

Book Review: Killer Potential  
By Hannah Deitch

Thanks to NetGalley and William Morrow for this advance reader's copy, in exchange for an honest review. "Killer Potential" is scheduled for publication on March 18, 2025.

And check out all of my reviews at my Raised on Reading ([www.raisedonreading.com](http://www.raisedonreading.com)) blog site.

I've always been a glass-is-half-full person, because if you're thirsty, that half glass sure looks refreshing.

But when it comes to novels, that half-glass theory doesn't hold water (pun intended). And that's the case with Hannah Deitch's debut novel, "Killer Potential." It gets the reader half-way there, but not all the way home.

Evie Gordon works as an SAT tutor in Los Angeles. One day she shows up at the home of a wealthy family and finds both parents dead. She's about to leave and phone 9-1-1 when she hears a voice from the closet under the stairs calling for help. There she finds a young woman, bound and unable to speak. Evie cuts her loose, but just then Serena, Evie's student, shows up and all Hell breaks loose. Serena is injured (Evie thinks she's dead) in the ensuing struggle, and then Serena's boyfriend shows up. Knowing how guilty they look, Evie and the woman she rescued flee.

This begins an improbable journey that at times reads a bit like *Thelma and Louise* – two women on the run from the law. And to this point in the story that's okay. I've been drawn in, and I'm wondering what's going to happen to these two women.

But as their journey unfolds, it becomes increasingly unbelievable that they are not only able to elude law enforcement during a cross-country drive from L.A. to the Florida panhandle

but do so again during a return trip to the far reaches of Washington state. All while their images have been broadcast and posted everywhere imaginable.

As you might imagine, the two women begin to open to each other. But more than open to each other. It doesn't take long before they become sexually engaged. And perhaps to break up the monotony of the drive – for them as well as for the reader – Deitch feels it necessary to reveal their sexual exploits in finely detailed specifics. For me, it was a bit too graphic. I don't need to be hit over the head with minutiae to know that a sexual encounter has taken place.

The latter portion of the book left me empty. The entire narrative is written first-person perspective in Evie's voice. Then toward the end it alternates between Evie's and Jae's (the woman she rescued) voice. And Jae's narrative comes across way too bland.

The book's climax is also a letdown. I wasn't sure what to make of the ending. It's abrupt and left me hanging. Perhaps Deitch just got tired of writing.

Which was fine, because I was tired of reading.

Two-and-one-half out of five stars for "Killer Potential," because the story never did live up to its full potential.