



Fear Itself

Dan Greenburg

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Why would a nurse's aide terrified of heights hurl herself from a 20th story rooftop in Queens? Why would an attractive librarian with a water phobia be found naked and floating face-down in the Astoria Park swimming pool? How did the scantily clad body of a young bookstore clerk with a horror of snakes end up inside a Central Park Zoo cage with a 200-pound python? NYPD Detective Max Segal, strung out from a devastating divorce, is determined to find the killer before more women die.

A sadistic ex-con who masquerades as a shrink is seducing phobic women into psychic hell and literally scaring them to death. When Max Segal picks up the killer's trail, Max's new girlfriend is chosen to become victim number four.

Like *Love Kills* and *Exes*, Dan Greenburg's previous bestselling thrillers, *Fear Itself* is a terrifyingly realistic, darkly humorous, startlingly sexy, street-tough thriller with a surprising climax.

Fear Itself Details

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Author : Dan Greenburg

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From Reader Review Fear Itself for online ebook

T.R. Horne says

* Received as a Goodreads First Read*

Dan Greenburg has an exceptional thriller in *Fear Itself*, the story of a psychopathic prisoner who fools the parole board and therapist into releasing him into society. He is released into the custody of his mother who is the very reason he ended up in prison in the first place (indirectly, of course). He assumes his psychopathic role of finding women who have phobias and forcing them to face those fears, while becoming aroused emotionally, physically and sexually by their discomfort. He learns that he is in love with his therapist and that she is the only person to help "save" him from his psychopathic tendencies...so he embarks on a journey to make her his. Unfortunately, Detective Segal is in love with the same woman and hot on the trail of this killer. This book ends in rare fashion and with loads of emotional gratification for the readers.

I found myself really submerging into the book, reading carefully each line and ruminating over it before moving on. It's beautifully written and the characters are really developed to the point that you feel that you know them and understand them on deeper levels, especially Max Segal. You get a look at the inner demons of the characters and really invest yourself into whether they will work through their issues.

Greenburg has a thoughtful twist to his thriller in which the reader follows along with the characters and finds out things as they go along. I was not able to pinpoint what would happen or how they would manage to find the answers but cleverly, they did. I was very satisfied with this book and really applaud the premise of phobias being tied to the psychological aspect of murder. It was a really cool idea and one that I found believable and well thought out. I enjoyed this novel immensely and recommend it for readers who like to be a little uncomfortable, a little appalled and taken on a journey of inner thoughts that most of us deny having.

- T.R. Horne, author of *Breaking Mobius* and blogger at Raging Book Reviews on www.ragingbookreviews.wordpress.com

Denise says

Plagued by his pending divorce, his doubly unfaithful soon-to-be-ex-wife, and severe money troubles, homicide detective Max Segal now also has a series of distinctly strange deaths on his plate. In each case, the victim appears to have been killed by the thing she was most afraid of - literally scared to death by a psychopathic killer who appears to enjoy watching his victims' terror.

The whole "death by phobia" thing is an intriguing premise, though one I'm pretty sure I've seen used on an episode of *Criminal Minds* (I think, could have been a different show) several years back. Also, I probably would have enjoyed this more if not for the fact that all the female characters (with the notable exception of P.J., of whom I'd have loved to see more) were either completely fucked up or too stupid to live.

Patricia Baker says

I really liked this book. received it as part of a giveaway from Brilliance Publishing in Grand Haven, MI. I loved the police detective, Max and all his troubles with his pending divorce, his interaction with police cop DaVinci, his partner, Caruso. I would read another book with this character. I not sure if I really want him to be a couple with the Dr. Stevenson. think she is a little too old and has her own baggage to make it work. Even though I knew that Andy Woods and his mother were up to no good, I felt compelled to read more of the story. have to say that his victims were certainly dupe-able and that probably lead to their deaths. very creepy about Cynthia. do not think there is a word in the dictionary that would define her motherhood. all in all, a very quick readable book.

Tracey says

This is a great book! It's an easy read with a page turning plot. I couldn't put it down. It is better than many New York Times best sellers I have read. I won the book in a Goodreads giveaway, and I am so happy I entered. I heartily recommend it.

