

#1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

"ICE-PICK SHARP...SPECTACULARLY
SNEAKY...IMPRESSIVELY CAGEY."

—JANET MASLIN, NEW YORK TIMES

GILLIAN
FLYNN
GONE GIRL

SPECIAL
EDITION
INCLUDES
PREVIOUSLY
UNPUBLISHED
SCENES

A NOVEL

Named one of the Best Books of the Year by:

San Francisco Chronicle

St. Louis Post Dispatch

Chicago Tribune

Huffington Post

Newsday

Selected as one of the Top 10 Books of the Year by:

Janet Maslin, *New York Times*

People

Entertainment Weekly

O, The Oprah Magazine

Slate

Kansas City Star

USA Today

Christian Science Monitor

Praise for *Gone Girl*

“[A] thoroughbred thriller about the nature of identity and the terrible secrets that can survive and thrive in even the most intimate relationships. *Gone Girl* begins as a whodunit, but by the end it will have you wondering whether there’s any such thing as a who at all.”

—**Lev Grossman, *Time***

“The plot has it all. I have no doubt that in a year’s time I’m going to be saying that this is my favorite novel of 2012. Brilliant.”

—**Kate Atkinson, author of *Life After Life***

“Flynn is a master manipulator, deftly fielding multiple unreliable narrators, sardonic humor, and social satire in a story of a marriage gone wrong that makes black comedies like *The War of the Roses* and *Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf* look like scenes from a honeymoon.... It is, in a word, amazing.”

—**Yvonne Zipp, *Christian Science Monitor***

“Admirers of Gillian Flynn’s previous books, *Sharp Objects* and *Dark Places*, will be ecstatic over *Gone Girl*, her most intricately twisted and deliciously sinister story, dangerous for any reader who prefers to savor a novel as opposed to consuming it whole in one sitting.”

—**Michelle Weiner, *Associated Press***

“*Gone Girl* [is] a thriller with an insane twist and an insidiously realistic take on marriage.”

—***New York***

“Brilliantly constructed and consistently absorbing...The novel, which twists itself into new shapes, works as a page-turning thriller, but it’s also a study of marriage at its most destructive.”

—***Columbus Dispatch***

“Full of midnight-black wit and gorgeous writing...About halfway through the book, something happens.... That’s the moment you should check the clock and firmly put the book down if you have to rise early the next day. Because trust me, if you keep reading, you won’t stop till you finish it.”

—**Joy Tipping, *Dallas Morning News***

“Absorbing...In masterly fashion, Flynn depicts the unraveling of a marriage—and of a recession-hit Midwest—by interweaving the wife’s diary entries with the husband’s first-person account.”

—***New Yorker***

“How did things get so bad? That’s the reason to read this book. Gillian Flynn—whose award-winning *Dark Places* and *Sharp Objects* also shone a dark light on weird and creepy, not to mention über dysfunctional characters—delves this time into what happens when two people marry and one spouse has no idea who their beloved really is.”

—**Carol Memmott, *USA Today***

“Ms. Flynn writes dark suspense novels that anatomize violence without splashing barrels of blood around the pages...Ms. Flynn has much more up her sleeve than a simple missing-person case. As Nick and Amy alternately tell their stories, marriage has never looked so menacing, narrators so unreliable.”

—***Wall Street Journal***

“A good story presents a reader with a problem that has to be resolved and a few surprises along the way. A great story gives a reader a problem and leads you along a path, then dumps you off a cliff and into a jungle of plot twists, character revelations, and back stories that you could not have imagined. *Gone Girl* does just that.”

—***St. Louis Post-Dispatch***

“Gillian Flynn’s barbed and brilliant *Gone Girl* has two deceitful, disturbing, irresistible narrators and a plot that twists so many times you’ll be dizzy.”

—***Minneapolis Star Tribune***

“The story unfolds in precise and riveting prose...even while you know you’re being manipulated, searching for the missing pieces is half the thrill of this wickedly absorbing tale.”

—**Oprah.com**

“An ingenious whodunit for both the Facebook generation and old-school mystery buffs. Whoever you are, it will linger, like fingerprints on a gun....

Flynn's characters bloom and grow, like beautiful, poisonous plants. She is a Gothic storyteller for the Internet age."

—***Cleveland Plain Dealer***

"A highly original thriller that's also a razor-sharp depiction of a relationship gone off the rails."

—***Parade***

"As *Gone Girl* works itself up into an aria of ingenious, pitch-black comedy (or comedic horror—it's a bit of both), its very outlandishness teases out a truth about all magnificent partnerships: Sometimes it's your enemy who brings out the best in you, and in such cases, you want to keep him close."

—***Salon***

"Flynn keeps us guessing with equal parts charm and menace. An addictive read."

—***More magazine***

"Flynn's third noir thriller recently launched to even more acclaim than the first two novels, polishing her reputation for pushing crime fiction to a new literary level and as a craftsman of deliciously twisting and twisted plots."

