



Beyond Recall

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At a wedding party in Cornwall in the summer of 1981, Chris Napier is shocked to recognise a dishevelled intruder as his childhood friend Nicky Lanyon, whom he has not seen since his father, Michael Lanyon, was hanged for the murder of Chris's great-uncle, Joshua Carnoweth, in 1947.

It was the inheritance of old Joshua's fortune that led the then humble Napier family to their present state of affluence. When Nicky subsequently hangs himself, Chris sets out on a journey into his own and others' memories of the tragic events of 34 years before. Driven on by Nicky's firm belief in his father's innocence, he begins to doubt the official version of those events and to question the conduct of several members of his own family.

Then other present-day mysteries begin to dog his footsteps into the past and soon his search for the truth becomes a desperate struggle for his own survival.

Beyond Recall Details

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From Reader Review Beyond Recall for online ebook

Monica Wies says

Chris Napier keert na jaren terug naar huis voor de bruiloft van zijn nichtje.

De bruiloft vindt plaats op Tredower House, het huis van zijn oudoom Joshua.

Deze oom werd in 1947 vermoord en Michael Lanyon werd ervan beschuldigd opdracht voor deze moord gegeven te hebben. Hij werd opgehangen.

De bruiloft wordt verstoord door de komst van Nicky Lanyon, zijn zoon. Hij is er van overtuigd dat zijn vader onschuldig was.

Chris belooft zijn jeugdvriend Nicky hem te helpen de waarheid te achterhalen.

Dan blijkt dat veel dingen beter niet bekend gemaakt zouden moeten worden.

Lesley Miller says

Robert Goddard is a non-guilty pleasure for me when I want to read gentle prose. He has a lovely touch with words even when covering death and ruin. When you are in the mood for something that you can simply read then he is your author,

Jeremy Hornik says

British provincial mystery. A man tries to figure out what happened years ago when his uncle was murdered, and his best friend's father was hanged for it. I had to push myself through the first half. The second half picked up with some nice reversals and such, but I just never was thrilled.

TheIron Paw says

I didn't enjoy Thomas Hardy in high school, I find Le Carre too slow moving - I'm afraid I have to put Goddard (this novel at least) into that category. This is a very well written and crafted novel, but too slow moving over the first three quarters for my taste. I would rate it a 4 for plot and character but a 2 for pacing and interest, so I'll give it 3. This would be a worthwhile read for Le Carre and similar fans, but I like my crime/thrillers with a faster pace.

Rodger says

I'd probably go to 3.5 stars. It's a quick and entertaining read, but I was repeatedly frustrated by the main character's unwillingness to share vital information with other people -- including the police. Sure, the entire book is built on family secrets, but there is very little reason for him to retain some of the facts when sharing info might have prevented additional crimes. The ending is overly neat as well.

Jenn says

Sometimes I think Robert Goddard's books are great, other times he sells us a turkey - they're silly, and they lack credibility etc, but this one was one of the first. A crime from forty years previously comes back to haunt a wealthy family when the son returns to a family wedding to find his old childhood friend has hanged himself. There's the usual raft of family secrets, flashbacks to the past and mysterious happenings whilst the hero runs round hopelessly at a breakneck pace.

It filled up the time nicely whilst we were stuck in a traffic jam north of Troyes (I wasn't driving). Robert Goddard is good for ten hour car journeys, don't know if he'd hold my attention otherwise. His heroes are always hapless, they end up being accused of murder and look out for the baddy female in there somewhere. Goddard always likes a femme fatale type.

My teenage daughter sneered at it at first but couldn't put it down later.

Debbie Robson says

I have long enjoyed reading Robert Goddard's novels. They are my staple holiday reads. Since joining Goodreads in November 2008 I have read and reviewed three of Goddard's mysteries and this is my fourth review, although in total I have probably read, over the years, another four books at least.

That's not many you may think, taking into account that Goddard has written over twenty mystery novels but I do pick and choose according to storyline and location and this sometimes does influence my rating. I've only just noticed that I've given one three, one four and one five star rating. As for *Beyond Recall*, I chose this book because of the location and setting - Cornwall, partly set during WII.