Keegan says

I liked the story line and the idea behind it. The reason I gave it a four out of five is because at certain parts it got confusing and it switched between so many people's point of views. It was a little distracting and I didn't necessarily like it. It was also a cliff hanger and I don't like books that do that I like to have a kind of ending cliffhanger so that it's ok but if it's just a plain cliffhanger it's kind of weird. I won it in a goodread's giveaway

George Kraus says

Without a doubt Dan Greenburg has done his home-work and leg-work in the gritty streets of New York City. Drawn into the tale, I accompanied NYPD Detective Max Segal on his tour through the city while following the tracks of a serial killer. This tour, which ends in Las Vegas, includes a number of characters of all levels, each clearly drawn, including their voices. Greenburg also allows the killer to show us his insane, murderous course. The chase ends in Las Vegas in a final confrontation. Greenburg's reader follows the investigation without tedious asides and psychological explanations. What is there is there, and it's up to the reader to add what he or she brings to the chase. And Dan Greenburg obviously brings a profound understanding of how crime novels work and how characters speak and act. He has been there, and has come back with a wonderful tale.

Eric_W says

Humor is important to me and when a book has dialogue that makes me smile, I can't help but mentally add a star. Such is the case here. I smiled a lot.

Max Segal is a homicide detective rooming with a colleague because he's going through a divorce. He likes his wife's lover, Achmed, but he doesn't like that his son, Sam, does, too.

Not only did Achmed bring Sam better presents than Max did, Achmed also had a comradely ease with Sam that Max was unable to achieve. This may have been because Achmed was not also obliged to see to it that Sam ate sufficient protein at mealtimes or remembered to cleanse all bodily orifices during showers or to floss his teeth before bedtime, but it may also have been because comradely ease was not one of Max's greatest talents. Sam liked Achmed a lot.

When he stops at what appears to be a routine jumper from the 20th floor of a building (proving that humans really do have many feet of intestine,) the local precinct detective pisses him off so much he decides to check it out, maybe see if it was really a homicide and thus fuck up the guy's clearance rate. Turns out the jumper had a phobia of heights to such an extent, she refused to live above the 2nd floor, yet she had supposedly jumped from the 20th.

Max then runs across two other weird cases. One is that of a woman found naked in a deserted pool, the other, another naked woman discovered dead of a heart attack in the Python cage at the zoo. The first was terrified of water, the second of reptiles.

There's little mystery as to who, how, or why these killings have taken place. The interest in the stories comes from the telling and then characters. You have got to love P.J. McCleary, another detective who joins forces with Max. She's this diminutive little thing who can bring a 300lb. boxer swiftly to his knees.

An interesting question one might ask is why the detail of how the killer manages to coerce the victims into succumbing to try their worst nightmares? Is it an attempt to appeal the readers' own desire to dominate? Be interesting to study the different reader responses to those scenes.

Ginya Eshom says

Fear Itself ascends the usual expectations of thriller fiction through its psychological erudition and expert pacing. Polarities abound--an analytical psychopath/a frazzled psychiatrist; lux Park Avenue interiors/raunchy Las Vegas wedding chapels. Sustained narrative tension keeps it all together.

Elaine says

Mine was the narrated edition (Kindle Unlimited). Some of the voices were terrific. A few were funny. Several of the female voices were similar, spoken with a lisp. One of my favorites was Surtees, a porter who was questioned by Detective DaVinci. I loved the repartee between Max and his detective partner. It had me cracking up!

What didn't work for me were some of the conversations between Max and other characters which went something like this:

"Yeah", said the sergeant. "You from the one-fourteen?"

"No," said Max. "From Queens Homicide."

"Homicide," said the sergeant. "This here ain't no homicide."

"I just got off duty," said Max...

"Check with the one-fourteen." said the sergeant...

"Right," said Max...

"One Virginia Morales," said the sergeant...

While it is helpful to know who's saying what, the constant 'said so-and-so' throughout when there were only the two of them speaking, makes it sound like a child's book. (Perhaps it's worse when it's being narrated.)

