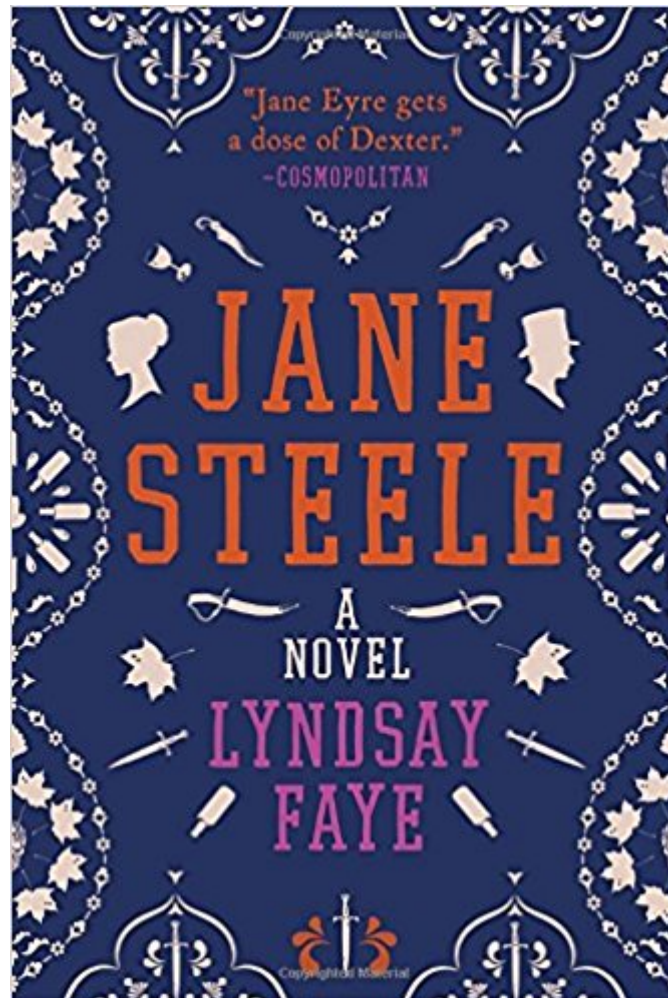




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Jane Steele



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Synopsis

Nominated for the 2017 Edgar Award for Best Novel The reimagining of Jane Eyre as a gutsy, heroic serial killer that The New York Times Book Review calls “wonderfully entertaining” and USA Today describes as “sheer mayhem meets Victorian propriety.” “A thrill ride of a novel. A must read for lovers of Jane Eyre, dark humor, and mystery.” PopSugar.com “Reader, I murdered him.” A sensitive orphan, Jane Steele suffers first at the hands of her spiteful aunt and predatory cousin, then at a grim school where she fights for her very life until escaping to London, leaving the corpses of her tormentors behind her. After years of hiding from the law while penning macabre “last confessions” of the recently hanged, Jane thrills at discovering an advertisement. Her aunt has died and her childhood home has a new master: Mr. Charles Thornfield, who seeks a governess. Burning to know whether she is in fact the rightful heir, Jane takes the position incognito and learns that Highgate House is full of marvelously strange new residents—the fascinating but caustic Mr. Thornfield, an army doctor returned from the Sikh Wars, and the gracious Sikh butler Mr. Sardar Singh, whose history with Mr. Thornfield appears far deeper and darker than they pretend. As Jane catches ominous glimpses of the pair’s violent history and falls in love with the gruffly tragic Mr. Thornfield, she faces a terrible dilemma: Can she possess him—body, soul, and secrets—without revealing her own murderous past? A satirical romance about identity, guilt, goodness, and the nature of lies, by a writer who Matthew Pearl calls “superstar-caliber” and whose previous works Gillian Flynn declared “spectacular,” Jane Steele is a brilliant and deeply absorbing book inspired by Charlotte Brontë’s classic Jane Eyre.

