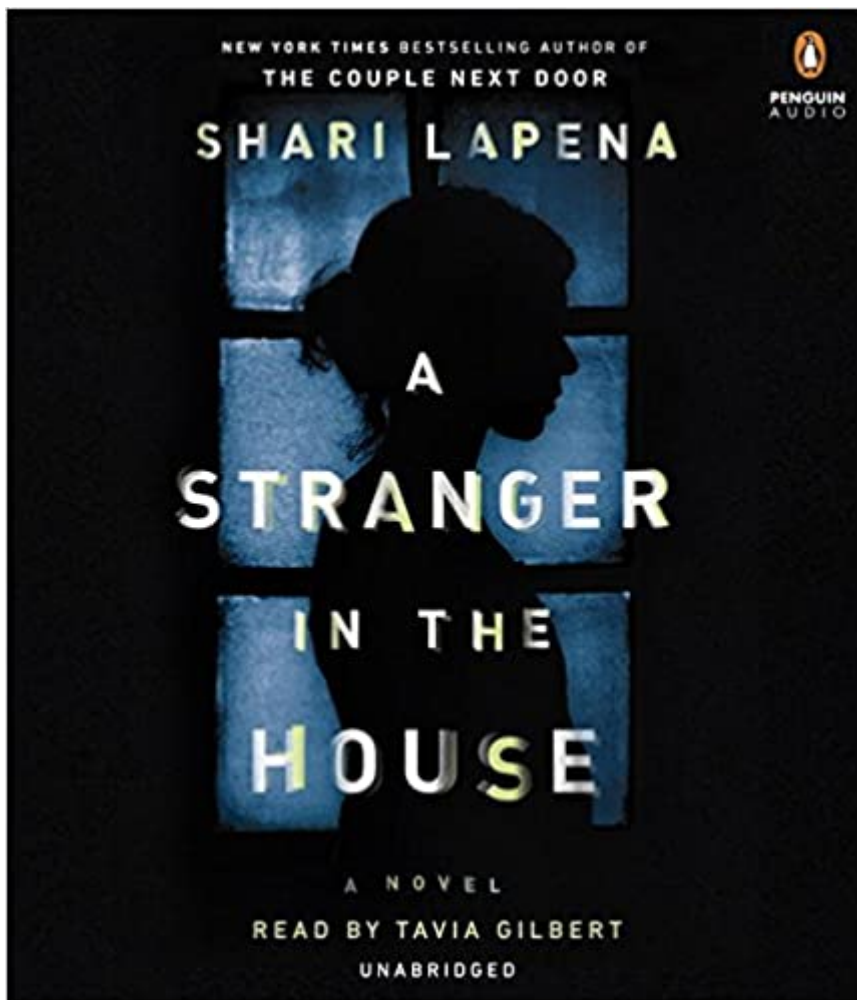


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# A Stranger In The House



## Synopsis

In this neighborhood, danger lies close to home. A domestic thriller packed full of secrets, and a twisty story that never stops from the bestselling author of *The Couple Next Door* He looks at her, concerned. "How do you feel?" "She wants to say, Terrified. Instead, she says, with a faint smile, "Glad to be home." Karen and Tom Krupp are happy they've got a lovely home in upstate New York, they're practically newlyweds, and they have no kids to interrupt their comfortable life together. But one day, Tom returns home to find Karen has vanished her car's gone and it seems she left in a rush. She even left her purse complete with phone and ID behind. There's a knock on the door the police are there to take Tom to the hospital where his wife has been admitted. She had a car accident, and lost control as she sped through the worst part of town. The accident has left Karen with a concussion and a few scrapes. Still, she's mostly okay except that she can't remember what she was doing or where she was when she crashed. The cops think her memory loss is highly convenient, and they suspect she was up to no good. Karen returns home with Tom, determined to heal and move on with her life. Then she realizes something's been moved. Something's not quite right. Someone's been in her house. And the police won't stop asking questions. Because in this house, everyone's a stranger. Everyone has something they'd rather keep hidden. Something they might even kill to keep quiet.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Praise for *A Stranger in the House*: “Smart and suspenseful. . . you’ll never see the ending coming.” --PureWow “So many dizzying twists you’d better not drive after reading!” • Linwood Barclay, New York Times bestselling author of *Parting Shot* “Smart, twisty and compulsive. Suspense and suspicion accumulate relentlessly, toying with your expectations and your emotions right up until the packs-a-punch ending. Don’t miss it, and don’t expect to be able to put it down.” • Gilly Macmillan, New York Times bestselling author of *The Perfect Girl* “A diverting page-turner.” --Publishers Weekly “Great suspense and lots of twists.” --The Toronto Star “Lapena keeps the well-developed twists churning, with each a surprise notch in this ever-evolving plot, and she continues this skillful storytelling until the stunning twist at the end. . . memorable.” --Associated Press

