



## ***The Silent Wife by A.S.A. Harrison***

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### **About the author:**

A.S.A. Harrison's previous books include *Orgasms* (Coach House Press, 1974), *Revelations*, with Margaret Dragu (Nightwood Editions, 1987), and *Zodiacat Speaks* (Viking Penguin, 1996). *The Silent Wife* is her debut novel and she was at work on a new psychological thriller when she died in 2013. Harrison was married to the visual artist John Massey and lived in Toronto.

*Source: Author's website (<http://asaharrison.com>)*

### **About this book:**

Jodi and Todd are at a bad place in their marriage.

Much is at stake, including the affluent life they lead in their beautiful waterfront condo in Chicago, as she, the killer, and he, the victim, rush haplessly toward the main event.

Chapter by chapter, the narrative evolves from their alternating perspectives. He is a committed cheater. She lives and breathes denial. He exists in dual worlds. She likes to settle scores. He decides to play for keeps. She has nothing left to lose. The alternating voices pitch the reader back and forth between protagonists in conflict who are fighting for self-preservation, both making deeply consequential mistakes, behaving in ever more foolhardy ways, and losing at the games they are playing.

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The *Silent Wife* is a finely wrought, emotionally charged psychological thriller about a marriage in the throes of dissolution, a couple headed for catastrophe, concessions that can't be made, and promises that won't be kept. It ensnares the reader from page one and doesn't let go.

Source: Author's website (<http://asaharrison.com>)

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. Describe Jodi and Todd—separately and together as a couple. How would you define the quality of their 20-year relationship? Why has Jodi looked the other way with Todd's occasional affairs? What does it say about her expectations for the relationship...and what does it say about Todd and his expectations?
2. Then there is Natasha—what do you make of her? Why is Jodi's reaction so powerful to this particular dalliance of Todd?
3. To what degree does Harrison's use of psychology elucidate the mental state of her characters? Did you find the author's information on psychotherapy helpful...interesting...overdone...distracting?
4. Harrison's novel switches back and forth between Jodi's and Todd's points of view. Why might the author have used this technique? What does it add to the story? Or would you have preferred a single point of view?
5. What was your emotional reaction to *The Silent Wife*? Would you call it a page-turner...and, if so, how does Harrison ratchet up the suspense?



6. If you've read *Gone Girl*, how does the *Silent Wife* compare with Gillian Flynn's book?

Source: Litlovers (<http://litlovers.com>)

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