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Customer Reviews

Nominated for a Macavity Award--Sue Feder's Memorial Award for Best Historical NovelPart of NPR's Guide to 2016's Great ReadsAn Best Book of 2016 So Far (June, 2016)"Witty and exquisitely plotted, this is such a delectable treat --it is a pity it has to end." --People's "[Jane Steele's] crimes are wonderfully entertaining." --The New York Times Book Review"An entertaining riff on Jane Eyre...sheer mayhem meets Victorian propriety." --USA Today"Jane Eyre gets a dose of Dexter. In a story that's equal parts romance, thriller, and satire, the Brontë heroine is made over into a fighter with a shadowy past." --Cosmopolitan"A thrill ride of a novel. A must read for lovers of Jane Eyre, dark humor, and mystery." --PopSugar.com"Delectable --Bronte fans and unfamiliar readers alike will be sucked into Jane's rich story, filled with love and secrets a plenty. This book will take you on a dark and unforgettable journey." --Bustle.com"Jane Steele is the hard-edged Jane Eyre you never knew you wanted --A Jane Eyre for our age, with a heroine who can wield both a knife and a well-placed insult. That her crimes are endearing instead of alienating is both a tribute to Faye's deceptively charming style and to Jane's sturdy yet pliant moral code. Who could begrudge a few casualties when you're having this much fun?" --BN.com"This book scratched all my favorite itches: Victoriana, feminist rage, and excellent, gut-punch sentences. You'll love this Jane just as much as you love the original." --BookRiot.com"Faye's skill at historical mystery was evident in her nineteenth-century New York trilogy, but this slyly satiric stand-alone takes her prowess to new levels. A must for Brontë devotees; wickedly entertaining for all." --Booklist (starred review)"Young Jane Steele's favorite book, Charlotte Brontë's Jane Eyre, mirrors her life both too little and too much --In an arresting tale of dark humor and sometimes gory imagination, Faye has produced a heroine worthy of the gothic literature canon but reminiscent of detective fiction." --Library Journal (starred review)"Let's be honest here. When I was sent an advanced readers' copy of JANE STEELE, which was billed as an historical crime novel with a Jane-Eyre-style heroine who becomes a serial killer, I thought someone was pulling my leg. I decided to read ten pages, just to annoy myself as I'm often inclined to do. Also, to show what a good

sport I am. I was hooked by page five and read my way through at a merry clip. I loved this book! The language rings true, the period details are correct. Jane Steele is a joy, both plucky and rueful in her assessment of her dark deeds. The plotting is solid and the pacing sublime. If this were a series, this would be the perfect introduction. As a stand-alone, I give it an A+.

—Sue Grafton, #1 New York Times bestselling author

"This is a wonderfully wicked book. The deadly first chapter actually made me gasp. Jane Steele is a character you will not soon forget. Great evil fun!"

—R.L. Stine, author of *Goosebumps* and *Fear Street*

Lyndsay Faye pulls off the most elusive feat of historical fiction: to give us a book that reads as though it was unearthed from a perfectly preserved antique chest. Sneakily charming and wildly well written, like Faye's other novels *JANE STEELE* demands attention.

—Matthew Pearl, New York Times bestselling author of *The Dante Club* and *The Last Bookaneer*

"I've just read the next best thing. Enhanced by truly original and poetic turns of phrase...throughout its compelling narrative, Jane Steele pleas for a comfortable chair, a crackling fireplace, and an ideal adult beverage to guarantee a thoroughly pleasurable winter evening."—Otto Penzler, Owner of The Mysterious Bookshop

"JANE STEELE is lethal good fun! In Jane, Lyndsay Faye has created a heroine unwilling to suffer tyrants or fools. The result is a darkly-humorous, elegantly-crafted story of an "accidental" vigilante. A delicious read."

—Suzanne Rindell, author of *The Other Typist*

"Enchanting. JANE STEELE is beautifully rendered and utterly captivating, from the first cry of "reader, I murdered him" to its final pages. Lyndsay Faye is a masterful storyteller, and this is her finest tale yet."

—Maria Konnikova, New York Times bestselling author of *Mastermind: How to Think Like Sherlock Holmes*

JANE STEELE is the book I never knew I always wanted to read. Gripping, twisty, and fiendishly clever, JANE STEELE picks you up by the throat and never lets you go, taking you on an exhilaratingly wild ride. I haven't enjoyed a book this much in ages--the only thing it left me wanting was MORE Jane Steele!"

—Deanna Raybourn, New York Times bestselling author of *A Curious Beginning*

"From the gasp-inducing moment Jane Steele utters the words "reader, I murdered him", you know you are in for a rollicking romp of an adventure that recasts the Jane Eyre story in an entirely new light. But mixed in with the verve and vivacity is a story of real heart, exemplary, near-forgotten history, and an utterly unforgettable heroine. Brava to Lyndsay Faye for what's already one of my favorite thrillers of the year."

—Sarah Weinman, editor of *Women Crime Writers: Eight Suspense Novels of the 1940s & 50s*

"Add Jane Steele to that club of unforgettable antiheroes"

—Tom Ripley, Hannibal

Lecter, and Dexter Morgan— who do dreadful things to bad people. Bold, inventive, and charmingly wicked, this instantly addictive novel pays homage to Jane Eyre while being wholly original. Lyndsay Faye has created a masterpiece.