Praise for *The Couple Next Door*: “Meticulously crafted and razor sharp. *The Couple Next Door* lingers long after you turn the final page.” • Harlan Coben, #1 New York Times bestselling author of *Fool Me Once* “The twists come as fast [as] you can turn the pages.” • *People* “Provocative and shocking. One crime, an entire neighborhood of suspects, secrets and lies. How well do we ever know those around us? *The Couple Next Door* will keep you glued to the pages in search of the answer. Even then, you’ll never guess the truth . . . until it’s too late.” • Lisa Gardner, #1 New York Times bestselling author of *Find Her* “I read this novel at one sitting, absolutely riveted by the story line. The suspense was beautifully rendered and unrelenting!” • Sue Grafton, New York Times bestselling author of *A X* “Real men read women writers because of books like this. Trust me.” • Lee Child, #1 New York Times bestselling author of *Make Me* “Shari Lapena has written a stunning debut thriller. Turn on the night lights and lock all your doors and windows. *The Couple Next Door* grabs you with each twist and shocks you with every betrayal.” • Linda Fairstein, New York Times bestselling author of *Killer Look* “A twisty, utterly riveting tale that will send readers on a wild roller-coaster ride of emotions. Shocking revelations kept me turning the pages like a madwoman.” • Tess Gerritsen, New York Times bestselling author of *Playing with Fire* “Expertly paced and finely crafted, *The Couple Next Door* is a gripping thriller of the highest order. I couldn’t put it down.” • A. J. Banner, bestselling author of *The Good Neighbor* “Gripped me from the very beginning to the very end!” • Becky Masterman, author of *Rage Against the Dying* “Brilliant! This utterly riveting psychological thriller hurtles along at breakneck speed, never giving you the opportunity to catch your breath. Twisty, turny, and unputdownable.” • C. L. Taylor, bestselling

author of The Lie   “Exquisitely torturous tension.”   •NPR.org   “Where did that baby go! It’s hard not to read to the end to find out, and the twists waiting there are gratifyingly clever.”   •USA Today   “The many never-saw-them-coming twists and questionable characters . . . will keep you on the edge of your seat. First-time novelist Lapena’s writing is spare and tense, and it makes The Couple Next Door a compulsive read. The last line is absolutely a killer.”   •Good Housekeeping    “[A] well-sculpted domestic thriller . . . highly suspenseful . . . Twists are subtly revealed with aplomb, taking the story to increasingly unpredictable levels.”   •The Associated Press --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

Shari Lapena worked as a lawyer and as an English teacher before turning to writing fiction. She has written two award-winning literary novels, and her suspense debut, *The Couple Next Door*, was a New York Times and an international bestseller. *A Stranger in the House* is her second thriller.

I bought and read Shari Lapena’s first thriller, ‘*The Couple Next Door*’ and loved it. So, when I read an excerpt in the back of the book for ‘*A Stranger In The House*,’ I hot-footed it straight to NetGalley to request a copy. My email pinged a day later and I downloaded it immediately. “Maybe she got lucky with the first book” I thought as I read the first sentence. “Perhaps she will have written a copy-cat book and I bet it’ll be a bit bland and boring” I thought, with a tinge of jealousy and disbelief that anyone could pull off a second bestseller so quickly after writing the first one. How wrong I was! And now I’m going to tell you why . . . Shari has a way with suspense that just grabs you from the first paragraph and keeps you there in anticipation, searching for the twists as you try to guess what is going to happen next. She starts with a great hook, particularly in this, her second book. You are compelled/hypnotised to keep reading to answer the questions that have been posed. This book makes you immediately want to know what happens and why it has happened, but whoa there cowboys, hold your horses! Shari drip feeds the clues like a stubborn tap that won’t turn off and just as you start to form a theory and solve the puzzle, she zaps it in the head, leaving you wondering and shaking your head, determined to beat the author so you can guess before the book ends. And you do kind of guess, but you’re not entirely sure and you couldn’t claim to have had it worked out ages before, even as you read the last word because you don’t trust Shari and are waiting for a one liner or a sentence that will turn it around again. This ‘eager, hungry reading is a pleasant change from a lot of the psychological suspense/thrillers out in the market at the moment which are quite same. This isn’t. It’s a standalone, a unique style and although the storyline hasn’t been unheard of,

