

PRAISE FOR *THE GIRL ON THE TRAIN*

‘Really great suspense novel. Kept me up most of the night.
The alcoholic narrator is dead perfect’
STEPHEN KING

‘My vote for unreliable narrator of the year’ *The Times*

‘This year’s most highly anticipated psychological thriller’
Sunday Times

‘Clever, exciting and full of twists’ *Daily Mail*

‘Has more fun with unreliable narration than any chiller
since *Gone Girl*’ *New York Times*

‘The thriller scene will have to up its game if it’s to match
Hawkins this year’ *Observer*

‘Gripping, enthralling – a top-notch thriller and a
compulsive read’

S J WATSON, bestselling author of *Before I Go to Sleep*

‘A cleverly crafted piece of modern suburban noir’
Independent on Sunday

‘Hawkins’s taut story roars along at the pace of, well, a
high-speed train . . . a smart, searing thriller’
Good Housekeeping

‘Achieves a sinister poetry . . . Hawkins keeps the nastiest twist for last’ *Financial Times*

‘Grabbed me from the start and didn’t let go’
Woman & Home

‘[Paula Hawkins] pulls off a thriller’s toughest trick: carefully assembling everything we think we know, until it reveals the one thing we didn’t see coming’
Entertainment Weekly

‘A long, long time since a book gripped me like this’
MARIAN KEYES @mariankeyes

‘I haven’t stopped recommending it to people . . . will chill and thrill in equal measure’ *Crimesquad.com*

‘*Gone Girl* fans will devour this psychological thriller . . . Hawkins’s debut ends with a twist that no one – least of all its victims – have seen coming’ *People Magazine*

‘Hawkins keeps the tension ratcheted high in this thoroughly engrossing tale . . . Kept me guessing until the very end!’
LISA GARDNER

‘Distinctive, intelligent and unpredictable’ *The Times*

‘Unputdownable . . . A fast, clever thriller with a flawed, entertaining heroine’

PAULA DALY, author of *Just What Kind of Mother Are You?*

‘Like its train, the story blasts through the stagnation of these lives in suburban London and the reader cannot help but turn the pages’ *Boston Globe*

‘Compulsive reading’ *Marie Claire*

‘If you like your books twisty and your narrators unreliable and flawed, this is for you’ *Cosmopolitan*

‘Taut, tight, utterly compulsive. Once you embark you won’t want to get off’

TAMMY COHEN, author of *First One Missing*

‘Artfully crafted and utterly riveting’

KIMBERLY McCREIGHT, bestselling author of *Reconstructing Amelia*

‘Perfectly paced, from its arresting beginning to its twist ending; it’s not an easy book to put down’ *NPR.org*

‘Compulsively readable . . . It actually hurt to put it down’
JOY FIELDING, bestselling author of *Now You See Her*

‘A complex and increasingly chilling tale . . . will wrong-foot even the most experienced of crime fiction readers’

Irish Times

‘It’s the kind of book you’ll want to press into the hands of everyone you know’

LAURA KASISCHKE, author of *The Raising*

‘Marries movie noir with novelistic trickery . . . hang on tight. You’ll be surprised by what horrors lurk around the bend’ *USA Today*

‘A highly addictive novel’ *GQ.com*

‘A high speed ride full of twists and turns. Gazing out of the train window will never be the same again’

COLETTE McBETH, author of *The Life I Left Behind*

‘A gripping read about the lies we tell ourselves and each other’ *New Zealand Herald*

‘A complex and thoroughly chilling psychological thriller . . . *The Girl on the Train* is one of those books where you can’t wait – yet almost can’t bear – to turn the page. It’s a stunning novel of dread’ *New York Daily News*

‘A compulsive page-turner, with the pacing of its revelations perfectly timed’ *Sydney Morning Herald*

Paula Hawkins worked as a journalist for fifteen years before turning her hand to fiction. Born and brought up in Zimbabwe, Paula moved to London in 1989 and has lived there ever since. *The Girl on the Train* is her first thriller. It has been published in over forty languages, has been a No. 1 bestseller around the world and is now a major motion picture starring Emily Blunt.

