



Paper Ghosts

Julia Heaberlin

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Jahrelang hat Grace auf diesen Moment hingearbeitet. Sie hat trainiert, sie hat recherchiert. Jetzt ist sie sicher, dass der alte Mann neben ihr auf dem Beifahrersitz der Mörder ihrer Schwester ist.

Carl Louis Feldman ist Fotograf. Die Frau auf dem Fahrersitz behauptet, dass er eine Reihe von Mädchen umgebracht hat. Doch er weiß nichts davon. Er hat ohnehin kaum mehr Erinnerungen an sein Leben.

Je länger der Road Trip dauert, desto größer werden die Zweifel. Ist Carl ein gebrochener, dementer Mann, dem schreckliches Unrecht widerfährt? Oder ist er ein gefährlicher Psychopath, der nun zur Rechenschaft gezogen werden muss?

Paper Ghosts Details

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Author : Julia Heaberlin

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From Reader Review Paper Ghosts for online ebook

Sheila says

5 stars--I greatly enjoyed this book.

I really loved this book, which is an anthem to Texas disguised as a suspense novel. What made it stand out for me, in a saturated genre that I read a lot of, were the descriptions of the photographs--and actual black-and-white photos included in the book as well. I also loved trying to puzzle out Carl, who was a fascinating character--is he a killer? How progressed is his dementia? Why is he going along with the narrator's plan?

Each little detail comes back around in this book, and it was well worth suspending my disbelief for. Loved it.

I received this review copy from the publisher on NetGalley. Thanks for the opportunity to read and review; I appreciate it!

Liz Barnsley says

I loved Paper Ghosts. When I finished it I wanted to cry and I wasn't sure why or who for. It's interesting that this is a crime novel that ends up, to my mind, being about nearly everything but the crime.

Paper Ghosts is a dual-edged character drama, two people caught up in a mental game of cat and mouse, in Grace's case not only with Carl but with herself. She believes he killed her sister, she is not sure if his illness is real or an attempt to hide, for Carl's part he's not saying. The interactions and relationship that grows between these two forms the backbone of the novel – it is fascinating, emotional, haunting and occasionally somewhat beautiful.

Grace is obsessed, determined, Carl is...well what is Carl exactly? Julia Heaberlin captures the sense of dementia pitch perfectly – my Mother is declining with every day so I know – that jumpy, unpredictable behaviour, the flashes of coherence within a maelstrom of unconnected memories and comments, never knowing how they'll be not only from one day to the next but from one moment to the next. As these two move ever onward on their twisted road trip, they have a kind of psychological battle of wills, I just couldn't look away.

Paper Ghosts is not a thriller, it is a slow burner, it builds the tension with every page. The photography angle is eerily ingrained into the wider narrative, giving the whole thing a strangely nostalgic feel, I shall definitely be buying a copy of this, the visual sense of it with the added pictures is a clever feature that just involves you further.

In the end we have resolution, possibly not in the way you would expect – it left me feeling edgy and slightly disconnected, like I said earlier wanting to cry but not sure why.

The writing is beautiful, the story is both beautiful and eerily sinister, if you are looking for those huge twist

moments then you won't find those here – what you will find is an elegantly constructed mystery, the mystery being one of character rather than event in its heart – I thought it was beautifully different, cleverly emotive and completely addictive.

Highly Recommended.

Kendall says

Let's start off by admiring how beautiful the cover is of this book. I LOVE IT!! :)

Our main character Grace was 12 when her sister Rachel went missing and was presumed to be dead but there was no body that was found. As you can imagine, Grace became obsessed with finding out what happened to her sister. Grace's obsession leads her to a man named Carl who used to be a photographer but is now living in a home with other convicts that have dementia. Smart Grace pretends to be Carl's daughter! Super smart on her part right?! :)

The story SLOWLY starts to unravel when Carl and Grace take a road trip together. I feel like I was watching a tennis match between the two.... them playing their own little games with one another back and forth. The author had me wondering does Carl remember more than he is leading on is he truly mentally ill?

The story took off with lighting speed and I thought I was going to enjoy it but unfortunately it just stalled throughout the entire middle and nothing was happening. I was confused a tad throughout the story and was skimming a lot of the middle. The ending just wasn't up to my expectations either and was left wanting more.

