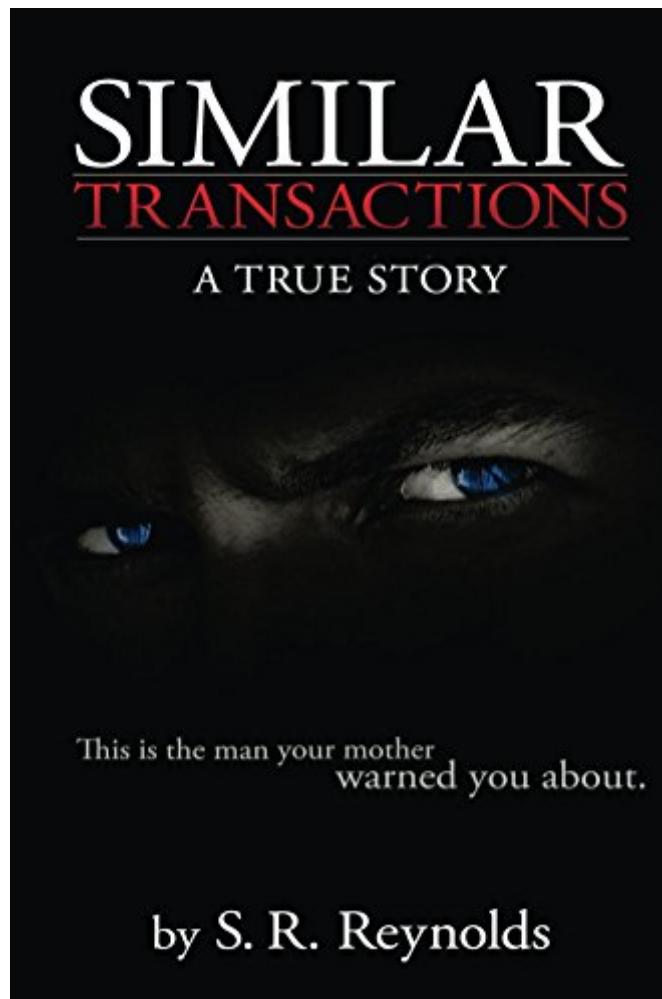


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Similar Transactions: A True Story



Synopsis

"...a powerful memoir about the author's determination to solve a murder and bring the perpetrator to justice." -- True Crime Library, publisher of True Detective Magazine S. R. Reynolds has never forgotten the mishandled case of fifteen-year-old Michelle Anderson, a vibrant beauty who went missing from Reynolds' Knoxville, Tennessee, neighborhood years earlier. Aided by her old professor, famed forensic anthropologist Dr. Bill Bass--founder of the University of Tennessee's "Body Farm"--Reynolds picks up the trail of this cold case. As she presses neglected pieces of the puzzle into place, Reynolds unearths a string of heinous kidnappings and rapes across the South, crimes that span decades. She talks to the victims. A picture begins to form. Patterns appear. And all evidence points to one man: convicted sex offender Larry Lee Smith. As a result of Reynolds' efforts, the Knoxville Police Department reopens the cold case of Michelle's disappearance, but Larry Lee is about to be released from a Georgia prison, where he served time for a related crime--a "similar transaction." What transpires in this story is amazing on many levels.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Despite the unsettling subject matter, this is a gripping and exciting read. I was impressed with the

lengths S.R. Reynolds went to to get this story. She proves to be a bold investigator, tracking down key documents like police and FBI files, forensic reports, court and interview transcripts, even a medical and psych evaluation (how did she get her hands on that?!). She interviews almost everyone associated with Larry Lee Smith and his crimes and gets them to open up and tell their side of the story, putting a human face on both sides of these crimes. When the author suddenly appears in her own book halfway through, I thought it was strange at first (certainly unconventional) but then I realized the story couldn't be told any other way, because as she was writing the story, she became a part of the story, so her appearance is quite natural. Then you realize, by distant associations, that she was on the periphery of this story the whole time. The more I think about it, the more I see just how cleverly structured this whole book is. I look forward to many more books by this author, though I fear it may be a while. Based on her involvement in this story, she seems to be the type of writer/researcher who immerses herself deep into a story before it can unfold on paper.

My cousin recommended this book to me and I couldn't put it down once I got it. The subject matter broke my heart as well as knowing this was a true story but I really appreciated the way Mrs. Reynolds laid out the storyline and identified all those that worked to bring this man to justice. My husband is reading it now and once he's done, I have a couple of neighbors that are wanting to read it as well.

Fascinating . . . disheartening regarding our "justice" system . . . agonizing regarding the effects of an unprosecuted murder. It's a compassionate, realistic view of what happens to family and friends when the killer goes free (for long, uncertain periods of time). (Every killer has more than one victim when he/she kills . . . there are MANY.) It was also very heartening to see that even long afterwards sometimes someone still remembers your child and your pain -- and is moved enough to take up the chase.

True crime fans are always seeking another Ann Rule. Reynolds does share a Rulian style in that she explores the lives of victim and suspect and gives thorough backgrounds. Maybe a little too thorough sometimes. If you like to speculate on why someone turns into bad guy, and you like sociological background to help understand the forces that drive people to kidnap, rape and kill, you will like this book better than someone who wants to focus on suspense and the actual crime. I would read another by this author.

While the story, which entails the death of a teenager and multiple rapes and assaults, is in and of itself fascinating, it lays bare the ineptitude of the criminal justice system. An investigator who was lazy and unmotivated; a records system that wasn't available to other jurisdictions; a penal system that accomplished nothing in terms of rehabilitating the perpetrator. Our system is a mess.

Thankfully, the author dedicated seven years of her life to tell this story. Sadly, it is one of similarity in cities and states throughout America.

This is an excellent book. Once I started it I couldn't put it down. I found myself thinking about it during the day and anxious to get to pick it up in the evening. Congratulations to Sasha Reynolds for sharing this story with us and for fighting for Michelle and the other victims in this case. Thank you so much!

This real life murder mystery, with all of its twist's and turns, evolved as the author continued to research the disappearance of a 15 year old girl in Knoxville, Tennessee. A fascinating.....chilling....account of these events and a researchers' determination that the killer be found and held accountable. I could feel the fear of the victim, the frustration of the investigators and the sorrow of the family. I highly recommend this book...you will not be able to put it down until the end!

This is one of the best true-crime books I've ever read! It catches your interest immediately, and doesn't let go until the very last page. The author makes you feel like you're Right There throughout the narration; it's exciting and innervating. After I read it, I bought three more copies to gift to good friends. It's worth sharing!

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