for me. I will not re-summarize the plot, only to say that the author does an excellent job in depicting the potentially devastating consequences when family members are not honest with each other.

Ms. Chamberlain is a talented writer, and the prose flowed nicely, especially with the short chapters. I liked the way the POV switched often between Riley and Jade; this was never confusing as the chapters were well-labelled. This technique resulted in excellent character development of the two protagonists. I really felt myself getting involved in their plights and really caring what would happen to them. There was also quite a bit of time shifting, but again the reader was well-informed of the changes. I loved all the twists and turns. The two huge twists in the last third of the book really took me by surprise--kudos to Ms. Chamberlain for fooling me!

The only negative in my opinion was the relatively abrupt ending. I wanted to know much more about the lives of Riley and Jade subsequent to the last chapter than the epilogue provided. This dropped my score from 5.0 to 4.5, but the book is closer to 5.0 than 4.0; thus, a 5 star rating from me.

I had never read any of Ms. Chamberlain's books before this one, but based on how much I enjoyed *A Silent Sister*, I definitely plan to read more. I highly recommend this novel to anyone who has an interest in women's fiction.

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### **Carole says**

Every time I finish a Diane Chamberlain book, I'm reminded why she is at the top of my favorite authors list!! Her stories always have characters I love and care about, and the plot twists are amazing. When I'm reading her novels, I cruise through them, turning pages and finishing chapters faster than I normally do because I have to know what happens next to those characters I adore. This makes for a great read you'll love to curl up with!

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### **Katie B says**

This is the type of book that is enjoyable even when you have an idea what is going to happen. You feel invested enough in the story to actually watch it play out even if it is predictable.

Riley MacPherson's father has recently passed and she returns to her childhood home to sort through his belongings. It's up to her to get everything in order because her sister committed suicide when Riley was a toddler, her mother died years ago and her brother Danny won't be much help because he has his own set of problems. While going through her father's stuff she comes across things that indicate that her sister Lisa might actually be alive. But if she didn't commit suicide where is she and why did she leave?

Poor Riley. Talk about some family drama. I think this makes a really good fiction read as opposed to just a straight mystery. The family dynamics are so interesting and it's fascinating to see how certain events affected each family member and how they interacted with one another. I really enjoyed watching it all unfold even if nothing was super surprising. My only criticism is I didn't really care for some of the dialogue in the last 50 pages. There were a few lines that were cheesy and sounded like they belonged more on a bad soap opera.

Definitely recommend if you enjoy books with complex characters and enjoy family dramas.

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### **Diane S ? says**

2.5 When Riley returns home to clear out her Father's house after his death, she finds everything she believed about her family was wrong.

A story about secrets and the detrimental effect on a family. This is not one of my favorites of Chamberlain novels. Although at times the story was interesting I felt the plot was uneven. At times over dramatic and the dialogue forced and stilted. Usually this author does a good job writing women's fiction, aptly straddling the line between wringing excess emotion out of the reader and providing an interesting and quality plot. This plot and especially the ending seemed implausible.

That said I will still read her next novel, because one mishap in my book, does not mean I will not give her another chance. I have loved many of her books in the past.

ARC from Netgalley.

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### **Elyse says**

Audiobook..... ( gotta love the library Overdrive... keeps improving too)

Easy Listening..... easy to follow ....engaging ... not earth-shattering fantastic....  
but I enjoyed turning in to this station. The narrator's voice was 'very pleasant' - and held my attention. I was a happy camper!!!

I guess I'd call this mystery-light! Lisa, a musical prodigy on the violin, age 16, is assumed dead..... having committed suicide many years ago.....after having committed murder, and before her court date.

So... rather than a 'whodunit' mystery, it's more a 'whydunit' mystery. The reader is always wondering 'why' .... why did Lisa kill herself? Or did she? They never found her body. Why or why not?

What I enjoyed was the comfortable easy tone --- my emotions were never TOO HIGH or TOO LOW.... or TOO CRITICAL.

I was peacefully happy enough being 'read to'.....while soaking in the pool, walking, cooking, or resting in the sauna. Every time I listened to this audiobook-- it felt like I had a little friend with me 'chatting-away'. ...., telling me a story! Duh! lol I WAS being told a story. Everything was breezy engaging-- nice brain teaser relaxer....( both). Let's face it.... it's a different type of listening to then "Truman" or "The "Destiny of the Republic". I still have a LONG way to go with Truman -- but one more long walk - and I'm almost done with "Destiny of the Republic"... One part was soooo exciting - I scream to the trees and cheered! -

But back to Diane Chamberlain's novel....

Riley & Danny ( brother and sister), are two characters you will get to know well. They are very different--- but ( for me)---I never spent 'any' time judging either one of them. I simply was 'engaged' in knowing WHO THEY WERE - WHY THEY WERE THE WAY THEY WERE.