I do have to say I loved how the author added photos throughout the novel. I thought this was genius on her part! :)

2.5 stars.

Thank you to Netgalley and Ballantine books for the advanced arc.

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Liz says

Reading Paper Ghosts is like watching a chess game or a tennis match. Back and forth, back and forth. Both individuals have their own agenda and are trying to outwit the other. One, Grace, is the sister of a murder victim who thinks she's identified her sister's killer. That man, who may now be suffering from early onset dementia, was formerly a documentary photographer who was acquitted on the one case taken to court. She takes him on a road trip to view sites of murders he supposedly committed. But her stories seem tenuous at best or nonsensical at worst.

The book consists of mixed media. There are photographs, photographer's notes from Carl's published book, lists and pages out of a youngster's notebook. I liked the way this broke up the story and gave an added dimension.

There's a delicious creep factor to the beginning of the book. It had me squirming. But as the story goes on, the tension comes and goes and in between, the book just seems to sag. Too many scenes that just didn't seem to make sense. Grace is totally paranoid and not just about Carl and his proclivities. The plot didn't hang together and the ending seemed anticlimactic and definitely out of left field.

If I rated this book at the beginning it would have been a five star. But by the end, it was down to a three. I felt like the author squandered a great premise.

My thanks to netgalley and Ballantine Books for an advance copy of this novel.

Diane S ? says

Original and clever. In the twelve years since her sister disappeared, she has been obsessed with finding her body and what happened to her. She has now targeted on a 61 year old, photographer, Carl, a man who took pictures of women she is certain have been his victims. Aquited of the murder of one of the women ,Carl now has dementia and is living in a halfway house. Pretending she is his daughter she decides to take him on a journey to different sites in his photograph, hoping this will spark something in his memory.

Neither of our lead characters are reliable narrators since one has to question if they are always sane. Traveling the state of Texas, many times I wondered if Carl really had dementia, at times he seemed extremely lucid. There is plenty of suspense, had no idea if Carl was guilty or not, though the evidence seemed to suggest his guilt. There was also humor, with the situation itself, with the demands Carl makes, and the ghosts that seem to accompany him. We are even taken to the site of the Davidisns and the markings of the dead. Such a unique albeit strange setup, and one that I thought well done.

I liked this authors previous book, but actually think I liked this one even better. It is hard with so many thrillers and suspense novels being written, to come up with a unique plot as well as unique characters. Haberlin managed to do just that.

ARC from Netgalley.

Christine says

Paper Ghosts is slightly odd. This makes it rather memorable. Julia Heaberlin gives us a slow moving relationship drama. This is a road trip, with a suspected serial killer.

This story takes us into the life of Grace, a woman who is desperate for answers about her missing elder sister. Grace was a twelve year old child, when her sister went missing. This lead to her becoming totally obsessed with the case. She is prepared to conquer her fears and face a monster. She worked out that a photographer, Carl Louis Feldman, was responsible for the murder. He was a prime suspect in the case. Grace has worked out, that he killed more than once. Carl is now living with dementia, in a care home. His memories are slowly being eradicated by illness. Grace believes that by taking him to his various crime scenes, that she can lift a lid on what happened and Carl will admit to his criminal past. Will Grace get to the

truth? Will Carl's memory recover enough to give Grace the answers she needs? Is Carl faking his illness?

With Paper Ghosts, Heaberlin presents a man living with dementia. It is fairly convincing. He is a prisoner of his mind. We see frustration tipping over into anger and violence. We get a sense of the loss he has to live with and the impact on his identity. We see the man. It is a credit to the author, that we see humanity in Carl, through the dementia. He is not just an illness. He is multi-layered. Carl was a photographer. He has a history. He potentially is a killer. He is an enigma.

Carl and Grace are two unusual people. We see some marked similarities, between the two characters. Both seem to be lost. We don't really trust either of them, in terms of their reliability. Grace is lost in the past, missing her sister. She thinks she has all of the answers. Carl is a victim of the dementia, taking away his past piece by piece. Grace finds Carl difficult to deal with, due to his illness and her suspicions about his nature. We see some moving scenes, as Grace has to adjust to living with Carl and his mindset.