I'd probably have to say the conversations and narration of the dialogue, was my favorite part, the story itself being secondary.

Adam says

I won this book for free from the Goodreads book giveaway contest and this was a really good book! I enjoyed the twists and turns especially when thinking about how a sadistic monster could play on someone's most primal fears and use those fears to entice the "perfect" response to his thrill kills. I loved the dark humor with Andy and his "loving" relationship with his mom. These two are perfect, in a creepy Norman Bates way.

Erin says

When a nurse's aide, who is afraid of heights, jumps off of a high rise, it hits the suspicion of NYPD's Detective Max Segal. After the first woman dies, another woman is found floating face down in a pool, and she has a phobia of water. The third woman who dies in a snake enclosure, who is afraid of snakes, points to one killer responsible for all three murders. Max is determined to find the killer, while facing his own dilemmas in life. Max thinks he is getting close until the killer picks Max's girlfriend to be his next victim.

This book is both thrilling and suspenseful. Doctor Grace Stevenson is a tough woman, and definitely can keep calm in difficult situations. She is a very caring woman who likes to think the best of people. Detective Max Segal is also a very kind and caring person. He struggles with knowing his ex-wife is with another man who his son completely adores. The financial problems really make it difficult for Max, but he tries to do the best he can for his family. I love how Max works to track down the killer, and when it comes down to money being an issue preventing him from trying to solve the case, he does everything possible to try to work it out. Even though this was the third book in the Max Segal series, I didn't feel as though I was missing anything major. I had no problem reading this as a standalone book! Parts of this book were really funny, like the altercation between Max and DaVinci. I also loved how I hit parts where I could not put the book down. I had to find out what was happening next! I really enjoyed this book and would enjoy reading more from this author, especially in this series!

I received a copy of this book for free through Goodreads First Reads.

Books n All Jill Burkinshaw says

This is the third in the Max Segal series the 1st book I loved, couldn't put it down. Book 2 I wasn't impressed but it was readable worth the 3 stars but this one I couldn't get into at all I got a third of the way through with no sign of improvement unrealistic characters and unbelievable plot - I gave up :(I did pick this up again and read to the end but my opinion didn't change

Mkittysamom says

Fear Itself is actually about fear. A recently "reformed" convict Andy Woods kills 3 women by exposing them to their greatest fears. Max is in the middle of a divorce and meets Grace, Andy's therapist for review and the two men fall in love with her. I enjoyed this thriller, as well as the first two! Read it all at one time, couldn't stop because I wanted to know if Andy would get caught and who Grace would choose. So much was going on, in terms of all the characters! I hope there will be a 4th novel starring Max Segal!

Meg says

I won my autographed copy in a good reads giveaway. I had been in a small slump recently when it came to deciding what to read or keep reading and then this book arrived on my mailbox. I wasn't bald to start reading it straight away, but it was like getting exactly what you needed rather than what you ordered: I was hooked from page one and couldn't put it down until I was finished. This book was amazing!

I haven't read any of the other booked in this series or anything by this author before, but you can be sure I will now!

The research that went into this book more than paid off. Not only were the scenarios and reactions well-done, the everyday lives of people (cops, morgue attendants, hotel workers, and therapists) were all vividly portrayed. Especially the villain of the book, a psychopath whose story reminded me of the first time is read Perfume and got to see the world through the eyes of a psychopath/sociopath. A very startling glimpse, to be sure, but a vivid one.

This book was incredible and packed with edge-of-your-seat, in-your-face tension from the first chapter.

Dan Claffey says

I received this book for free through the Goodreads First Reads program.

I unfortunately didn't get a chance to read the previous entries into the Max Segal series, but still didn't feel like I was missing a ton of vital background story for any of the characters. The novel stands on its own very well.

The author does a great job making you feel very attached to a dark, twisted killer who, as you understand more and more of his life's story you feel more and more sympathy for his situation. The final chapters are riveting and I felt I needed to continue reading until finished because I was so emotionally invested in the characters. I wish Goodreads gave us the option of giving half stars, as the only reason this isn't a 4 for me was some of the character dialogue seemed somewhat unrealistic and a little difficult to read. Definitely a

