



Ties That Bind

Carolyn Arnold

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“Madison Knight is a tough, sassy, and intelligent detective. She is a straight shooter and takes no crap.”

–My Blissful Books

The hunt for a serial killer begins...

Detective Madison Knight concluded the case of a strangled woman an isolated incident. But when another woman's body is found in a park killed with the same brand of neckties, she realizes they're dealing with something more serious.

Despite mounting pressure from the sergeant and the chief to close the case even if it means putting an innocent man behind bars, and a partner who is more interested in saving his marriage than stopping a potential serial killer, Madison may have to go it alone if the murderer is going to be stopped.

Ties That Bind Details

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From Reader Review Ties That Bind for online ebook

Frederick Brooke says

In her middle 30s and single, Madison Knight is a detective in the fictional city of Stiles. The department is filled with men who give her too little respect, people like her Sergeant and her Chief, paper pushers, publicity seekers. Like most procedurals, this excellent story begins with the discovery of a body.

What sets Madison apart, besides the fact that she is a woman, is that she is after the truth. As the pieces start to fall into place, the men are quickly satisfied, but not Madison. Things are not what they seem on the surface; it takes a person of her tenacity to find the real killer.

Ties That Bind features a lot of entertaining dialogue between Madison and her partner, Terry. The two can never quite separate barbs relating to their unravelling personal lives from sniping about which way to go on the strangler case. The bond between them is real and attractive. Madison's head is a complex zone of insecurities based less on her femininity than on being fundamentally unsure about her abilities. She frets about having to give the bad news to the next of kin of the murder victims; she can't forget the old unsolved cases; she often wonders if her partner or even the Sergeant might be right. Not that she could ever show any sign of weakness -- not in this hardboiled climate! The only thing you can really count on is chocolate. She goes through Hershey bars like there's no tomorrow.

I love it that mundane things keep going wrong in the Stiles police department. A key piece of evidence is lost for a few days, holding up the investigation and jeopardizing it. The DNA lab is backlogged. When Madison inputs the wrong search terms in a DMV search, far too many hits come back, and none of them is the match they were looking for. Such problems make this world seem so gritty and real, and the story believable.

I recently read a Sue Grafton mystery, and not too long ago a couple of Sara Paretsky mysteries. Carolyn Arnold with her Detective Madison Knight is right up there on the same plane with those contemporary masters of the genre. I want a sequel, and I want it now.

Doing Max Vinyl

Pete Morin says

I enjoyed Arnold's dialogue quite a bit, and she's knitted a nice suspenseful story, but I felt that the narrative lacked punch in places. There were some problems for me with the plot, which I shall not mention, lest I be a spoiler.

All in all, a good read.

Lynn Hill says

What a great book! I read it in one day and so many twists and turns I never saw the ending coming! This is

the first book I have read by Carolyn and it will not be my last! Thank you Carolyn

Jane says

Madison Knight is a smart, sexy and sassy homicide detective assigned to a murder of a young woman by strangulation. With her partner, Terry she investigates the clues, waits impatiently for lab results and talks to people the victim knew.

A second murder and another young victim with lots of differences between the first and second victim. Sandra the first was Caucasian, unmarried, a professional woman that liked some kink with her sex. Laura the second woman was Asian, married and an unpopular middle management boss. It looked like they had nothing in common. The third victim was a sixty-year old married, wealthy wife of the owner of a successful business.

Each of the women was strangled with an expensive tie and staged differently in different settings. Some DNA and a few fingerprints were found and at two scenes witnesses saw the killer leave.

Maddy and her partner think they have the right guy but he keeps telling them he didn't do it; Maddy goes over the evidence and finds a new unexpected lead that takes her to arrest the actual killer.

If you like a good detective story with lots of twists and turns to an unexpected ending, this is for you. I enjoyed it and loved Madison Knight and her sassy dialogue.

Gail says

Read a couple good reviews of this, it was described as an excellent police procedural. It was a free book for Nook so gave it a try. It started out fine but as the story went along, I got very tired of the main character -- Madison. She was always so rude and abrupt with everyone including her supposed friends! She was especially rude to her male partner who was having some marriage problems. I didn't like him very much, either. Madison's boss was insufferable, always there asking questions and demanding to know when the case would be solved. The boss was much nicer to her male partner, bad treatment of women gets old fast. The story bogged down about a third to a half way through but then it picked up again. The ending was pretty preposterous but it is fiction.

This was the author's first book in this series. I doubt I will read another one even if it is free.