"Estranged from his family for most of his adult life, Chris Napier is persuaded to return home for his niece's wedding. At the reception, he is shocked to recognise a dishevelled intruder as his childhood friend Nicky Lanyon, whose presence is a chilling reminder of a murder and subsequent trial that Chris has tried hard to forget."

I think the main reason I keep coming back to Goddard's books is that, putting aside the mysteries, his protagonists are people you do want to spend time with. You want to be with them as they try and solve the mysteries that face them. Generally they are middle aged men and perhaps as a woman I should seek a woman as the main character in a mystery, but the author's understanding of women shines through his characterisations so well, that it doesn't seem to matter.

His historical research is always faultless too and this is quite important in *Beyond Recall* because Chris Napier is a young boy during the Second World War. Here is an effective rendering of time, place and characterisation all in one paragraph.

"Strictly speaking, I'd known Don Prideaux longer than I had Nicky Lanyon. We met in the first year of Daniell Road School in the autumn of 1941, thrown together across the narrow aisle between our desks by alphabetical chance. He was large for his age, mischievously pugnacious and irrepressibly curious. The Second World War had been going on for two years by then, but since we were too young to remember much about life in peace time, it had effectively been going on for ever."

A very accomplished mystery with the Goddard trademark twists and turns. Highly recommended to readers who are sick of the blood and gore in a lot of mystery novels.

Brenda H says

The mystery begins when Chris Napier finds his childhood friend, Nicky Lanyon, lurking - and later hanged - in the bushes at a family event. Nicky's father, Michael, was hanged for conspiracy to commit murder after Chris' grandfather was found stabbed to death. The motive was always a bit unclear since it was assumed that Michael - despite being no blood relation to Chris' grandfather - would inherit the fortune rather than the Napier family.

Goddard does a masterful job of interweaving the past with the present. There are 3 separate timelines being read at once with no disruption to any of the storylines. The characters are a good mix of the likable, the detestable and the enigmatic. The reader is taken along on a complex journey as Chris attempts to unravel a decades-old family mystery.

Rating: 4 Stars

LG says

Like Emma Moresco, one of the more important characters, I enjoyed the tour of Cornwall that we get in this novel, the author's 10th. Even though I've never been to Truro or Torquay or Pangbourne (and am not likely to visit any of these places), his succinct descriptions strike some sort of universal chord. Here's one: "Battersea Park was bathed in crystalline sunlight, gilding the yellows and reds of the trees around the boating lake and etching the lines of the power-station chimneys beyond Queenstown Road. Children on their way home from school were playing with their mothers, the high notes of their carefree voices rising above the plaintive wail of the peacocks and the distant growls of the traffic." Take away the names of the park and the road, and of course the wailing peacocks, and I feel right at home in a paragraph like this.

The setting, in fact, became more interesting than the characters - maybe because there were too many Napiers and Lanyons and minor players to care about by the time we get to know who's who. Or who says they're who. By page 2, for instance, we know Gran is going to play a major role, but even by page 200 I felt I still didn't know her well enough to become upset by the gravity of that role. These characters might have been more sympathetic in a TV-movie adaptation, maybe. (I can see Penelope Wilton as Gran.) As a result, even Chris remained a detached figure, as if I were one of the gossiping neighbors to keep at bay instead of the audience of his story. His own determination to keep his distance from his family seemed to work too well. The *deus ex machina* in the ending doesn't help.

Still, this is definitely one for Goddard's followers. And those who've been to Cornwall, maybe. Or you could wait for the movie.

Nd says

How I love Robert Goddard's books! Everyday details always make them a little difficult to get interested in in the beginning, but the mundanity of the protagonist's everyday life is what establishes him in a reader's mind. Then, a story that neither the unassuming character nor the reader expects slowly entangles us, bit

by bit, until we both are immersed without ever realizing it's happening. This particular book begins and ends with someone trying to extort money from Chris Napier, self-made car restorer. The family fortune, which Chris has refused any part of, was made by his great-uncle Joshua Carnoweth, an adventurous Brit who went to the U.S. during the gold rush to seek his fortune and used his assets honorably, as he saw fit, after he returned many, many years later. Involved are war heroes, former loves, family greed, framing of innocents, childhood friendships, extortion, murder, and bribery, among other spellbinding complicating elements. Wonderfully, the only predictability to all of the Robert Goddard books I've read so far is continued in *Beyond Recall*: Just as the reader sees how the surprising and very complicated plot will unfold, the unexpected turns takes one in other directions. It's hard to put down the book until the end.

