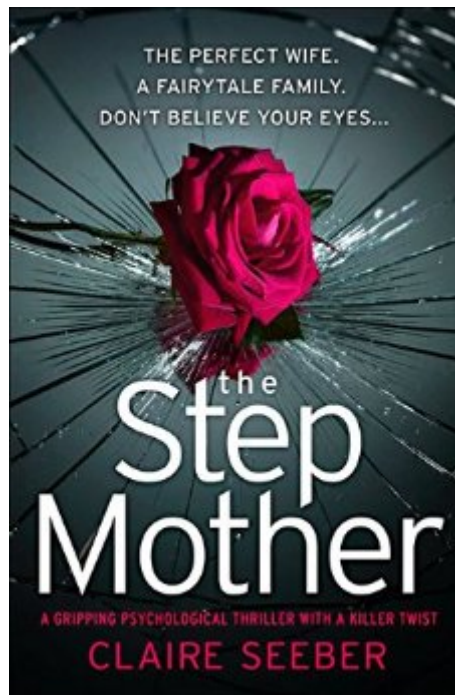


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# The Stepmother: A Gripping Psychological Thriller With A Killer Twist



## Synopsis

The perfect wife. A fairytale family. Don't believe your eyes | Jeanie and Matthew are a happily married couple who both have teenage children from previous relationships. No one said it would be easy to raise a blended family under one roof but Jeanie and Matthew are strong. They will make it work. And whilst Jeanie's step-daughter Scarlett rejects her, Jeanie will just have to try harder to win her over. But Jeanie has a past. A terrible secret she thought she'd buried a long time ago. And now, it's coming to the surface, threatening to destroy her new marriage. Someone is playing a terrifying game on Jeanie and she must put a stop to it once and for all. After all, a fairytale needs a happy ending, doesn't it? A compelling, dark and twisty psychological thriller that will grip fans of *Behind Closed Doors*, *Between You and Me* and *The Teacher*.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I wanted to give up on this book several times. It was so slow but finally picked up around 50%. Yes, it was that slow. Jeanie (40ish) and her sister Marlina (late 30's) grew up with a crappy drug addict mom. Jeanie basically took care of Marlina growing up, Marlina is now a workaholic journalist

always in search of a story. Jeanie marries Matthew within 6 months of meeting. He's a recently divorced man with teenage twins and Jeanie has a 19 year old son. Now let me start by saying I strongly dislike weak, fragile women. Jeanie is one of those. She has this "big" secret, yet every time she plans to tell her husband, something comes up and she can't tell him. I'm okay with a little diversion to add to the story but not over and over. So many parts of this book were completely ridiculous. I wanted Jeanie to just punch someone in the face so many times. She was so weak and full of self doubt. I also felt the author could have left out all the nonsense with Marlena speaking directly to us readers every few chapters. It didn't work for me, same as the "story" Marlena was trying to piece together for her job also didn't have any meaning to this book. Yes I would read another book by this author. I just thought this one was a bit bizarre and far fetched. Not the worst book I've read but I wouldn't recommend it.

Jeanie knows that when she and Matthew marry it won't be easy blending their two families together. Jeanie has a teenage son and Matthew a son and daughter. Matthew's daughter is somewhat resentful of her new stepmother but Jeanie is determined to make things work between the families. However, Jeanie also has a secret that in the rush of her and Matthew's relationship she never actually told Matthew the truth of her past. Now that secret is coming back to haunt her as someone is determined to let the truth out. The Stepmother is somewhat of a retelling of Snow White but even though it's loosely based on that tale this is a dark and twisty version that is completely original. It's easy to say this story is one that will have the pages turning rather quickly as it had me completely engaged in it from start to finish. There were several different things going on in the plot with this one that had me guessing from start to finish. Jeanie has her secret past that slowly gets revealed plus you have the relationship of the new blended family then on top of all that there are a lot of strange things going on that had me wondering are we turning this into a ghost story? But in the end it all gets a great wrap up after all the twists throughout. Overall, definitely one I'd recommend. This is the second book I've read from Claire Seeber and I've quite enjoyed them both. I received an advance copy from the publisher via NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.

No character development, baffling plot twists, confusing, frustrating read. The protagonist is shallow, weak, dull, with none of the self-awareness or inner life that would add some dimension to her. Through her many confusing and mystifying experiences, I just kept wondering how she could be so stupid. The Snow White pretext added nothing, background about her previous life felt

clumsily delivered in random information dumps, and also felt trite. The inciting incident from her past, the scandal, if you will, needed more gravity. From about halfway in, I skipped to the end.

Firstly, the good points - and there are SOME: Good grammar, spelling, punctuation and editing, a pleasant writing style, and convincing dialogue. HOWEVER the author creates a plot that is so convoluted and ultimately outlandish, the reader has absolutely no fricken idea where the story is supposed to be going. This is not helped by the time-wasting side stories that add nothing and go nowhere interesting. This is not intriguing or mysterious, it's simply frustrating. I had no sympathy for any of the characters... a few had potential but were underdeveloped, or they were handled so badly they became pointless and irritating and I lost interest in them. A third of the way through the book I was so annoyed (and bored) I decided to look up a full synopsis - something I've never considered doing before - so I could find out what the big secret is and wouldn't have to keep reading. Unfortunately there seems to be no full synopsis available, but I did find several glowing reviews. Based on the great reviews I kept reading, thinking it had to be going somewhere amazing. It wasn't. I am completely baffled by this. Did we all read the same book?

There is no character development in this book. The plot and characters are impossible to believe, thus leaving the reader in an abyss of emotionless indifference and lack of empathy for any aspect of this story.

This is my first read of Claire Seeber's novels. This was a page-turner for me. I couldn't wait to see who the despicable person was who was tormenting Jeanie. It's a book about becoming a blended family and even though it goes to extremes I found the feelings of insecurity faced by Jeanie's step children very credible. Who is behind the dark and evil games that are being played at Jeanie? This is a disturbing psychological thriller and it gets a 4.5 star from me. Would recommend to my friends.

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