



## Phobia

*C.A. Shives*

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EVERYONE HAS A SECRET FEAR...

Ex-cop Artemis Herne thought he left the grit and crime of the city in the past when he moved to a small town in Pennsylvania. But the discovery of a woman's dead body, bound and covered with snakes, sends panic through his community and ignites his investigative instincts.

As the serial killer continues to target his prey, Herne must confront his haunted past to uncover the pattern in the deaths. He soon discovers that every victim suffers from a phobia. And every murder transforms the victim's worst fear into reality.

Tormented by his personal demons, Herne is forced to face his own fears as he hunts for a murderer who uses terror for a weapon.

## Phobia Details

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Author : C.A. Shives

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## From Reader Review Phobia for online ebook

### **Tyler-rose (The Reading Pile) says**

Review can be found at [www.the-reading-pile.blogspot.co.uk/](http://www.the-reading-pile.blogspot.co.uk/)

So, I started reading this and remembered a movie I watched that was scarily similar to it... Dread... So I got really worried... I was terrified of that movie! And this book was no different! The Healer as the murderer calls himself goes around turning peoples phobia's into a reality.. their death.

Honestly, Phobia has had me gripped and I've loved reading every minute of it. The novel was very well written and addictive. I found myself talking out loud trying, just as the police consultant, Herne was, trying to figure out who was going to die next... who the murderer was...

If you like crime books, that aren't boring.. .that are funny and clever and very addictive, then Phobia is definitely for you! Honestly after being a crime fan, recent crime books have let me down... Maybe Phobia has reignited my love for them.

I was really impressed with the twists that made me 'oh my' out loud on a regular basis. I really did enjoy Phobia and thought it was well written.

Wonderful book, wonderful plot, wonderful. No other words to describe it!

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### **Zoe says**

Phobia is a gem. From the first page, we are thrown headlong into a race against time. The concept of a serial killer (who does not see himself as a killer) using his victims phobias to kill them is very good, and on the whole, the book is a very satisfying read.

I did find some of the dialogue to be a bit tedious, especially that of Rex Tucker. While I appreciate that the characters are all fully grown adults, and for the most part, male police officers in a stressful situation and buzzing with testosterone, I found the constant profanities irritating. At times, the conversations held between Tucker and Herne appeared very awkward and slightly juvenile, which did detract slightly from the main story. However, on the whole, this is a very good book. We see the situation from both sides; the good ones, and the baddie. The side story of Herne falling apart himself while assisting with the case adds to the intensity of the story, while the window into the mind of the killer provides us with a great sense of desperation to heal himself and others.

I found it very hard to stop reading this book before it was finished. There is always some little thing that makes you feel as if you have the whole thing worked out in your head, and within seconds, something happens to blow your theory out of the water, which ensures that this book is impossible to leave for a few days. This is one to finish as soon as possible purely for the brilliant ending. You won't see it coming!

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**Erin says**

## Phobia:

I liked this book I liked the way that it was done. I know that this concept has been done before in tv shows and in movies but I liked that this one took a different path. I mean in any case there were similarities but on the other hand it was unique in its own way.

This book read like a mystery but handled like a thriller which was a nice touch. The readers read from the point of view of a past cop as the main character, while also reading from the mind of 'The Healer', and even from the minds of some of the victims before it happens. The change of character view is done by being put into new chapters so that it is easier to tell when there has been a change.

There are no perfect characters in this book, all of them have a flaw and not all of them are fears/ phobia's so if you are looking for a book that has a character with redeeming qualities in the end then this is not the book for you. Each character has been written in a way that makes them interesting and also in way the makes you raise your eyebrow at them and say why? Its nice to see the way that the writer chose to create all of the characters that you meet.

This story takes place in a small town but the characters also go to another small town. You get to see three different law enforcement teams working on the case, and the use of some not legal ways that are used to catch the healer.

Please note that I guessed who it was early on in the book, in this case it is not a bad thing because you don't know what they will do next and that is enough to hold your interest. I think that anyone who watches and reads a lot of mystery will catch who did it early on as well but will keep reading to see how the others figure it out and to see what happens next.

This is a great book for someone looking for either a mystery or a thriller and if you come across it I say that you should give it a chance you might find it hard to put the book down.