Lorena Angell says

Ties that bind--First off I love book titles with double meanings and this one is certainly that. This is a great read for those who enjoy detective novels and chronological play-out, oh, and the excellent twists of skilled writers. I found myself trying to guess where this book was going only to be pleasantly surprised where it went. Without giving anything away, something that stuck with me since completing the book is Detective Madison Knight's reactions to viewing the deceased women her own age and how it brings to light her own mortality. Carolyn Arnold's portrayal of that really made me stop and think. I love books like that.

Kevin Reeder says

a new favorite author.

Joy says

This is a very good thriller. I got it free from bookbub and I read it on my phone. It's the first book I've read by this author and I would read another of her books. She had me guessing who the killer was until almost the end!

C.C. Cole says

"Ties That Bind" features ace career-minded heroine Madison Knight, an investigator of a homicide, but when the number of victims increase, so does the complexity of the case and the suspects. This is an easy, entertaining read, perfect for readers that follow crime dramas. The editing errors noted in the negative reviews on amazon I didn't find as a big deal and to me didn't detract from the story itself. Four stars!

Shirley Worley says

Enjoyable read, but I failed to connect with the main characters. Madison eats, sleeps, and breathes her job and doesn't seem to have a relationship outside of her work. We really know nothing of her past or the reason she has issues with an ex-fiance in the story. She's extremely hard-working and driven, admirable traits, but she doesn't flesh out much from there. She seems to be all business, until she playfully punches her partner on the shoulder. Repeatedly throughout the book. Somehow, it didn't seem to fit her personality. Her partner's personality definitely takes a backseat and he seems at times to be an afterthought or a tag-along. Plot was interesting. Overall, not bad for a first book in the series.

K J Bennett says

Meet Madison Knight, ace detective. She's on the case of a potential serial killer who has a unique method of killing people, and she encounters almost as many red herrings as a trawler man on a long fishing voyage. She has a crime fighting partner who's a little distracted, a sergeant who's a bigoted bully and a police chief who wants results fast.

Let me state right now that I rarely read crime fiction, and when I do it tends to be written by Colin Bateman.

For the most part, **Ties That Bind** is a standard police procedural-cum-buddy detective novel, but I think Miss Arnold manages to portray Knight in favourable way. Crime writers tend to write their female detectives in such a clichéd manner that I have a tendency to put the book down and never pick it up again.

In the case of **Ties That Bind**, I found it to be most readable from start to finish. It wasn't perfect: I thought it dragged a little towards the middle, and there's definitely a tendency to show and not tell at times –

"Do you listen to anything I say? Yes, that's the maiden name. I swear I mentioned the name."

*She tapped the steering wheel. "Type it in." **She referred to the onboard computer system in the car.***

She referred to ... is a phrase used four times in the book, when, perhaps, a description of events - e.g. ***Madison pointed to the data terminal mounted on the dashboard and snapped, "Type it in."*** - but that aside, I really enjoyed this book.

Once the halfway point was passed, the plot developed rapidly, and by 75% (or it may have been 76%!) it positively steams along. There can only be so many ways to kill people, and only so many motives, so crime fiction has to have original and engaging characters: I think Madison may well fit the bill.

I think, but I'm not 100% certain, that this is Carolyn Arnold's first novel, in which case, ten-out-of-ten for a first effort.

I'm awarding this book 4 Stars: it managed to get a non-crime fan to read it to the end.

Stephanie says

I liked this book in the beginning, because I was hopeful. By the end I was annoyed. It is entirely too predictable and the characters are hardly developed.

Unfortunately Arnold wasted a chance to develop a great character with Madison Knight. She should be interesting, and there are plenty of references to her past; however, nothing is developed. We hear about her ex-fiance, but we don't know why it ended, how it ended, if she still has feelings for him, etc. We never learn why she decided not to be a criminal defense attorney and work as a cop instead. Her partner's character is just as flat...even more so really.

The story itself is predictable, but most crime novels are. A few twists would have been much appreciated. This book is basically a bad Law & Order episode.

The final and largest problem with the book is how poorly it is written. I am convinced Arnold didn't have anyone else look at it before hitting publish. There are grammatical mistakes, words missing, misspellings, typos, and the list goes on and on. It became distracting at a few points in the book.

I don't really recommend it. Maybe if you need something to just pass the time? I got the book for free on my Nook, and I won't be buying the rest of the series.

Muriel says

Bad editing ruins a book for me every time. Despite the author's attempt to attribute any errors to the readers'

imagination.

Debra says

Detective Madison Knight is determined to find the killer who strangled a young woman. Since Knight has no love life, her boss demands quick results, and she failed to solve a previous case, the detective throws herself into the investigation. Meanwhile, her partner Terry's personal problems are keeping him distracted, so a second murder only adds to the pressure for both of them.

