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Posted on 17 February 2019 By Tatiana de Rosnay

Wow I never read Sarah s Key, so I cannot compare But I thought this book was written at least 50 years too late for the big reveal to actually matter If I hadn t been listening to the audio on a long road trip, this would have been a book I put down right away Let me just say that I m not surprised that our bookstore didn t sell A SINGLE COPY of this book in hardcover, and though the paperback has been on the bestseller list for a couple of weeks already, we ve not sold one paperback copy yet, either SPOILERALERT If you pay attention to pronoun use and I do when reading you re gonnaguess this early on anyway But the big secret the one that makes her daughter drive off the road, nearly killing herself and her brother when they re all grown up and their mother is dead anyway is that their mother didn t love their father but actually loved another woman Wow How positively 1960s of the author Really THAT s the tragedy that has marked these people s lives and made them miserable way into their adulthood I thought the French were supposed to be so sophisticated, anyway They can handle heterosexual love affairs with aplomb but not lesbian ones Somehow, I don t think that s the case. Antoine Rey Thought He Had The Perfect Surprise For His Sister M Lanie S Birthday A Weekend By The Sea At Noirmoutier Island , Where The Pair Spent Many Happy Childhood Summers Playing On The Beach It Had Been Too Long, Antoine Thought, Since They D Returned To The Island Over Thirty Years, Since Their Mother Died And The Family Holidays Ceased But The Island S Haunting Beauty Triggers Than Happy Memories It Reminds M Lanie Of Something

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Unexpected And Deeply Disturbing About Their Last Island Summer When, On The Drive Home To Paris, She Finally Summons The Courage To Reveal What She Knows To Antoine, Her Emotions Overcome Her And She Loses Control Of The Car Trapped In The Wake Of A Family Secret Shrouded By Taboo, Antoine Must Confront His Past And Also His Troubled Relationships With His Own Children How Well Does He Really Know His Mother, His Children, Even Himself Suddenly Fragile On All Fronts As A Son, A Husband, A Brother And A Father Antoine Rey Will Soon Learn The Shocking Truth About His Family And Himself By Turns Thrilling And Seductive, With A Lingering Effect That Is Bittersweet And Redeeming, A Secret Kept Is The Story Of A Modern Family And The Invisible Ties That Hold It Together I think I m turning into a crotchety old lady I was really looking forward to reading A Secret Kept I had read a preview and really liked it I loved Sarah s Key by the same author I m sad to say that I was disappointed. I ll start with the positive De Rosnay does a fabulous job of setting the scene I ve never been to France, but I was able to imagine what it was like living in Paris and visiting a resort island with a road that gets submerged at high tide De Rosnay also gets people right Each of her characters, especially Tonio s insufferable children, seems quite real It seems that French teenagers are very much like American teens. So, that brings me to the reasons why I gave the book three stars instead of four I m trying to give fewer books 5 stars these days, so 4 stars means it s really good First, Antonio was such a spineless girly man He just let stuff happen to him and rarely stood up for himself He was the king of non confrontation I just wanted to smack him and say, Man up, dude Even in relationships, the women take the lead And, surprise, he s unhappy The other thing that I didn t like was that the mystery part of the story wasn t very mysterious We know pretty early on that the mother was having an affair before she suddenly died The only mystery there was who her lover was Well, that secret is revealed halfway through the book Then, we think that there s another, bigger secret that s part of the secret that was just revealed But, that second secret turns out to be a big nothing How s that for not spoiling the plot Ultimately, I think the thing that disappointed me most was that I was expecting a mystery about a big, dark family secret, and I was expecting it

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Armageddon in Retrospect: And Other New and Unpublished Writings on War and Peace

to follow mystery conventions in a literary way However, this is entirely a book about feelings and about the ways in which people don't communicate with those to whom they are closest I just wasn't in the right frame of mind for a feelings book. I do need to thank Sarah at MacMillan for sending out a second copy of this book for me I won it through FirstReads on Oct 1 and realized in early January that it was way past due Sarah was very helpful. After having read Sarah's Key and somewhat enjoying the writing as well as the story, I was looking forward to this book Unfortunately it was quite a disappointment The story, involving a mysterious love, death, and the aftermath it left on the children involved, had fine concepts to work with However, the story became bogged down and drawn out into what ultimately became a love story I think with middle aged angst with teenage angst thrown in as well This story was told by the narrator Antoine, who to me seemed to whine his way through the book and ultimately became a character I disliked There were the gratuitous sex scenes that seemed to be put in there to enliven a dull read Unfortunately, they didn't work I personally do not like a book where a character meets someone and five minutes later is having great sex with them I prefer my characters to develop a little relationship before they head down that road Ultimately, I call this book total fluff So, if you want to read something that takes no time and no brain to read, I recommend this as a possible novel to fill that need.