—***Kansas City Star***

"Flynn's terrific psychological thriller *Gone Girl* wanders into an alternate criminality to the darkest corners of mind and matrimony, using Occam's razor to slit its own throat.... Aside from the plot's high entertainment value, Flynn has buttressed her book with humor and great writing."

—***The Daily Beast***

"Dark yet funny with a devious twist, this is everything that made Flynn's *Sharp Objects* a bestseller—but better."

—***Redbook***

“This thriller is told in alternating voices, a risky form of narrative that works masterfully here because the characters are so distinct and convincing.... The first half of the story leads readers on a merry chase and gives the term ‘red herring’ new meaning. The second half takes readers on a calculated descent into madness. The ending...is one of the most chilling we’ve seen in recent years.”

—***Sacramento Bee***

“A twisting, turning, zooming-up-the-charts thriller.”

—***Real Simple***

“After a chilling, bombshell twist, you won’t know which clues to trust nor whom to believe.”

—***Woman’s Day***

“Part thriller, part macabre love story...The book is told deliciously...The twists and turns are never obvious.”

—***New York Post***

“A satisfyingly scathing take on a marriage so broken even the truth is built on lies.”

—***Family Circle***

“In this fast-paced thriller, Flynn tracks the disintegration of a marriage and asks: How does a couple go from uttering passionate vows to living separate lives?”

—***All You***

“One of those rare thrillers whose revelations actually intensify its suspense instead of dissipating it. The final pages are chilling.”

—***Kirkus Reviews* (starred review)**

“Flynn cements her place among that elite group of mystery/thriller writers who unfailingly deliver the goods.... Once again Flynn has written an intelligent, gripping tour de force, mixing a riveting plot and psychological intrigue with a compelling prose style that unobtrusively yet forcefully carries the reader from page to page.”

—***Library Journal* (starred review)**

“Compulsively readable, creepily unforgettable, this is a must read for any fan of bad girls and good writing.”

—***Publishers Weekly* (starred review)**

“Just this minute I finished a week of feeling betrayed, misled, manipulated, provoked, and misjudged, not to mention having all my expectations confounded. Considering how compulsively I kept coming back for more, I am seriously thinking of going back to page one and doing it all again.”

—**Arthur Phillips, author of *The Tragedy of Arthur***

“We all know the story, right? Beautiful wife disappears; husband doesn’t seem as distraught as he should be under the circumstances. But Flynn takes this sturdy trope of the 24-hour news cycle and turns it inside out, providing a devastating portrait of a marriage and a timely, cautionary tale about an age in which everyone’s dreams seem to be imploding.”

—**Laura Lippman, author of *After I’m Gone***

“Gillian Flynn’s *Gone Girl* is like *Scenes from a Marriage* remade by Alfred Hitchcock, an elaborate trap that’s always surprising and full of characters who are entirely recognizable. It’s a love story wrapped in a mystery that asks the eternal question of all good relationships gone bad: How did we get from there to here?”

—**Adam Ross, author of *Mr. Peanut***

“I cannot say this urgently enough: you have to read *Gone Girl*. It’s as if Gillian Flynn has mixed us a martini using battery acid instead of vermouth and somehow managed to make it taste really, really good. *Gone Girl* is delicious and intoxicating and delightfully poisonous. It’s smart (brilliant, actually). It’s funny (in the darkest possible way). The writing is jarringly good, and the story is, well...amazing. Read the book and you’ll discover—among many other treasures—just how much freight (and fright) that last adjective can bear.”

—**Scott Smith, author of *The Ruins***

“Gillian Flynn’s *Gone Girl* reminds me of Patricia Highsmith at the top of her game. With *Gone Girl*, she’s placed herself at the top of the short list of authors who have mastered the art of crafting a tense story with terrifyingly believable characters.”

—**Karin Slaughter, author of *Fallen***

“*Gone Girl* manages to be so many stellar things all at once—suspenseful, inventive, chilling, funny, unsettling—as well as beautifully plotted and fiercely well written. Gillian Flynn is a thrilling writer.”

—**Kate Christensen, author of *The Astral***

GILLIAN FLYNN

GONE GIRL

A NOVEL



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Gillian Flynn is available for select speaking engagements. To inquire about a possible appearance, please contact the Penguin Random House Speakers Bureau at speakers@penguinrandomhouse.com.

<http://www.prhspeakers.com/>

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Love is the world's infinite mutability; lies, hatred, murder even, are all knit up in it; it is the inevitable blossoming of its opposites, a magnificent rose smelling faintly of blood.

—Tony Kushner, THE ILLUSION

part one

BOY LOSES GIRL

NICK DUNNE

THE DAY OF

When I think of my wife, I always think of her head. The shape of it, to begin with. The very first time I saw her, it was the back of the head I saw, and there was something lovely about it, the angles of it. Like a shiny, hard corn kernel or a riverbed fossil. She had what the Victorians would call *a finely shaped head*. You could imagine the skull quite easily.