Ties That Bind is a gritty police procedural that would have been better without the occasional POV shift to the villain. Nothing about him is all that intriguing, as little's revealed about his background and lifestyle. I liked the frustration and irritation Madison often feels toward her superiors and her partner. But I didn't like that the reader is often told how Madison feels when it's already obvious through action and dialogue.

Although the story is set in the city of Stiles, I have no idea where that is. Very little description of the city and environment was offered, which is too bad. Vividly described settings add so much to mysteries.

Karen Crissinger says

It took me awhile to get through this book, in large part because I was so disinterested that I found myself surfing the web on my iPad every few pages. Madison Knight is a poor knock off of JD Robb's Eve Dallas; Knight isn't near as tough as she is jaded and petty. About 2/3 of the way through the book I recognized a formula that I felt might have been JD Robb fan fiction, and did some research on the author. Suffice it to say, nothing good came from any credible source. The writing is amateur and unedited. The characters are one dimensional and trite. The plot dragged on for chapters, and then force finished with what was supposed to be a twist, but was more like an echo of an old Law & Order episode. The only redeeming quality of this particular read is that it's over. And it was free. Moving on to other interests.

Dianne says

Meet the detective with a chip on her shoulder as big as Mount Rushmore. Madison Knight gets the job done, in spite of being the lone female detective in the Good Ole Boy, Stiles police department.

The case started with a body and what Madison found was a can of rotten worms and a pattern of heinous proportions. It almost seems only Madison is after the TRUTH, as opposed to red-stamping the case closed. Along with her partner, with whom she has an often barbed relationship, she is determined to prove that similar cases are out there and a serial killer is on the loose. What she uncovers is nothing short of a twisted nightmare and she may not get the backup she needs in time.

Good detectives are hard to find, one that will go the extra mile, one that will take a chance, but Madison is "that" detective caught up in a world dominated by testosterone and the inability to look too far outside of the box. Carolyn Arnold's **TIES THAT BIND** follows a trail of murders linked to designer ties and an event that happened years before. Gritty scenes, tension between characters and one detective who isn't interested

in winning a popularity contest, just getting the job done right.

Mystery/crime lovers, meet Madison, criminals beware, if you get on her radar, she will not give up. Entertaining, sometimes a bit frustrating, with a main character that shows true grit, even in desperate times.

Series: Madison Knight - Book 1

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For Reviews & More: <http://tomtender.blogspot.com>

Notary Tim says

This book has way too many typos (missing words, missing punctuation, some wrong word / punctuation choices) for a professionally written work. I don't know whether they are the result of poor editing in the ebook version on the Kindle (which is where I read this) or poor writing by the author. Who spells Sarge as Serg?

Beyond that, the motivation of Madison Knight (main character) for her behavior is too vague. Why does she keep hitting her partner on the shoulder? Why does she have such bad reactions to things that a reasonable person would expect a police officer to face on a regular basis? For that matter, why are both the Sargent AND the Chief such idiots? It reads like she watched too many tv cop shows and worked all the cliches of them into a murder mystery, then mixed in her pet peeves.

Overall, I give it a 6 out of 10, not nearly enough to recommend it to anyone else but no so low as to say it stunk. I liked it enough to finish it, as the murder mystery plot line was pretty good.

elaine m. suda says

Ties Together

I found this murder mystery very intriguing and was surprised at the ending. I enjoyed all the characters, especially Madison. She really put all her energy and persevered in solving her case. I look forward to reading more of your work.

Lisa says

Pretty good read. The ending was the best so unexpected.

Joan says

This was okay to read but there was not much depth to the characters which was a shame as they had the potential to be very interesting. I was going to give it 2 stars, (which means I thought it was okay) but then I read this comment by the author at the end:

As for any errors you might imagine in spelling, punctuation or capitalization please accept this as the variance permitted with the existence of many conventions and styles of writing.

There are also times my characters may use incorrect grammar, abbreviations or misspelled words in their speech, but know this is intentional whether it is to assign an accent or a way of expression.

Ouch. Sorry. can one actually 'misspell' a word when you speak it? Or speak an abbreviation? I can accept 'incorrect grammar' but that is a product of dialect not accent, surely, in which case there is no need to make a comment about it - any good writer will ensure that the reader is aware of the speaker's origin?

An **accent** is the way that particular person or group of people sound. It's the way somebody pronounces words, the musicality of their speech, etc.

A **dialect** describes both a person's accent and the grammatical features of the way that person talks.

As for variances in conventions and styles of SPaG. There are no 'variances' in the conventions of punctuation as far as I am aware. The same basic rules apply everywhere. If you stick to one set of 'conventions' then there will be no errors. You either use US or UK, not that I have ever noticed much difference; the use of " as opposed to ' for direct speech is the only one I can think of.

This comment looks like a convenient 'catch-all' for poor writing/proof-reading/editing.