#girlonthetrain

Jangal Publication

The Girl on the Train

Paula Hawkins



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For Kate

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She's buried beneath a silver birch tree, down towards the old train tracks, her grave marked with a cairn. Not more than a little pile of stones, really. I didn't want to draw attention to her resting place, but I couldn't leave her without remembrance. She'll sleep peacefully there, no one to disturb her, no sounds but birdsong and the rumble of passing trains.

One for sorrow, two for joy, three for a girl. Three for a girl. I'm stuck on three, I just can't get any further. My head is thick with sounds, my mouth thick with blood. Three for a girl. I can hear the magpies, they're laughing, mocking me, a raucous cackling. A tiding. Bad tidings. I can see them now, black against the sun. Not the birds, something else. Someone's coming. Someone is speaking to me. *Now look. Now look what you made me do.*

RACHEL

Friday, 5 July 2013

Morning

THERE IS A PILE OF clothing on the side of the train tracks. Light-blue cloth – a shirt, perhaps – jumbled up with something dirty white. It's probably rubbish, part of a load fly-tipped into the scrubby little wood up the bank. It could have been left behind by the engineers who work this part of the track, they're here often enough. Or it could be something else. My mother used to tell me that I had an overactive imagination; Tom said that too. I can't help it, I catch sight of these discarded scraps, a dirty T-shirt or a lonesome shoe, and all I can think of is the other shoe, and the feet that fitted into them.

The train jolts and scrapes and screeches back into motion, the little pile of clothes disappears from view and we trundle on towards London, moving at a brisk jogger's

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pace. Someone in the seat behind me gives a sigh of helpless irritation; the 8.04 slow train from Ashbury to Euston can test the patience of the most seasoned commuter. The journey is supposed to take fifty-four minutes, but it rarely does: this section of the track is ancient, decrepit, beset with signalling problems and never-ending engineering works.

The train crawls along; it judders past warehouses and water towers, bridges and sheds, past modest Victorian houses, their backs turned squarely to the track.

My head leaning against the carriage window, I watch these houses roll past me like a tracking shot in a film. I see them as others do not; even their owners probably don't see them from this perspective. Twice a day, I am offered a view into other lives, just for a moment. There's something comforting about the sight of strangers safe at home.

Someone's phone is ringing, an incongruously joyful and upbeat song. They're slow to answer, it jingles on and on around me. I can feel my fellow commuters shift in their seats, rustle their newspapers, tap at their computers. The train lurches and sways around the bend, slowing as it approaches a red signal. I try not to look up, I try to read the free newspaper I was handed on my way into the station, but the words blur in front of my eyes, nothing holds my interest. In my head I can still see that little pile of clothes lying at the edge of the track, abandoned.

Evening

The pre-mixed gin and tonic fizzes up over the lip of the can as I bring it to my mouth and sip. Tangy and cold, the taste of my first ever holiday with Tom, a fishing village on the Basque coast in 2005. In the mornings we'd swim the half-mile to the little island in the bay, make love on secret hidden beaches; in the afternoons we'd sit at a bar drinking strong, bitter gin and tonics, watching swarms of beach footballers playing chaotic 25-a-side games on the low-tide sands.

I take another sip, and another; the can's already half empty but it's OK, I have three more in the plastic bag at my feet. It's Friday, so I don't have to feel guilty about drinking on the train. TGIF. The fun starts here.

It's going to be a lovely weekend, that's what they're telling us. Beautiful sunshine, cloudless skies. In the old days we might have driven to Corly Wood with a picnic and the papers, spent all afternoon lying on a blanket in dappled sunlight, drinking wine. We might have barbecued out back with friends, or gone to the Rose and sat in the beer garden, faces flushing with sun and alcohol as the afternoon went on, weaving home, arm in arm, falling asleep on the sofa.

