

Book Review: The Swimmer  
By Loreth Anne White

Everyone wants to belong, to find their place in the world. For 40-year-old Chloe Cooper, doing so has been both challenging and frustrating. And as it quickly becomes apparent in Loreth Anne White's psychological thriller "The Swimmer," satisfying that need is going to get much more complicated.

Chloe lives with, and cares for, her ailing mother in an apartment on the Vancouver coast. Her mother is over-protective to the point of obsession – Why? I won't spoil that for you here – and has instilled in Chloe a fear of virtually everyone and everything around her. Hence, Chloe – an autodidact (self-taught person) – has lived her life watching other people – sometimes too closely – while creating, and painting, their life stories.

Her latest fixation are the new neighbors, 60-year-old online influencer Jemma Spengler, and her 62-year-old renowned surgeon husband Adam. Chloe has taken to observing Jemma swim in the bay every morning as she walks her mother's aging dog. She also becomes aware of tension between Jemma and her husband. And one foggy morning when she observes a swimmer being murdered by a jet skier, she immediately looks to incriminate Adam, who she has observed with another woman.

Did he deliberately murder his wife?

That's when Chloe's life *really* spirals out of control.

The pacing is excellent throughout, barely breaking stride from the first page. The multiple timelines provide solid backstory that gives each of the main characters depth, and gradually helps to explain why they are the way they are. In other words, their respective motives. Some of them you will quickly despise.

The narrative is told from varying points of view, including excerpts from a future crime podcast that add intrigue to the story and foreshadow events to come.

And then there are the plot twists, several of them. Some predictable, most you will not see coming. Meanwhile, White's ability to keep the chapter lengths short ensures you will be hard-pressed to put the book down.

The climax, or last 30 to 40 pages, are explosive. But even as you plow through them, questions will remain unanswered until the final few.

"The Swimmer" is an addictive novel that will grab and hold you throughout. It's an exceptional look at the human spirit, the human mind, and the lengths some people will go to get what they want.

No treading water here. A full five stars for "The Swimmer."