I'm sure credit belongs to author Diane Chamberlain--but I have a hunch I might not have liked this book is much 'without' the audiobook. Everything about the woman's voice blended beautifully with my extremely busy tasks ... haha while audio-enjoying!!!

I plan to try another 'written' book by Diane Chamberlain. I had only read one: a huge surprise-- to win "Necessary Lies", as a Goodreads give-a-way years ago .... and the book blew my mind it was so great. I learned a lot & loved it.

My next Chamberlain book "The Midwife's Confession" .... comes recommended to me by KAS. I happen to have a paper copy in the house. So....I'll test out Chamberlain again. KAS says it's one of the authors best books!

This one... 4 stars for pure engaging story. Kept me interested!

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### **Heather 'Bookables' says**

I really enjoyed this book. It kept me on the edge of my seat and some parts were def. predictable but I still enjoyed the journey it took to get there. The ending was rushed and the majority of the secrets and etc spilled out in the last 50 pages which wasn't enough time for me. I would recommend this to anyone who's looking for a good mystery to read.

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### **\*TANYA\* says**

What an amazing book. I really enjoyed this book. I will definitely be looking into more books from this author.

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### **Patrice Hoffman says**

Imagine everything you've been told about you, your family, and your long lost sister are all lies? Well, in Diane Chamberlain's *The Silent Sister* Riley MacPherson finds that the stories she's been told of her sister, believed to have committed suicide as a teenager, just may in fact be alive. How's that for a huge family secret?

Riley is trying to clean out her father's home when a series of events lead her to believe that she may in fact want to investigate her past. At the age of 25, all the people she could ask were long gone. Her mother died when she was young, her father recently deceased, and Danny, her brother, are all unable to answer the questions she desperately needs answering. That is until Riley delves a little deeper into the mystery that is her family.

I've never read any other books by Diane Chamberlain and I'm not sure what I expected, but this novel reads like chick-lit. That is fine and dandy if that's what you're in the mood for, but I definitely wasn't which is unfortunate because *The Silent Sister* is actually gripping from the beginning. We are introduced to Riley, a social worker, who based her whole career choice as a social worker on a sister she hasn't known since she was two years old. She's even patient with her brother Danny who suffers from some form of PTSD after having been wounded in Iraq.

There are a few things I found wrong with this book which makes it impossible for me to give it more than 2-stars. And sadly, it's not because of the writing which is not bad at all. It's simply so darn predictable this novel. From beginning to end it is predictable. The characters, even Riley, are paper thin, and I almost felt like one storyline (with the crazy RV park couple) was too neatly tossed away and sewn up. I mean... it can't be that easy to get out of a contract is it?

Anyway, *The Silent Sister* may not have been a great read for me, I certainly wouldn't say it's not worth a gander especially if women's literature is your thing. It's usually my thing, but I expected more of a mystery-type thriller with a hint of chick-lit instead of the other way around. Overall, I would definitely read more by this author.

*Copy provided by St. Martin's Press via Netgalley*

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### **Lisa says**

This sister can stay silent no longer: I LOVED THIS BOOK!

I was THRILLED to receive this book from Goodreads, and here is my honest review:

This was a fantastic book! How is it that I never knew about this author? I'm so glad that I won this book, because who knows how much longer I would have gone without having Diane Chamberlain on my radar? One more day would have been too long. So goodreads, I thank you.

I don't want to give away any of the plot. I will tell you this: there is a sister. She is silent. Why? That's what I'm not telling you. But Riley is going to find out. She also has a brother. He might as well be called The Silent Brother. You'll see why. And there are other people and they all have seeeeeeeeecrets.

There are lots of twists. My best estimate is a twist every 35 pages. This book is so much fun, and impossible to put down. And sooooo well-written. This wins the Lisa-prize for 2014 Most Addictive Read of the Year. Congratulations, Diane! 5 STARS!!!!

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### **Margitte says**

This is the second book of this author that I finished and once again I am emotionally invested in the deftly plotted, immensely readable, and masterfully executed saga of a family in crisis.

Perhaps the title could have been *The Violin named Violet*. Mmm...yes, a bit too much, but really, this violin in this tale had this mysterious story to tell: "Hi, my name is Violet, Violet MacPherson, the only member of this family, apart from Lisa who committed suicide at the age of sixteen, who knows what really happened and it is not what you think! Yes, there was ice on the river, and a murder, and then silence.....until now! So hear me out, this is my story, Riley MacPherson. Danny, you need to know as well, whether you like it or not. Come. Let's talk about your dad, your mom and Lisa."