Fascinating. Moving. Thought-provoking, as we get to know Carl and Grace. Julia Heaberlin makes the road trip genre her own.

Michelle says

No rating. DNF @ chapter 30 / 43%

I just can't read any further. I read Black-Eyed Susans by this author a few years back and really enjoyed it but this book is SOOOO confusing. Other reviewers seem to really like this one and it makes me feel like I'm reading a completely different book. I don't get it. I don't get any of it.

Thank you to NetGalley for providing me with a digital ARC in exchange for my honest review.

Debra says

"Bad people are to be found everywhere, but even among the worst there may be something good."

Serial Killer or man afflicted with dementia???? That is the question

Carl Feldman is a documentary photographer who is living in a half way house and has been diagnosed with dementia. One day a young woman arrives and claims to be his daughter. She wants to take him on a road trip to see if the trip can jar his memory. She believes he has killed various women who have gone missing or have been killed. He does not believe that she is his daughter, nor does he have any memory of killing anyone but agrees to her road trip if she will meet his conditions.

She agrees to meet his conditions because she has been waiting/Preparing/training for this day. Her older sister, Rachel, went missing when she was 12 years old. Most of her life has been spent obsessing over what happened to her sister. She believes Carl killed her sister as she believes he has killed various young women in the locations where his photographs have been taken.

I read this book in one day. It's not your classic page turner but it does weave quite the story. Is this man a

serial killer, is he innocent, does he really have dementia, is he a victim, are her assumptions correct are some of the questions that went through my mind as I read this book. I really loved how the story builds - it is not fast but it is not slow either. This book is like watching a "sleeper" hit movie. It came out of nowhere with hidden truths, revelations, and hidden agendas. This book is a quiet but effective thriller. It never tries to hard or rushes through anything. I found the pacing to be spot on. I never really knew where this book was going. It was also strangely compelling to see two people on a road trip with their newly acquired dog, Barfly, who did not trust each other. Both were wary of the other. Carl did come off as a creepy guy but then there was that nagging question - was he creepy because he was creepy or because he was ill and could not help himself?

This book turned out to be a little gem. A wonderfully written psychological thriller. It starts a little slowly but as the story builds, you get to be part of a creepy road trip to find the truth no matter what the cost.

I look forward to reading more books by this Author.

Thank you to Random House publishing -Ballantine books and NetGalley who provided me with a copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

See more of my reviews at www.openbookpost.com

Marialyce says

You can follow my reviews at: <https://yayareadslotsofbooks.wordpress...>

A map marked in red with three dots, a serial killer with dementia and a sister who has waited countless years to find her missing sister embark on an atmospheric journey. What could possibly go wrong?

Imagine preparing for twelve long years, formulating plans, practicing, spending countless hours waiting to entrap the man you think kidnapped and murdered your older sister? Now all that planning comes to fruition as Grace takes Carl, a well known former photographer and who she suspects is the man who murdered her sister away with her. Grace endeavors to find Rachel her sister, dedicating her all to finding her sister. Carl is the man she feels killed her sister and others throughout Texas. And yet, here she sits next to him in a car following a map of death and despair. Grace is ready, she has worked out every scenario, every possible twist, every way that Carl can act until he leads her to where her sister is. Grace is obsessed. For twelve years this need has driven her. She is haunted by memories, driven by photographs she is sure Carl has taken, sure they constitute the dead girls he has left behind.

Grace pretends to be his daughter and as she secures Carl from the home where he lives with other convicts with dementia, she will give her all to find Rachel. Carl has dementia, he doesn't seem to know much but he is dangerous. But Grace is prepared or is she?

This well done atmospheric story is one that explores not only what serial killers are but also the mind of dementia as it travels down a road of what to believe is real and what is just figments and allusions. Is Grace really the one with delusions or is Carl exactly the person she has pegged him to be, a killer, the man who murdered her sister?

Thank you to Julia Haeberlin, Penguin Random House, and NetGalley for an advanced copy of this book

We can alleviate physical pain, but mental pain – grief, despair, depression, dementia – is less accessible to treatment. It's connected to who we are – our personality, our character, our soul, if you like. (Richard Eyre) Does Carl have a soul or is he a tainted being who has a lust for death? Is Grace always going to bear mental pain? Will this journey into darkness free her or lead her further into the dark world her mind inhabits? How far would you go?

