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# **The Suspect: A True Story Of Love, Betrayal, Marriage And Murder**



## Synopsis

On a clear autumn morning in 2004 Rachel O'Leary, a 30 year-old mother-of-two, was brutally battered to death in her home. It was a merciless killing that stunned the small, trusting community where she lived, and devastated her close-knit family. In the days that followed the discovery of her body, it was thought that Rachel was the victim of a bungled robbery attempt. It soon emerged, however, that police investigating the case believed Rachel had known her killer and that her murder had been carefully planned months in advance. The spotlight immediately fell upon Rachel's husband, Joe O'Leary, who admitted in a number of extraordinary press interviews that he was a prime suspect in his wife's slaying. The 32-year-old advertising executive vehemently denied any involvement. It was a crime that captured the imagination of the public, who watched as the illusion of the idyllic suburban life the couple shared together began to shatter.

Extract from the Suspect

WITH THE SOUND of her heart pounding loudly in her ears, Rose Callaly drove as quickly as she could in the direction of her daughter's home. Gripping the steering wheel tightly, she did her best to calm herself down by going through all of the logical reasons why Rachel O'Leary might not be answering her telephone. Maybe she was out shopping or visiting a friend and had left her mobile at home by mistake, maybe there was a fault with the line, maybe

Rose shook her head and decided to concentrate on the road instead; it was safer that way. Thankfully traffic was good and within 20 minutes she was parking in the driveway of her daughter's bungalow, which lay nestled in the picturesque countryside of north Dublin. As she pulled up beside Rachel's Renault Scenic, which was parked in the same spot she always left it, Rose's sense of foreboding deepened. If her daughter was at home, why had she not answered the landline or acknowledged any of the many worried messages her family had left for her? Ever since being told that her daughter had failed to pick up her youngest son, Adam, from the crèche earlier that morning, Rose knew from somewhere deep down that something was wrong. But now was not the time to panic; she had to find Rachel. As she turned off the engine of her car, two dogs her daughter was looking after began to jump and bark. Already in a rush to get into the house, she was irritated by the thoughts of trying to stop them following her. As it was, she needn't have worried

something was already stopping the dogs from entering the house. Walking quickly to the back patio doors of the house, the entrance the family always used, Rose was surprised to find them both wide open. She was even more surprised when she saw that the curtains in the kitchen were drawn, something Rachel would never allow happen during the day. She entered and swiftly scanned the room and although paying little attention, as she was intent on locating Rachel, she did notice there were several items strewn

around the door. She would later recall that she felt someone had taken and actually placed them there. She also spotted that the kitchen tap was running but did not stop to turn it off. Rachel, Rachel, where are you love? Rose called as she walked into the utility room. There was no sign of her daughter in the small area where the washing machine was kept, so she crossed over into the hallway. Turning to her left, she checked the sitting room; it was a mess, dozens of CDs and DVDs lay strewn on the floor. What had happened? Where was Rachel? Rose began to call louder. Rachel, Rachel are you alright? Answer me love. Where are you? Everything appeared to be normal and so she turned around to face the room where her daughter slept with her husband Joe. Her eyes were almost immediately and reluctantly drawn to the floor. Blessing herself, she let out a small cry. There, lying motionless on the light coloured carpet of the room was the body of her daughter, Rachel.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

There is no other way to explain Joe O'Reilly's criminal behavior. Women are often in a state of

denial...a pattern of "this can't be happening" that they are frozen and unable to react once their spouse has fallen into hate.

Author Jenny Friel was a newspaper journalist covering the 2004 murder of 30-year-old Rachel O'Reilly in Dublin, Ireland. She interviewed Joe O'Reilly shortly after his wife was killed, and, at first, believed he was not the murderer. Mounting evidence against him changed her mind, however, and eventually she was convinced he was a sociopathic type killer. While all the evidence against him was circumstantial, he was still convicted in 2007 and given a life sentence. Ms. Friel does an excellent job retelling the story in this book, first published in 2007. It never bogs down, and always keeps the reader wondering what was going to be uncovered next. It was also an interesting look at An Garda Síochána, the Irish police service, and the court system in Dublin. For example, individuals the Garda want to question can be arrested and held for so many hours; and Joe O'Reilly was not locked up until the day a jury found him guilty. My only complaint about this captivating and sad true crime story is that it ended so abruptly, and what happened to the O'Reilly's two young sons was never disclosed. Who got custody of them? P.S. Rose Callaly, Rachel O'Reilly's mother, also wrote a book about her daughter--Remembering Rachel: The story of Rachel O'Reilly's life and brutal death - by her mother.

As an avid true crime reader I consider this book just okay. Since the crime took place in Ireland and the author is from there, it reads a bit different from American authors which made it a little challenging at times. Wording is different, expressions are different, spelling is different and other things just make it different. The justice system is about the same as the American justice system including someone getting a life sentence for murder and only serving a few years. That seems so unfair! The story was pretty predictable and the author gave away way too much information in the introduction. I don't think I would recommend this book to anyone who is looking for a real investigation or a fast paced book. This one is kind of boring and elementary.

The story of Rachel O'Reilly's brutal murder at the hands of her husband, Joe, is heartbreaking and tragic. The author covered the case from the beginning as a journalist. Although Joe O'Reilly was convicted on circumstantial evidence, that evidence was overwhelming. It's hard to imagine that anyone else could have murdered Rachel. I'm not sure they ever established a motive although there were several to choose from, but there can be little doubt that the murder was premeditated. 28

I read a lot of true crime, and found this book very well written... just the right amount of detail to not get "overburdened" as some authors seem to repeat ... Author Ms. Friel does very good job telling story, although you do wonder what drives this husband to murder... but that is the case with many books that deal with husbands who choose to kill.... for some reason deciding that is the "way out" of a marriage.

I have read many many crime stories and this is just a fairly well written documentary of a rather ordinary murder. No twists no turns, no suspense. It is a sad thing that happened but one that is repeated in the news frequently. I sat on the jury of a much more complicated and gristly murder which still gives me nightmares. This story doesn't rise to the level of book worthy in my humble opinion.

This book was ok. I read it in one day as I sat on the beach. There was a lot of repetition in the book and I wasn't sure if my Kindle skipped back a few pages or if the repetition was intended or if the editing and/or proof-reading was just poor. In some instances sentences were not finished so that's definitely a proof-reading issue. At any rate, the story was good but if you read the intro, you knew from the start what the outcome would be, so there was no suspense. As one previous reviewer said, though, it would have been good to include what happened to the two young sons of the murder victim.

This was a good story, but it could of been better. The story started out very good, Joe O'Reilly told everyone that wanted to listen about his wife's murder. If this was not enough for the police to believe he did this, than who knows where the police could go. The police had little evidence could not prove Joe was driving his car, perhaps Joe rented one, maybe. The truth is somewhere. The story got very long in the middle when the trial started and his witnesses , repeated all the same evidence over and over again. At least the jury and the judge believed all the testimony that was brought in, and Joe got life, which he so deserves . He can sit with all the other guilty people that love to brag about what they did. On the other hand, Rachel's parents and brother's will have to live the rest of their life's without their complete family. How Nicki thinks she will someday marry that guy, seems a little crazy. I believe she needs help also, or could she of been involved in the murder also, maybe?

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