I'd know her head anywhere.

And what's inside it. I think of that too: her mind. Her brain, all those coils, and her thoughts shuttling through those coils like fast, frantic centipedes. Like a child, I picture opening her skull, unspooling her brain and sifting through it, trying to catch and pin down her thoughts. *What are you thinking, Amy?* The question I've asked most often during our marriage, if not out loud, if not to the person who could answer. I suppose these questions stormcloud over every marriage: *What are you thinking? How are you feeling? Who are you? What have we done to each other? What will we do?*

—

My eyes flipped open at exactly six A.M. This was no avian fluttering of the lashes, no gentle blink toward consciousness. The awakening was mechanical. A spooky ventriloquist-dummy click of the lids: The world is black and then, *showtime!* 6-0-0 the clock said—in my face, first thing I saw. 6-0-0. It felt different. I rarely woke at such a rounded time. I was a man of jagged risings: 8:43, 11:51, 9:26. My life was alarmless.

At that exact moment, 6-0-0, the sun climbed over the skyline of oaks, revealing its full summer angry-god self. Its reflection flared across the river toward our house, a long, blaring finger aimed at me through our frail bedroom curtains. Accusing: *You have been seen. You will be seen.*

I wallowed in bed, which was our New York bed in our new house, which we still called *the new house*, even though we'd been back here for two years. It's a rented house right along the Mississippi River, a house that screams Suburban Nouveau Riche, the kind of place I aspired to as a kid from my split-level, shag-carpet side of town. The kind of house that is immediately familiar: a generically grand, unchallenging, new, new, new house that my wife would—and did—detest.

"Should I remove my soul before I come inside?" Her first line upon arrival. It had been a compromise: Amy demanded we rent, not buy, in my little Missouri hometown, in her firm hope that we wouldn't be stuck here long. But the only houses for rent were clustered in this failed development: a miniature ghost town of bank-owned, recession-busted, price-reduced mansions, a neighborhood that closed before it ever opened. It was a compromise, but Amy didn't see it that way, not in the least. To Amy, it was a punishing whim on my part, a nasty, selfish twist of the knife. I would drag her, caveman-style, to a town she had aggressively avoided, and make her live in the kind of house she used to mock. I suppose it's not a compromise if only one of you considers it such, but that was what our compromises tended to look like. One of us was always angry. Amy, usually.

Do not blame me for this particular grievance, Amy. The Missouri Grievance. Blame the economy, blame bad luck, blame my parents, blame your parents, blame the Internet, blame people who use the Internet. I used to be a writer. I was a writer who wrote about TV and movies and books. Back when people read things on paper, back when anyone cared about what I thought. I'd arrived in New York in the late '90s, the last gasp of the glory days, although no one knew it then. New York was packed with writers, real writers, because there were magazines, real magazines, loads of them. This was back when the Internet was still some exotic pet kept in the corner of the

publishing world—throw some kibble at it, watch it dance on its little leash, oh quite cute, it definitely won't kill us in the night. Think about it: a time when newly graduated college kids could come to New York and *get paid to write*. We had no clue that we were embarking on careers that would vanish within a decade.

I had a job for eleven years and then I didn't, it was that fast. All around the country, magazines began shuttering, succumbing to a sudden infection brought on by the busted economy. Writers (my kind of writers: aspiring novelists, ruminative thinkers, people whose brains don't work quick enough to blog or link or tweet, basically old, stubborn blowhards) were through. We were like women's hat makers or buggy-whip manufacturers: Our time was done. Three weeks after I got cut loose, Amy lost her job, such as it was. (Now I can feel Amy looking over my shoulder, smirking at the time I've spent discussing my career, my misfortune, and dismissing her experience in one sentence. That, she would tell you, is typical. *Just like Nick*, she would say. It was a refrain of hers: *Just like Nick to...* and whatever followed, whatever was *just like me*, was bad.) Two jobless grown-ups, we spent weeks wandering around our Brooklyn brownstone in socks and pajamas, ignoring the future, strewing unopened mail across tables and sofas, eating ice cream at ten A.M. and taking thick afternoon naps.

Then one day the phone rang. My twin sister was on the other end. Margo had moved back home after her own New York layoff a year before—the girl is one step ahead of me in everything, even shitty luck. Margo, calling from good ole North Carthage, Missouri, from the house where we grew up, and as I listened to her voice, I saw her at age ten, with a dark cap of hair and overall shorts, sitting on our grandparents' back dock, her body slouched over like an old pillow, her skinny legs dangling in the water, watching the river flow over fish-white feet, so intently, utterly self-possessed even as a child.

Go's voice was warm and crinkly even as she gave this cold news: Our indomitable mother was dying. Our dad was nearly gone—his (nasty) mind,