## Lucy Barton says

This book is very well written. The lead character has many flaws, of which some we do not know about until the very last minute. I read it on Kindle and was 86% through before I guessed whodunnit!! I was a little disappointed that the detectives did not think about rooms being bugged or wired until very late into the book, however this just added to the build up!! I hope Artemis Herne will be back solving more cases soon. :o)

**MGGMMGGM says**

Phobia is a mutiple POV type of book BUT it isn't confusing, so don't be afraid. Shives has written it effectively and I can definitely see the gift for storytelling by Shives. Imagine from page one until the time that Herne solves the case I was trying to determine who the killer was and when it was time to name the killer I was mind boggled. The outcomes was unexpected. Amazing! The twist and turns was never ending and the story was very engaging. You'll never run out of thoughts in your head trying to figure who is who.

The story was flawless. There was no information dump. There was no dull moment. It was just pure awesomeness and brilliantly executed. Every detail meshed perfectly creating an effecting thriller that all mystery lovers would enjoy!

Take note I am a great lover of thrillers and mysteries – I read Cornwell, Lescroart and Grisham books (before I got hooked on YA) like crazy but sometimes I get disappointed with one thing or the other BUT I can definitely tell you that Phobia and C.A Shives CAN compete with these well known authors – no doubt! I am looking forward to reading more of what Shives can offer and I encourage you too. Your money is well spent on Phobia I swear.

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### **Laima says**

This book sounds amaaaazing!! I can't believe how lucky I was to win a free copy from the FirstReads giveaway contest!

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I LOVED THIS BOOK!!!

I was riveted from the start. Even the beginning was really creepy... the way I like my stories.

Small town sheriff, Rex Tucker, calls in his friend, ex-police officer Artemis Herne, to help solve an unusual murder. Artemis is a brooding character who has ways of finding the truth that run below police radar. His methods are unusual but get the job done and Rex calls in a favor. Reluctantly, Artemis agrees. The first murder that occurs in this Pennsylvania town involves a wealthy young woman found in her bedroom, bound and covered with snakes. She is dead... from all the snake bites.

And so it begins... a series of creepy murders. The next dead body is found in a homemade coffin, in the woods. Herne and Tucker find a link between the two murders. These people had severe phobias, one of snakes and the other of small spaces. There is a suspect in town, psychologist Peter Locheed. But, in my opinion, this suspect seems too good to be true... too obvious. All the murders take place on a Saturday and as the search for the killer progresses, more victims are discovered. This story is filled with twists, clues, creepy murders, and characters with dirty secrets. Even characters who you don't think have any secrets, have dirty secrets.

This book should be made into a movie, with Tommy Lee Jones playing the role of Artemis Herne and Will Smith as Rex Tucker, in my opinion.

I already have a waiting list of friends who want to borrow this book.

Thank you to author C.A.Shives for sending me a copy. I seriously hope you write more novels with these characters!!!

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### **pinK says**

The characters in this book were very well built, but the story itself seemed bland. One of the best parts of a crime story is the mystery of who is the culprit. Phobia didn't have mystery for me. Honestly, I think a person would be fairly naive to have not figured out the murderer in this book within the 2-3 murder. I figured it out shortly after the second murder, but was hoping I was wrong. Unfortunately, I was correct. I was so hoping for a twist, but was disappointed. I still give this book 3 stars because it was very well written and developed, it just lacked the suspense and mystery since I was able to figure it out so quickly.

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### **~reader~ says**

This book blew me away! I couldn't believe this is a debut novel. It takes place in the small town of Hurricane, Pa. I don't want to give anything away but the opening of the story will suck you in. It starts off strong and only gets better. Great read!

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### **ReadandRated says**

I'm almost nervous when I read a debut novel, especially one which I've already agreed to review and picking up Phobia for the first time was no exception.

I found the book initially read at a slower pace than I was expecting and it took me a few chapters to really get into it, although on reflection that is probably to be expected when you are getting to know new characters and a new writing style.

However, suddenly I found that I was hooked and I got completely engrossed in the story which was cleverly unravelling on the pages. I really enjoyed the character Artemis Herne and I hope he will feature in future books; he was a full on, gnarly, alcoholic, old school type and I thought he was ace!

I felt there were lots of occasions where this book could have taken a lazy turn but full credit to C A Shives as it didn't, it was a great read and I will look forward to reading more.

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### **Lindaknighthall says**

This book had me hooked from the beginning! The plot is clever and well thought out, with just the right amount of 'red herrings', and kept me guessing for most of the book, something that doesn't happen often. I enjoyed getting to know the characters and really cared about their fate. The story moved along at a brisk pace and I found myself reading faster as the race to catch the killer intensified. I didn't put it down until I'd finished it.

I love murder mysteries and this one was up there with the best I've read! I eagerly await more from this

author!