Entirely set in France in the present day and in 1974, A SECRET KEPT begins when Antoine Rey, a divorcee in his mid forties, takes his sister, M lanie, to their childhood vacation spot, Noirmoutier Island, for her fortieth birthday Passage to the island is made on a causeway called Le Gois, a road that is only passable at low tide and which becomes treacherous in moments once the water rises They make the passage and spend an idyllic time on the island, but the devastating events following their holiday set in motion a search for clues surrounding the untimely death of their mother when they were children. I found myself thinking of Le Gois often while I read the book and watched Antoine and M lanie untangle their family secrets The they discover the their findings threaten to drown them The revelation of secrets causes M lanie to pull back the way a cautious driver would at the edge of Le Gois as the waters rise Antoine, on the other hand, races recklessly

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forward, unable to stop his quest, and gradually becomes empowered by his discoveries. One of the most intriguing aspects of *A SECRET KEPT* is Tatiana De Rosnay's convincing voice as a male narrator. Through Antoine's family struggles with his teenagers, the wife he loves who left him for another man, and a relationship with a fierce, sexy mortician named Ang le Rouvatier, his mid life crisis is revealed in raw, potent language. Another strength of the book is De Rosnay's portrayal of the difficulties of family life from sibling relationships, to the aftermath of divorce, to the difficulty of raising children amid crises. She holds nothing back, and while some scenes are painful to read, they are authentic. For lovers of De Rosnay's novel *SARAH S KEY*, this book is very different from its predecessor, but to me, every bit as enjoyable. In *A SECRET KEPT*, Tatiana De Rosnay shows her skill at tackling different kinds of fiction with originality and honesty. With a cast of characters I won't forget and an ending that made me cheer out loud, I highly recommend *A SECRET KEPT*. I look forward to reading of Tatiana's books. This book is a quick read, but pretty insufferable. Aside from being poorly written, overly descriptive, convoluted perspectives, clunky use of adjectives, etc, the plot is uneven and uninteresting, and as many reviewers have pointed out, the secret referenced in the title is not worth waiting for. The characters are one dimensional sketches, and many of the mini plot twists serve no point, building up to nothing, and are quickly discarded. Strangely, for the first couple of chapters I kept picturing the narrator, Antoine, as a woman, and I think this is due to the author's inability to get into a male mindset. It almost feels like she wrote a female character, and decided to change her at the last moment to a man. I'm not sure why she didn't make Melanie the narrator and change up the story a bit. I also found the relationship between the narrator and his sister to be kind of creepy. Am I the only one? Antoine's new girlfriend is presented as a savior, someone who swoops in and instantly makes him feel better about his emotional immaturity and his dysfunctional family. But this woman is painted as a one dimensional, emotionally unavailable, overly sexed, type A, biker chick caricature. Not sure how someone so seemingly shallow is able to turn his life around so profoundly. For most of the book, brother and sister are in this together, sleuthing and uncovering clues.

about their family's past and out of nowhere Antoine decides he isn't up for sharing his newest discoveries with Melanie, then he finds out that she somehow already knows everything he knows, and THEN she tells him she doesn't want to know any, should he find anything So incongruous Having loved Sarah's Key, I was especially disappointed in this follow up novel I hope this author is not a one hit wonder. I was fortunate to be asked to blurb this book That's always a bit nerve wracking What if I don't like it I shouldn't have worried De Rosnay is such a sure and strong writer and she knows her characters well Most enjoyable to me was reading a story about deep family relationships written from the point of view of a sympathetic male character Beautifully done However, the reader really must try to separate this book in her or his mind from Sarah's Key They are worlds apart and impossible to compare Both excellent, but an apple and an orange. This is just a okay book for me It is family drama that is told by a middle aged man Antoine Rey who's living a dreary life his wife divorced him, his grown up children starting to rebel against him, his parents are gone and so hoping to bring back the life that he used to know, he invited his only sister Melanie Rey on the occasion of her 40th birthday The place is on the beach where their family used to go on vacations when they were kids On the way to the venue, the two met an accident on the road and while in the hospital, Melanie made a decision to reveal her long kept secret about their mother I will not divulge about that secret because I don't want to spoil your fun as it is too much of a spoiler. My problem with this book is that it is too predictable Also the long narration of Antoine about what is happening with his life is just a bit too dramatic I mean, I don't know where that comes from I am also a middle aged man but I don't spend so much time regretting what I did mistakes particularly It is those mistakes that make us who we are and as long as we learn from them, they should not be mistakes any They are life lessons Also, most of what Antoine laments about are his own doing so I don't feel empathy towards his character I'd rather do something about my problems rather than wallow in sadness and despair. The plot is okay and conflicts are good enough So, I am giving this book a 2 star rating that in Goodreads means It's okay Audiobook 1991 adored Sarah's Key I did not adore A Secret Kept At some

point I stopped caring what the secret even was The main character male was unlikeable to me Just unappealing I wasn't even excited for him when he finally got laid He had negative relationships he couldn't get over his divorce whine whine whine 3.5 Mixed feelings about this book in spite of very good writing Forty something, recently divorced Antoine Rey surprises his sister Melanie for her 40th birthday and takes her to the seaside resort they visited as children During their stay, memories of those childhood vacations and their mother, who died when they were young children, surface Melanie remembers something that really shakes her Before she has a chance to share the memory with Antoine there's a circumstance that erases the memory Antoine is floundering, still in love with his ex wife, missing his children and daily family life, feeling lonely and unmoored He is a man who has difficulty getting close and sharing feelings until he meets a very interesting woman, a mortician named Angele The development of their relationship is one of the strengths of the story There are a lot of family secrets and tragedy's along the way Because we meet the characters through Antoine's point of view, his detachment keeps them at a distance that made it hard to know and care about them That dimmed the suspense of some of the family secrets for me.

"A riveting tale of family, relationships, and the  
eric power that memory holds over our present lives."  
— Katherine Howe, *New York Times* bestselling author  
of *The Physick Book of Deliverance Dane*

TATIANA  
DE ROSNAY

AUTHOR OF *Sarah's Key*

THE  
NEW YORK TIMES  
BESTSELLER

# A Secret Kept

A NOVEL