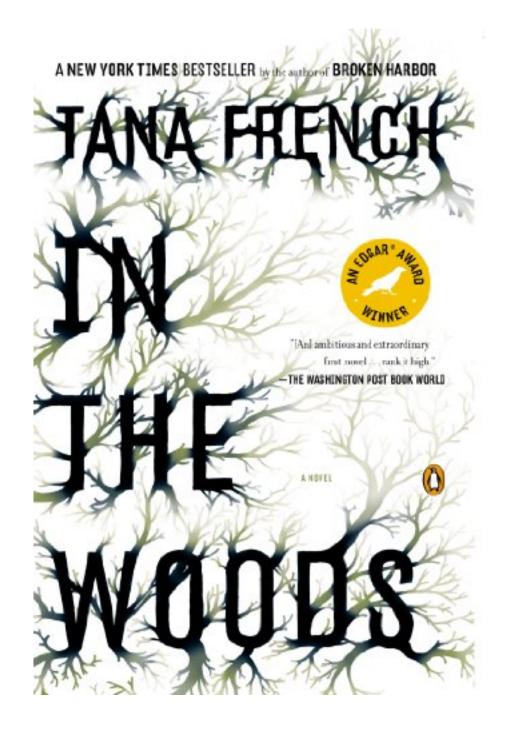


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Tana French's In the Woods is tangled, dark, and impossible to put down. With a story like a freight train and characters so vivid that I found myself wondering what they were doing while I wasn't reading it, it's one of the best books I've read this year. In fact, it's so good that I wish I'd written it - it's absolutely brilliant. -- Kelly Braffet, author of LAST SEEN LEAVING and JOSIE AND JACK

With her utterly beautiful and brilliantly evocative prose, Tana French invites us into a murky netherworld so seductive and engrossing that we can't turn away, even when we try. Ms. French is an extraordinary writer and IN THE WOODS is a stellar debut. -- Lisa Unger, author of the New York Times bestseller BEAUTIFUL LIES and SLIVER OF TRUTH

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The debut novel of an astonishing voice in psychological suspense

As dusk approaches a small Dublin suburb in the summer of 1984, mothers begin to call their children home. But on this warm evening, three children do not return from the dark and silent woods. When the police arrive, they find only one of the children gripping a tree trunk in terror, wearing blood-filled sneakers, and unable to recall a single detail of the previous hours.

Twenty years later, the found boy, Rob Ryan, is a detective on the Dublin Murder Squad and keeps his past a secret. But when a twelve-year-old girl is found murdered in the same woods, he and Detective Cassie Maddox—his partner and closest friend—find themselves investigating a case chillingly similar to the previous unsolved mystery. Now, with only snippets of long-buried memories to guide him, Ryan has the chance to uncover both the mystery of the case before him and that of his own shadowy past.

Richly atmospheric, stunning in its complexity, and utterly convincing and surprising to the end, In the Woods is sure to enthrall fans of Mystic River and The Lovely Bones.

#### From the Hardcover edition.

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Most helpful customer reviews

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful.

Did I miss something?

By L. Szlenk

(2.5 stars) This book was raved about online, it's award winning, and in my efforts to continue my dark and twisty book binge (post Gillian Flynn and Girl on the Train), I was very excited about In The Woods. And boyyyy did this book start off fantastic. I was infatuated with Ryan and Cassie's partnership, felt weirdly connected to Cassie and felt a brotherly annoyance for Ryan. And Ryan's childhood mystery made my spine tingly with eagerness for answers. Very quickly, however, my love affair faded. The characters became stale, the motorway case (which I thought was a distraction to the original plot; boy was I wrong) even staler, Ryan's character became annoyingly horrible (in the sense of bad writing, not character development. I worry French couldn't figure out what to do with him). Despite this, however, I kept reading on. A lot of mysteries have the dull moments, usually purposeful; the calm before the storm. I did not see that here at all. French kept dangling the little glimmer of hope throughout making it seem certain that we were gonna receive answers (and based on the awards this book has received I assumed the answers were going to be mafnificent). We did not. I was convinced the motorway plot line was a distraction and the true mystery lied in Ryan and Peter and Jamie! I found myself gripping with useless hope that the last handful of pages was going to give me SOMETHING. A page, a paragraph, hell, three words to pull this book together. I had extraordinary faith in this book and was extremely disappointed. In case you didn't get the gist: RYANS CHILDHOOD CASE NEVER RECEIVES AN ANSWER. nothing. I was worried I skipped a chapter or naively missed something, so I went back, I reread some, I searched for answers online. Nothing.

NOTHING. That entire plot line was as useless as Ryan's memory.

I will say, however, that French's writing kept me quite entranced at times and was able to keep me to the end of her 430pg book despite only about 150 of those pages having been laced with interesting plot. It is her first novel so perhaps her other published pieces will rank higher. This one, though, did not live up to the hype.

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful.

Spinning spinning

By Mary Ellen Courtney

A friend, who I used to trust, recommended Tana French. I don't know if things improve with later books, but this was painfully boring. I was skipping so fast by the mid-point my finger got tired. My husband threw in the towel. The mysterious noises in the woods meant......? The entire early childhood abductions had zero to do with the story. Zero. Yet we are flogged with it, and his half-baked angst, the entire book. The resolution. Meh. You knew who the mastermind was the minute she hit the scene. It was a lot like spinning out on ice, except it never hits a snowbank. It just keeps spinning until it runs out of energy. Even the mysterious thing stuck on the bottom of the guy's shoe. What? Why?

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Ballsy By Theo Gangi SPOILERS

Though I share many of the gripes of other reviewers I have to give this book 5 stars. The inner lives of the characters and their relationships are so precise and finely tuned. She never uses one sentence where two would suffice, but there is not one banal line in all her flights of fancy. Mostly I say 5 stars because of the ballsyness of writing a mystery unsolved (with plenty of resolution to other huge whodunit). There are one million mystery books that all end essentially the same way-- ironic that they're called mysterys at all. They are foregone conclusions. Now I love the genre and all but have to applaud the resolve and grit it takes to deny the reader and not condescend to us. Guess what. Bad guys get away and some questions don't have answers. If that truth is unacceptable then reading this book was probably good for you.

My biggest issue was with the naval-gazing shmuck narrator. His inability to get out of his own way was a yawn. He was punished for his narcissism. But that didn't save me from spending excessive time with a narcissist.

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