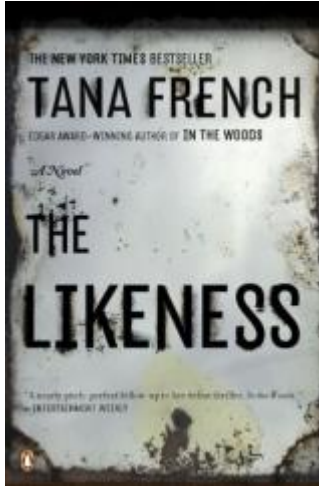


The Likeness

by Tana French



About the Book

Six months after the events of *IN THE WOODS*, Detective Cassie Maddox is still trying to recover. She's transferred out of the Murder squad and started a relationship with Detective Sam O'Neill, but she's too badly shaken to make any commitment either to him or to her career. Then Sam calls her to the scene of his new case: a young woman found stabbed to death in a small town outside Dublin.

The dead girl's ID says her name is Lexie Madison --- the identity Cassie used, years ago, as an undercover detective. And she looks exactly like Cassie.

With no leads, no suspects no clue to 'Lexie's' real identity, Cassie's old undercover boss, Frank Mackey, spots the opportunity of a lifetime. They can tell the media and the girl's friends that the stab wound wasn't fatal, and send Cassie undercover in her place --- to find out information the police would never hear, and to tempt the killer out of hiding to finish the job. At first Cassie thinks this is the craziest idea she's ever heard, but gradually she's seduced by the thought of working on a murder investigation again, by the victim's life --- doing a post grad degree in English and sharing the huge, ramshackle Whitethorn House with a strange, tight-knit group of friends --- and by the mystery of the victim herself.

As she is drawn into Lexie's world and uncovers layer after layer of her secrets, Cassie's confidence begins to come back. But Lexie's secrets run deeper than anyone imagined; at least one of her friends is becoming suspicious, and all of them would do almost anything to protect their home; Sam has discovered a generations-old feud between the locals and the inhabitants of Whitethorn House; and Frank is starting to suspect that Cassie's growing emotional involvement could be putting the whole investigation at risk...

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Discussion Guide

1. Early on in the book, Cassie Maddox says that “all the best undercovers have a dark thread woven into them, somewhere.” What is hers?
2. For Cassie, going undercover is almost a compulsion. What drives her to accept Frank’s offer and take on Operation Mirror?
3. The rule at Whitethorn House is “no pasts,” yet the house is seeped in history and artifacts from earlier eras. How does the house help its inhabitants avoid their own histories?
4. Undercover, Cassie slowly gets drawn into life at Whitethorn House and develops a fondness for Lexie’s idiosyncratic housemates. What is it about this world that is so enchanting for her?
5. Cassie says this is Lexie Madison’s story, not hers, yet she tells it like it’s her own. Whose story do you think it is?
6. Commitment is an issue for Cassie, as she can’t seem to settle down with a desk job or her boyfriend. At the same time, she has chosen to work undercover and devote her every hour to this case --- a very serious commitment of a different kind. Is this a contradiction in her personality, or are they complementary behaviors?
7. Daniel, Abby, Rafe, Justin, and Lexie’s relationship is a fascinating study of group dynamics and each character plays a distinct role. Just as Lexie did before her, Cassie can home in on who she needs to be to fit in. Do you think this is something most people do in social situations or is it a special skill?
8. What does posing as Lexie teach Cassie about herself? What are the differences between the two characters and where does Cassie draw the line?
9. Cassie wonders if Frank Mackey may have had a stronger hunch about the killer than he was admitting all along. Do you think he knew who the killer was?
10. French leaves the story of what happened the night of the stabbing somewhat open. What do you think really happened to Lexie and who was truly responsible?

Author Bio

Born in Vermont, Tana French grew up in Ireland, Italy, the United States and Malawi, and has lived in Dublin since 1990. She trained as a professional actress at Trinity College, Dublin, and has worked in theater and film. Her debut novel, *IN THE WOODS*, was honored with the Edgar, Barry, Macavity and Anthony awards, and her most recent, *BROKEN HARBOR*, won the *Los Angeles Times* Book Prize for Best Mystery/Thriller and the Irish Book Award for Crime Fiction Book of the Year. She lives in Dublin with her family.

Critical Praise

This book will leave readers eagerly awaiting the next.

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