what Shari does with it and how she brings it alive is the gift that makes an exceptional writer.. The characters are believable and authentic, they could be your neighbours or your friends, someone we all know. They just pop out of the page in 3D for you to get to know and enjoy and suspect. Also, Detective Rasbach from 'The Couple Next Door' is back in this book and I have to admit to a little crush on the blue eyed good looking detective so I was delighted when he popped up again with his laid back investigative style and sharp mind. So, to the brief synopsis . . . We meet Karen and Tom who on the outside appear to be a normal couple going about their business. That is until Karen mysteriously leaves the house one evening without keys, phone or her purse and crashes the car. What looks like a run-of-the-mill car accident on the surface, soon becomes a murder investigation and Karen is the prime suspect. Not only that, Karen has been hiding things about her past and she's not who she seems. Introduce the weirdo-psycho friend, Brigid, across the road who has a crush on Karen's husband and a history of a previous affair with Karen's husband, Tom, and the stakes get really high. I just loved this novel and read it in one sitting. If you like a police procedural/psychological suspense that keeps you guessing then this book is definitely for you. I defy anyone to not keep turning the pages until the very end. Shari Lapena's storylines are a masterclass in plotting, suspense, characterisation and authenticity. Her writing style is very different to what's out there at the moment and she has a distinctive voice, which is incredibly difficult to achieve in a very competitive fiction market. I'm fairly confident that if she wrote another thriller I'd know it was her. And, as an aspiring writer myself, that makes me so jealous! I would totally recommend this book and suggest you go out and buy it right now and whilst you're at it, get 'The couple Next Door' if you haven't read it already. I promise you you'll thank me for it although your husband/family/friends may not when you buy it to go on holiday and just mutter "uh,huh" or 'really" in a low, disinterested voice as you read, read, read and hurriedly turn the pages. It's been a while since I've found a book that I'm prepared to read as I'm getting off the train and going up the escalator, but this is one of them! Thank you to Netgalley and the publisher for my advanced copy.

I knew I was in trouble when I saw it was written by the woman who wrote The Couple Next Door. It's bad. And for a thriller, there are no thrills. For a mystery, there's no mystery. Who is the "Stranger in the House?" Well, look on the dang cover. As a reader, you will not be taxed in any way except in patience. I think every writer knows you're going to roll your eyes when amnesia is used as a plot device, so to counter that they have all, in the past decade or so, just written in a character or two who also rolls his eyes that amnesia is being used, as if a hip character wipes away all the

cliches. At some point, even having the hip character roll his eyes became over-used. But the main thing that bugs me is that the entire crux of the book is, "what was this nice lady doing in this terrible, crime-infested neighborhood?" Never mind there are two short chapters about some of the KIDS who have to live in that neighborhood, the real issue is how we can rally around this rich, white housewife who had to suffer driving through it once. This classist silliness isn't just mentioned once or twice; it's said by most characters in most chapters. In fact the first sentence in the book is, "she doesn't belong here." Even when "she" and her husband later go to a lawyer, that is echoed once again with a, "what is this nice couple doing here at a law office?" As if people of means don't use lawyers. They are the bread and butter of lawyers. We are even told more than once that it's a terrible thing their CAR has to go to that neighborhood. Someone please start a GoFundMe for that poor, brave Lexus. If you can put up with the rote amnesia stuff and the lazily cobbled bits of 90's movies "Single White Female" and "Sleeping with the Enemy," you still have to get past why rich people frustratingly wouldn't take normal, common-sense steps like putting up an alarm or video system when they knew someone was entering the house. Or why they didn't have one in the first place. You won't spend long reading this book -- a couple sittings max -- but you may regret what you did spend.

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