

Book Review: You Know What You Did  
By K.T. Nguyen

One of the more disappointing things for me as a reader is to pick up a book that has been hyped to the hilt, only to find that it does not deliver anywhere near the promises of the promotions.

That's the case with "You Know What You Did" by K.T. Nguyen. The book is promoted as a "heart-pounding debut thriller." Only one of those four words, in my opinion, is accurate: debut. This book was neither heart pounding nor thrilling. Instead, it moves along at a glacial pace. And rather than making it hard for me to put down, I had to push myself to continue reading.

Annie Shaw, whose mother is a Vietnam War refugee, is a budding artist on the verge of substantial notoriety. She's married to Duncan Shaw, a highly successful journalist, and has one daughter, Tabitha, who seems a bit more obnoxious than the average 15-year old.

Annie is also saddled with severe obsessive-compulsive disorder, which is not surprising when we learn her mother had the same condition and was a notorious hoarder. For a while, Annie's condition has been under control. But when her mother dies, all of her symptoms come back full force. For me, this was painful to read. I know OCD is a complicated condition, but I can't identify with a character who steps back into the shower to re-wash herself because she thinks her ankle brushed against the side of the stall as she was stepping out.

The first half of the book plods along as Annie's symptoms continue to worsen. Sprinkled throughout are flashbacks to when Annie was younger, as well as chapters depicting some negative event occurring in a hotel room. Those latter chapters are

confusing. Are they part of Annie's memories? Are they premonitions? They give the book a very disjointed feel, and made me wonder, where is this going?

By the time the narrative picks up a little steam (and I emphasize "a little"), I had completely lost interest in both the story and the main character. And if I don't care about the people in the story, then I'm just biding my time until I can flip over the last page. And speaking of last pages, I found the ending – much like the rest of the book – extremely disappointing.

I can't muster up more than 2 out of 5 stars for "You Know What You Did," and that's being a bit generous. You know what you did? You wrote a book that nearly bored me to tears.