Charlotte (charami) says

Dit boek is hoe een thriller moet zijn: spannend en onvoorspelbaar tot het einde.

Het verhaal is vrij complex en helemaal niet wat ik er van had verwacht op basis van de flaptekst. De lezer moet navigeren tussen drie verschillende tijden – het heden, het recente verleden en het verre verleden – maar toch blijft het verhaal duidelijk en goed te volgen.

Beetje bij beetje wordt het plot zo ontwaard en die zit volkomen logisch en geloofwaardig in elkaar. Op het einde is alles ook mooi opgelost en uitgelegd. Geen open einde, maar alle plotdraden komen mooi bij elkaar in een grote strik.

De personages zijn ook allen goed uitgewerkt, maar het meest memorabele personage is toch wel de setting. Het verhaal speelt zich af in Cornwall en doorheen het verhaal krijgen we een tour doorheen deze provincie. De beschrijvingen zijn zo levendig en aantrekkelijk, dat ik echt goesting had om er meteen naartoe te gaan om het zelf te ontdekken.

Echt een goeie, slimme thriller. Ik zal zeker meer lezen van deze auteur.

Carol says

Beyond Recall by Robert Goddard

5★'s

From The Book:

On a bright autumn afternoon in Truro, the Napier family celebrates one couple's golden wedding anniversary and another's marriage. But for one member of the clan, the day turns dark. Chris Napier, prodigal son, suddenly spots the ragged specter of a former friend, Nicky Lanyon—a man whose own family was ruined by the same twist of fate with which the Napiers were blessed. And the next morning, Chris is horrified to find Nicky dead, hanging from a tree where the boys once played.

For Chris, the suicide opens a floodgate of doubt and suspicion. How did his family's wealth slip out of the hands of a great-uncle, brutally murdered before he could change his will? Were the men convicted of the crime truly guilty? And who is the mysterious, seductive woman who claims to know the Napiers' darkest secrets? As the crimes of two families are exposed, a series of violent acts shadows him and suddenly Chris knows he's in uncharted waters...until a killer drops one last disguise—for the ultimate act of revenge.

My Thoughts:

The story is incredibly complex, and absolutely believable. The family history leading up to the present events is brilliantly depicted in each chapter and each witness that Chris uncovers adds a piece of information to the building blocks making up the final chapter. I did find it a challenge to keep who, what and why straight at times...but the end result was so well worth it. I would highly recommend this to anyone that loves a tangled mystery with lots of "I never saw it coming" plots.

Stephanie Cowart says

This is my first Robert Goddard book. I gather he is well-known author. This book had a comment of praise on it from Stephen King so I went into it thinking it was going to be pretty good.

I wasn't impressed.

The book flipped back and forth every couple of pages between the past and the more present past (but past nonetheless) and it was hard to follow. It took FOREVER to get interesting. I wasn't really involved in the characters so the thing that happened to them didn't really touch me. Honestly I was just trying to finish it because I hate to leave a book undone. It was a great concept but I told Jim it was like being forced to watch an entire movie in slow motion.

Solid 2 stars, but if anyone else has had good experiences with other Goddard books – be sure to let me know. I'm not ready to write him off all together!

Eadie says

This was another haunting tale of lies and intrigue by Robert Goddard, the master of manipulation. The twists kept me hooked until the very end. It's a well crafted story with a solid plot line and interesting characters. It's a shame that more people don't know about Robert Goddard's books as he is one of the best in suspense thrillers. I highly recommend his books as they are very entertaining. I can't wait to read the next one.

Andrew says

I don't think Robert Goddard knows how to write a bad book. He is the supremo when it comes to writing a ripping yarn! This has all the hallmarks of a great story from Robert Goddard, weaving backwards and forwards (seamlessly) through time to try find out what happened 34 years ago when Chris's uncle was murdered. This story took quite a bit of piecing together but absolutely loved everything about the book, even when one unexpected twist fooled me! You haven't read Robert Goddard? Why? You certainly need to remedy that if you love great 'all-involving' mystery books. He is most definitely one of my favourite authors and he has NEVER let me down. Go on, you know you want to!