Heartbreaking and shocking. Endearing and passionate. Possible and impossible. It's all elements in the narrative covering the lives of three people surviving a fatal event in their lives. All the characters in the book were simultaneously bad and good. It is called being human. And all of them can be forgiven.

I LOVED this book. Recommended in UPPER CASE to those who enjoy family dramas with a mysterious twist. The plot is a prime example of an irrational common sense that I would gladly subscribe to. And this is where I get off and leave you wondering. Read the official blurb if you want to know more. What a pity that it blows the cover of the drama ;-)

Diane Chamberlaine is definitely becoming one of my favorite authors for those relaxing, entertaining, dramatic community and family sagas.

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### **Lady Vigilante (Feifei) says**

**3-3.5 stars!!**

**99% of the books I read are strictly romance but sometimes I need a mystery/thriller/suspense to spice things up a bit and The Silent Sister seemed like a good choice. Overall, I was left somewhat underwhelmed, but I had a blast unraveling this intricately-woven mystery!**

Riley's father has passed away and she returns to her childhood home to settle his affairs and the house. She doesn't expect to uncover a boatload of family secrets, including the one that reveals the truth about her older sister Lisa: *she's still alive.*

My feelings for this book are really divided – on one hand I truly enjoyed the mystery element and the story was riveting and engrossing, but on the other hand, some events that take place are so predictable and/or far-fetched I had trouble identifying with the narrative as a whole. I would say the general mystery part I guessed from the very beginning (YAY ME!) but nevertheless, I liked how the author revealed it with a few side twists.

As for characters, unfortunately I never connected with them enough to be invested in anyone. My favorite by far is Lisa and she's probably the character the author develops the most. In the beginning I really sympathized for her and what she had to go through.

But once the whole mystery part was over, I really disliked the way the author portrayed the characters and the events that followed after: they were ludicrous, the reactions didn't appropriately match the situations, and the reasoning was baffling. Even if I could suspend disbelief (which I can't by the way) the last 25% of the book and the super big reveal about Riley and Lisa smacked a huge WTF on my face. That couldn't have been more rushed. Plus, the end of the book left me with more questions than answers, like (view spoiler)

Long story short, I loved putting the pieces of the puzzle together but anything that happened afterwards lost my interest, as stated above. Though not my favorite from this author, I'm still a huge fan of hers because she wrote one of my favorite women's fiction stories - *The Secret Life of CeeCee Wilkes*. My recommendation for The Silent Sister is pretty flimsy but not for The Secret Life of CeeCee Wilkes! If you want a truly stunning women's fiction novel with political intrigue, romance, mystery, and suspense, give that book a shot! It's one of my favorites.

*ARC provided by St. Martin's Press via NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.*

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### **Julie says**

The Silent Sister by Diane Chamberlain is a 2014 St. Martin's Press publication.

I have enjoyed every book I've read by Diane Chamberlain, but this is one of those I missed along the way. I recently saw Buzzfeed's list of the top most suspenseful books and this one was pretty far up on the list. So, I immediately went in search of a copy. (Once more my Overdrive library account proves invaluable!)

Years ago, Lisa, a young musical prodigy with a bright future ahead of her, disappeared and is presumed dead, a victim of suicide. Her body was never found...

When Riley's father dies suddenly, she becomes the executor of his will because her older brother, Danny, is

a war veteran with a host of issues. As she deals with the terms of her father's will and prepares to go through his personal papers and possessions in order to sell his place, she unearths a torrent of old family secrets, including the shocking truth surrounding her older sister's alleged suicide. When someone hints at the possibility her sister could still be alive, Riley becomes nearly obsessed with the notion of finding her, but if Lisa is still alive, and Riley manages to locate her, she could be putting her in a very precarious position.

This story was very complex and emotional, and except for a few too many strokes of luck and some implausible circumstances, and a couple of occasions where the story lost a little momentum, the book was near perfect. I don't know if I felt the level of suspense the book is supposed to trigger, but I did find it to be a top notch mystery and a very compelling family drama, that left me contemplating all that happened and believing that, yes, punishment and justice does come in all forms, even though I still felt a little conflicted by how everything played out.

The characters are human, flawed, mysterious, vulnerable and weak in many ways, filled with pain, regret, anger, and sadness, but also full of love and hope. I can't say I understood Danny's intense anger, especially after he finally knows the whole truth, and his volatile nature is the only reason I was left with any residual feelings of unease. Riley is perhaps a little too naïve, too easily manipulated, and sheltered which came back to bite her on a few occasions, but I really did like her.

The secondary characters were well drawn, all doing their part to create the desired atmosphere and help weave this sordid tale of lies and secrets.

I was totally immersed in the story, and am glad I took a time out from my review schedule to fit this one in.

4 stars

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