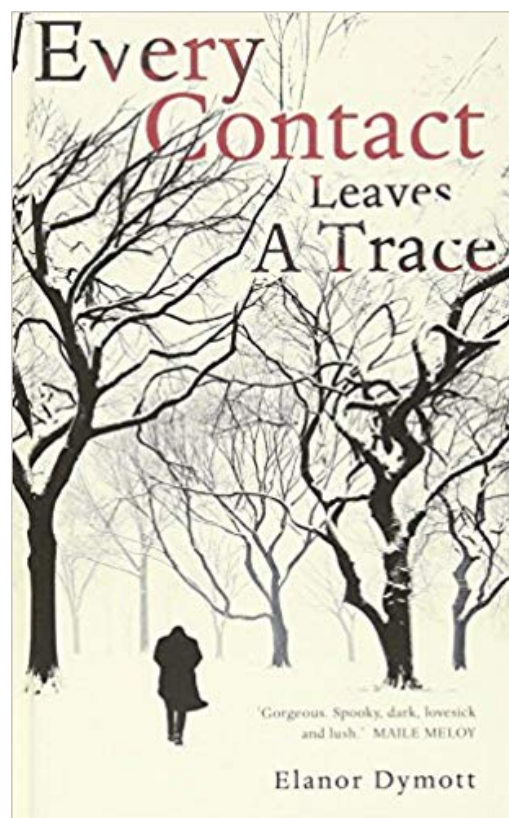


## Every Contact Leaves a Trace *by* Elanor Dymott



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Product Description 'If you were to ask me to tell you about my wife, I would have to warn you at the outset that I don't know a great deal about her. Or at least, not as much as I thought I did...' So speaks Alex, the narrator of this unforgettable literary thriller. Alex is in his thirties, a solitary man who has finally found love in the form of his beautiful and vivacious wife, Rachel. When Rachel is brutally murdered one Midsummer Night by the lake in the grounds of their alma mater, Worcester College, Oxford, Alex's life as he knew it vanishes. He returns to Oxford that winter, and through the shroud of his shock and grief, begins to try to piece together the mystery surrounding his wife's death. Playing host to Alex's winter visit is Harry, Rachel's former tutor and trusted mentor, who turns out to have been involved in some way in almost every significant development of their relationship throughout their undergraduate years. In his exploration of Rachel's history, Alex also turns to Evie, Rachel's self-centred and difficult godmother, whose jealousy of her charge has waxed and waned over the years. And then there are her university friends, Anthony and Cissy, who shared with Rachel her love of Browning and a taste for the illicit. As Alex delves deep into the past to uncover shocking secrets and constantly shifting versions of the truth, it is with these virtual strangers as his guides that he begins to confront the terrifying reality that neither his life, nor his love, are the things he thought them to be. Part love story, part murder-mystery, this is an extraordinary debut from a powerful new voice in fiction, guaranteed to make your heart beat faster and faster...



## Reviews of the **Every Contact Leaves a Trace** by Elanor Dymott

Thoginn

I hesitated over giving this book only 2 stars because its not poorly written as far as mechanics go (no cliches or clumsy phrasing). There were also several images that remained with me. However, as others have stated, the problem with this book is that it is all telling and not showing and the telling is about things that have already happened. I felt like I was watching a blurred film with the sound turned down. There is very little dialogue and action in this book. The main character tells the story in a passive voice and it is all his memories or memories as told to him by another character. This results in a story that is often dull and drags in places.

Perhaps due to the way this story is told I also never felt like most of the characters were very fleshed out. Evie never seemed like anything more than a caricature, and a very fuzzy one at that. The narrator is so bland that at first I thought he was supposed to be a psychopath. The other characters are very unlikeable but not interesting. Henry seemed gullible and spineless. Richard was obnoxious. Anthony was disgusting and so was Rachael. I realize Rachael was supposed to be flawed but I think the author intended her to have improved. To me, though, all she did was fall in love, there was no real evidence that she became a better person and her simply being able to love didn't redeem her enough for me to care what happened to her.

My final complaints with the story are that I figured out who the killer was pretty early on and I don't think the plot was very realistic. I may read something else by Dymott if she writes it because there is potential in her writing if she figures out how to create and tell a story in a more interesting living breathing way but as far as this one goes I wish I had checked it out of the library instead of purchasing it.

Hbr

Alex Petersen's wife of just a few months has been brutally murdered on the grounds of their alma mater, Worcester College at Oxford. Rachel went down to the lake to meet someone and her head was bashed in with a stone. Alex goes into a deep depression and has to leave his job as an attorney in order to process his grief.

Alex decides that he wants to find out the truth about Rachel's murder as the police investigation is at a standstill. Harry, Rachel's tutor and mentor at Oxford, believes he knows the answers about Rachel's death. He invites Alex to come to Oxford and spend time with him so he can tell Alex his theories about the murder. Alex spends some days listening to Harry and finds out a lot about Rachel's life that he knew nothing about. When Rachel was a student she was involved in erotic activities with two other students that included extensive use of alcohol. These students, Anthony and Cissy, had reason to be jealous of, and angry at Rachel. He learns about Rachel's life with her godmother Evie who raised Rachel after the death of her parents when she was a child. Evie and Rachel had been estranged for many years and Evie was jealous of Rachel. Harry's narration of his theories may or may not be true and Alex is torn about what to believe. He is on the brink of going to New York from London to start a new job but first wants some closure about what happened to Rachel.

This novel is very character driven and very British. Fans of Tana French will delight in Elanor Dymott's debut novel. The beginning of the novel starts off slowly and meanders a bit until it gets to the meat of things. At that point, it spills out like an oil slick and twists and turns in every direction. I was stymied until the very end about who murdered Rachel. This is a superb novel and I highly recommend it.

Kigabar

Good book and extremely well written. I actually wrote down one of the statements the man made about his wife

because is was beautifully written.

However....this book went on too long and the author beat every scenario, every event to death.

GAZANIK

This book took forever to get thru & no actual solution. It was laughable in spots, unless British men fall upon the ground weeping, quite often. Be so upset they vomit/faint, I mean-seriously???? The main character needed a shrink.

Kulafyn

This author oscillated from past to present which I found somewhat confusing but it comes together in the end.

felt boot

A great whodunnit. I was unfamiliar with Elanor Dymott, but she is a wonderful writer and this mystery is compelling from the first chapter. Also a sweet love story.

Dianaghma

ok

Dreary

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