Holly says

I knew from the very first chapters that I was going to enjoy this book. Grace was only 12 when her older sister went missing, presumed dead when no body turned up. So for years Grace's obsession was to find out what happened to Rachel and find her killer. Her obsession takes her to a man she believes is the killer, a renowned photographer, Carl. So she pretends to be Carl's daughter, because he is now living in a home where convicts with dementia live. This is where the story unfolds as Grace and Carl take a road trip so Grace can get some answers. This was another slow burn type of book. Not a lot happens but you get so invested in the story that you are just dying to know the end result. I enjoyed the stunning pictures that were throughout the book--added to that haunted feeling you get while reading. Another enjoyable read.

*Thank you to the publisher and Netgalley for an ARC in exchange for an honest review.

Elizabeth of Silver's Reviews says

Dementia, a photographer, murders...do they all point to and describe Carl? Is Grace wrong about still thinking that Carl murdered her sister and other women even though he was acquitted of murder?

Grace has been looking for her sister and the person who took her and killed her since she disappeared on her way to her babysitting job.

Grace believes Carl took her sister, and she had a plan on how to trap Carl into confessing and leading her to where her sister is by taking Carl on a ten-day trip across Texas trying to jolt his memory.

Carl is smarter than Grace had anticipated, and her job is more difficult than she expected. Grace also seemed a bit disorganized for all the research and planning she did.

Carl was frightening simply because he didn't seem stable, but did he act the way he did and treat Grace the way he did because he really did have dementia or was he two steps ahead of her for some other reason?

I would have been afraid to be alone with Carl had I been Grace.

Not knowing what to expect next would have had me taking Carl back immediately or not even attempting this trip in the first place. :)

PAPER GHOSTS is very well written, a bit evasive, and chilling. Ms. Heaberlin weaves an absorbing tale with intriguing characters. Her detailed writing is marvelous.

If you think you would enjoy a stressful, not sure why Grace is doing what she is doing “ride,” you won’t be disappointed in the twists and turns and situations that come up.

PAPER GHOSTS is my first book by Ms. Heaberlin, but she definitely knows how to pull you along and keep the suspense going. Dementia was also addressed.

ENJOY if you read this book. 4/5

This book was given to me free of charge and without compensation by the publisher in return for an honest review.

Susanne Strong says

4 Stars.

One woman believes that former photographer Carl Louis Feldman is guilty. Of murder, including the murder of her sister Rachel. He was acquitted of murdering other young women he was accused of and now, he lives in a care home for dementia patients. Yet none of that matters to this young woman, as she knows that Carl is responsible and she is dead set on proving it so that she can finally find out what happened to her sister, twelve years later. How, you ask? It’s quite simple really. She is planning on taking him for a ride. A car ride, that is. All across the State of Texas, visiting sites of his alleged crimes, using the photos he took to hopefully jog his “memory.” This gal poses as his daughter to get him out of his care home and lo’ and behold, it works! Can you say “Yee haw?!” Sounds sketchy to me, and well, to be frank a little dangerous. I, sure as heck wouldn’t voluntarily get into a car with an alleged murderer, but that’s just me. And here you thought I laughed in the face of danger..

What starts out as something of a nightmare, slowly becomes something else altogether. Is Carl’s mind really riddled with dementia? Or could he perhaps be playing his new “friend” like a fiddle? Questions, questions. My mind was racing a mile a minute. Is Carl Louis Feldman really who he seems? No matter how you slice it, Carl is one intriguing man. From all of the conditions he sets, to the things he sees and hears – his thoughts often put a smile on my face and had me laughing out loud. As for the woman? She is interesting, quirky and very determined. She wants someone to pay and she thinks that someone is Carl. She has planned for every contingency and has taken the necessary precautions. Is it enough?

“Paper Ghosts” by Julia Heaberlin is a novel that made my heart beat wildly and my breath catch in my throat. It was a crazy, interesting, wild ride and I enjoyed every second.

Thank you to NetGalley, Random House Publishing Group – Ballantine and Julia Heaberlin for an ARC of this novel in exchange for an honest review.

Published on NetGalley, Goodreads, Twitter and Amazon on 5.31.18.