Beautiful sunshine, cloudless skies, no one to play with, nothing to do. Living like this, the way I'm living at the moment, is harder in the summer when there is so much daylight, so little cover of darkness, when everyone is out and about, being flagrantly, aggressively happy. It's

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exhausting, and it makes you feel bad if you're not joining in.

The weekend stretches out ahead of me, forty-eight empty hours to fill. I lift the can to my mouth again, but there's not a drop left.

Monday, 8 July 2013

Morning

It's a relief to be back on the 8.04. It's not that I can't wait to get into London to start my week – I don't particularly want to be in London at all. I just want to lean back in the soft, sagging velour seat, feel the warmth of the sunshine streaming through the window, feel the carriage rock back and forth and back and forth, the comforting rhythm of wheels on tracks. I'd rather be here, looking out at the houses beside the track, than almost anywhere else.

There's a faulty signal on this line, about halfway through my journey. I assume it must be faulty, in any case, because it's almost always red; we stop there most days, sometimes just for a few seconds, sometimes for minutes on end. If I sit in carriage D, which I usually do, and the train stops at this signal, which it almost always does, I have a perfect view into my favourite trackside house: number fifteen.

Number fifteen is much like the other houses along this stretch of track: a Victorian semi, two storeys high, overlooking a narrow, well-tended garden which runs around

twenty feet down towards some fencing, beyond which lie a few metres of no man's land before you get to the railway track. I know this house by heart. I know every brick, I know the colour of the curtains in the upstairs bedroom (beige, with a dark-blue print), I know that the paint is peeling off the bathroom window frame and that there are four tiles missing from a section of the roof over on the right-hand side.

I know that on warm summer evenings, the occupants of this house, Jason and Jess, sometimes climb out of the large sash window to sit on the makeshift terrace on top of the kitchen-extension roof. They are a perfect, golden couple. He is dark-haired and well built, strong, protective, kind. He has a great laugh. She is one of those tiny bird-women, a beauty, pale-skinned with blonde hair cropped short. She has the bone structure to carry that kind of thing off, sharp cheekbones dappled with a sprinkling of freckles, a fine jaw.

While we're stuck at the red signal, I look for them. Jess is often out there in the mornings, especially in the summer, drinking her coffee. Sometimes, when I see her there, I feel as though she sees me too, I feel as though she looks right back at me, and I want to wave. I'm too self-conscious. I don't see Jason quite so much, he's away a lot with work. But even if they're not there, I think about what they might be up to. Maybe this morning they've both got the day off and she's lying in bed while he makes breakfast, or maybe they've gone for a run together, because that's the sort of thing they do. (Tom and I used to run together

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on Sundays, me going at slightly above my normal pace, him at about half his, just so we could run side by side.) Maybe Jess is upstairs in the spare room, painting, or maybe she's in the shower.

Evening

Turning slightly towards the window, my back to the rest of the carriage, I open one of the little bottles of Chenin Blanc I purchased from the Whistlestop at Euston. It's not cold, but it'll do. I pour some into a plastic cup, screw the top back on and slip the bottle into my handbag. It's less acceptable to drink on the train on a Monday, unless you're drinking with company, which I am not.

There are familiar faces on these trains, people I see every week, going to and fro. I recognize them and they probably recognize me. I don't know whether they see me, though, for what I really am.

It's a glorious evening, warm but not too close, the sun starting its lazy descent, shadows lengthening and the light just beginning to burnish the trees with gold. The train is rattling along, we whip past Jason and Jess's place, they pass in a blur of evening sunshine. Sometimes, not often, I can see them from this side of the track. If there's no train going in the opposite direction, and if we're travelling slowly enough, I can sometimes catch a glimpse of them out on their terrace. If not – like today – I can imagine them. Jess will be sitting with her feet up on the table out