I recommend it to anyone who enjoys a good whodunnit!

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### **Majanka says**

Phobia takes place in Hurricane, a small town with only one psychiatrist and a pitifully small police force. When a woman is found brutally murdered due to snake bites, homicide detective Rex Tucker asks his best friend and former cop, Herne, for help. It doesn't take the cops long to figure out the victim, Amanda Todd, was murdered by the very thing she was most afraid of – snakes. She had a true phobia for the animals. Although it's peculiar, it doesn't strike as a pattern right away, not until another victim is found. This time a man, dehydrated after spending several days in a small coffin. The man suffered from severe claustrophobia.

Herne and the other police officer have to look for a pattern, a connection between the murders, which they soon find in the phobias. All people murdered were patients of Dr. Lochhead, the town's only therapist at some point. But the doctor isn't so keen on sharing his patient information. When another gruesome murder is discovered, other police forces start to intervene, almost taking the case out of Tucker and Herne's hands. That's when Herne realizes that, to find the truth and catch the killer, he may not succeed if he keeps on playing by the rules.

Herne is an intriguing character. Tormented by images of his wife passing away years ago in a consuming fire, he hasn't looked for love anywhere ever since. He's a man driven by loneliness and the need for vengeance. This new case drives him into a downward spiral, and forces him to come to terms with his own emotions. It's intriguing to see these changes in someone, how they turn from uninvolved and disinterested to burning with passion to solve something. Herne's characterization is really well done. I wasn't smitten with him at first, but he grew on me as the story progressed.

The mystery itself isn't very straight-forward. Some leads are thrown up, and the story takes a nice few twists and turns before it reaches its climax. The only downside? I kind of knew who the killer was early on. Yep, bummer. But I'm sure not everyone will notice right away. Even though I found out early on, the book still kept me turning the pages. The characters, their interactions and relationships, the race against time, the setting and narrative were all interesting enough to keep me reading till the very end.

For a debut novel, Phobia is very, very strong. I can't wait to see what else author C.A. Shives has up her sleeves. I'm hoping for more thrillers. It's hard to find decent pageturners nowadays, but this author definitely nailed it. The story is well-developed, the pace is fast, and there's a general sense of urgency that doesn't drop once until the end of the novel.

I recommend Phobia to all fans of thrillers and suspense novels, hard-boiled detectives and mysteries, but not to the faint of heart.

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### **Saisha Sandoz says**

I received the book free from a facebook group I have joined. So far the books have been hit or miss. This one was definitely a HIT!! I enjoyed the book and stayed up late to finish it. It started with a bang, but slows a bit between the first and second murders. Although I guessed the murderer right away (it takes a lot to lead

me astray), there were enough red herrings that I almost second guess myself. I found it very interesting to see which phobias would be used (thought the dentist one was a little far fetched though). Overall, I would recommend this book!!

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### **Steve says**

A woman's dead body, bound and covered with poisonous snakes. Enter Artemis Herne, a retired homicide copy, and friend of the small town Police Chief, Rex Tucker.

It becomes clear that there is a serial killer, preying on residents of Hurricane with severe phobias.

Artemis has his own fears, and problems to deal with. He is talked into being a consultant on the case, because he has the uncanny ability to feel what victims do.

There are varying points of view explored as the story unfolds.

I was kept guessing as to who the killer was, and intrigued by the different phobias involved, and the way they were used by the killer, and Artemis, throughout this book.

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This was another free Kindle eBook obtained via a Pixel of Ink email, back in June of 2012. Pixel of Ink deals can be seen either by going directly to the site; or the way I get them by a daily email, after signing up at the site. The daily email is received around 3PM (Central Time).

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### **Mary Beth says**

I started this book last night and could not wait to have some time today to finish it. From the opening paragraph it grabbed my attention. I wanted to know what will happen next. It's hard to believe this is the authors 1st novel. For all you thriller/mystery fans out there. Pick up this book, you won't be disappointed.

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### **Sarah S says**

This was a relatively quick read which I appreciate in a book honestly. I was hooked from the very beginning, devouring the pages trying to figure out who it was and how they would find and then stop him, even getting irked when I figured out who it was \*chapters\* before the cops. I loved that there were other elements to it other than just the killings, it focused on a couple main characters and you got into them, their lives, their past and really got to get a feel for them as people.

This book just did not disappoint! I'm sure it's not for everyone but I did really enjoy my time reading it.

Only thing of note is that one of the cops sounds a bit like a Trucker with his language but eh, he's a cop.

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