Sarah Joint says

This story is sly, has some unexpected dark humor, great quotes, and creeps along ever so slowly with some chills on the way. For some readers, it'll be too slow. I was fascinated the whole time. The two main characters are incredibly unique and interesting. The back and forth never ends. You'd assume the serial killer would be the cat and the young woman the mouse, but there were moments I wasn't quite sure. They keep you guessing. The games they play with each other are constant, and you never know who will end up on top.

Carl Feldman was a celebrated photographer before accusations of murder and dementia took everything from him. Under the guise of being his daughter, Grace visits him in his care home. She's spent months picking at his brain. He insists he has no memory of much of his past. He doesn't even know if he's a murderer or not. He certainly wouldn't know if he killed Rachel, Grace's sister. **She's become convinced that Carl is not only responsible for the murder he was put on trial for, but quite a few others... including her sister.** Determined to find the answer to the mystery that's been haunting her since childhood, Grace concocts a crazy plan to help Carl remember: a road trip to places that should stir something in his head. **And if he still has a taste for blood... well, she's ready for him. She thinks.**

The strangest road trip I've ever read about, and an immensely absorbing tale. Certainly one of the most unique books I've read lately. I've definitely added the author to my "must read" list, as I'm quite enamored with her lovely writing style. 4.5 from me, rounded up to a 5. The wistful, slightly blurred, beautiful photos interspersed throughout the book definitely added something special to it as well. Tiny spoiler:(view spoiler)

I received a copy of this book from Net Galley and Ballantine Books, thank you! My review is honest and unbiased.

Lou says

I absolutely loved Julia Heaberlin's novel, "Black Eyed Susans", so reading this new release was a no-brainer for me. The premise of "Paper Ghosts" is an original and imaginative one, it grabbed me from the synopsis and continued to captivate me throughout the book. I particularly enjoyed the tagline - "My sister disappeared. I know who took her. Now I've taken him". Oh, and the beautiful cover! You can't underestimate the advantages that come from it being an eyecatching one.

Carl Feldman, a dementia sufferer, made a name for himself as a photographer. That was until he was tried and acquitted of murder. Grace is certain that Carl is her sister's killer and hatches a plan to visit him in care to take him on holiday, whilst pretending that she is his daughter. Her plan? To take him back to the places he is suspected to have killed women - in the hope that it will jog his memory and lead to him confessing that he did, in fact, kill her sister. So, did he actually do it or is he nothing but an old man with dementia?

I found Heaberlin's writing mesmeric, there are twists aplenty and the story is both haunting and compelling in equal measure. I appreciated the way the subject of dementia was addressed, and was exploited to maximum effect creating an endlessly riveting, unique thriller. There is also a sprinkle of sharp as a tack, black humour which was a great contrast to the evocative prose. There were also sinister and creepy undertones right from the beginning - I do delight in those type of titles.

Overall, this is an authentic and chilling read that uses deeper topics as substantial parts of the main hook. I look forward to Heaberlin's future releases and would definitely add them to my to-be-read heap.

I would like to thank Julia Heaberlin, Penguin UK - Michael Joseph and NetGalley for the opportunity to read an ARC in exchange for an honest review.

Emma says

This may well be one of the most batshit crazy books i've read recently, with both the dementia suffering potential serial murderer and his pretend daughter/investigator being contenders for the mad-as-a-hatter crown.

At the outset, I thought this was going to be an easy 5 stars; it begins with a sly to-and-fro between the pair, a subtle and insidious testing of each other, with every conversation seeming to insinuate dangerous knowledge and hidden truths. Then they embark on what felt like one of those wild peyote driven dreamscapes, two people road tripping in the desert, heading ever closer to disaster and lost in mind, body, and spirit.

Yet this journey took both characters beyond the cryptic psychological fencing in to the ridiculous, straying into reams of paranoid internal monologuing. I was snapped out of the mystery- no longer caring about who murdered whom and whether the main narrator is anywhere close to sane, I just wanted them both to get some serious help. The ending arrived from what might have been a different novel altogether, but did offer some solutions if you're prepared to accept the irrelevance of it all.

Overall, the book failed to mix its varied styles, felt too desperately overwritten, and was ultimately unsatisfying.

ARC via Netgalley