— Hilary Davidson, Anthony Award-winning author of *Blood Always Tells*

“Jane Steele is a bold and imaginative undertaking — wickedly entertaining and exquisitely unique in its execution. With thrills, mystery and romance, the story is striking and imaginative as we see how Jane Eyre gives meaning to Jane’s acts. Dark, satirical humor coupled with sharp dialogue make this a novel that’s refreshingly compelling.”

— USA Today (Happily Ever After blog)

“Hand to my heart, this book positively made me swoon. JANE STEELE is an homage to Jane Eyre, yet infinitely better, since Jane Steele is no one’s victim; she bends life to her will instead of drifting along according to fate’s whimsy. Jane is a thrilling protagonist. I wish that I could read this again for the first time — but I’ve no doubt it will be just as good when I read it for the third and fourth times.”

— Crimespree Magazine

“Clever thriller — US Weekly

“For anyone who read ‘Jane Eyre’ wishing for swifter, more final fates for the cruelest characters, Jane Steele is here to grant your wishes — a fresh and imaginative takeoff on ‘Jane Eyre,’ and will leave readers with plenty of fodder for discussion.”

— Minneapolis Star-Tribune

“[Faye’s] writing crackles with wit, conveying a hip 21st-century sensibility while remaining true to Brontë’s vision — and her historical research and thoughtfully drawn characters make Jane Steele — a compelling page-turner.”

— Pasadena Weekly

“Faye hasn’t embarked on a retelling of Brontë’s masterwork, or anyone else’s, for that matter. Her novel pays homage to the greats, yet offers a heroine whose murky past and murderous present remind us that some female behavior in other eras never made it into print. The satisfaction in this novel is its conviction that the self is enriched by an understanding of others, whether their motives are villainous or amicable.”

— NPR

“A beautifully written, thoroughly engaging and brilliantly satirical novel. Jane Steele is an extraordinary, likeable narrator, and Faye’s other characters are just as memorable. The sharp and tragic Mr. Thornfield gives Brontë’s Mr. Rochester a run for his money. This book, whether you’re trying to puzzle out the mysteries or just lapping up Faye’s brilliant humor, is an excellent homage to Brontë and simply a treasure on its own.”

— New York Daily News

“A smart satirical gothic romance that plays as much to Charlotte Brontë’s fans as Edgar Allan

Poe's *Flashed with humour and humors*, this novel is a hoot. I laughed not only at Jane's audacity as a character but also the author's accomplishments skillfully mashing up a modern serial killer novel with a 19th-century novel of manners. *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* *Cosmo.com's 15 Perfect Beach Reads for 2016* *One of New York Post's Must Read Books for the Summer 2016* *Selected as one of Milwaukee Journal Sentinel's Best Books of 2016* *Selected as one of the Los Angeles Public Library's Best Books of 2016* "Lyndsay Faye give us all the pomp and circumstance of an old English novel, but her murderous twists turn the genre on its head in way that's sarcastic and satisfying." *Southern Living*

Lyndsay Faye is the author of five critically acclaimed books: *Dust and Shadow*; *The Gods of Gotham*, which was nominated for an Edgar for Best Novel; *Seven for a Secret*; *The Fatal Flame*; and *Jane Steele*. Faye, a true New Yorker in the sense she was born elsewhere, lives in New York City with her husband, Gabriel.

This is a retelling/reinvented version of *Jane Eyre*, but the story of *Jane Eyre* is mentioned throughout the book by the narrator. In this version Jane Steele is a murderess and eventually moves in to her childhood home as a governess. There she finds secrets galore, but she might have also found the place she belongs. This book is great. I finished it in two sittings, because I had to sleep. The characters are well flushed out and interesting. Even the Villians are multi-layered. Our anti-heroine is amazing. She is likable even when you are judging her at the same time. The history that went into the telling of this story is rich and vibrant. You can picture how terrible the wars were and how it affected the men who survived. If I had one complaint about the story, it would be the glossing over of her transition from teenager to adult. It was rushed. There were a few characters that we briefly met and a murder, but all of it seemed like it got edited out except the bare bones. I wish they would have expanded on this and made the novel longer, or just cut it out completely. It was a wasted opportunity. I would absolutely recommend this book to all my friends!

I have to say this ... I became a huge fan of Lyndsay Faye's writing after reading the Timothy Wilde trilogy and she made me love Historical Fiction and can say that I'm addicted to this genre because of her. Her style in writing, in building up the characters, narrating the story, the events and how the plots develops amazes me. You think you know how it will end but later you find yourself you are wrong for she is no ordinary writer that let you figure out things before the ending. Jane Steele

relates to Jane Eyre's novel somehow, however you want to see it or relate it it depends on the reader himself. Actually Jane Steele tells her story by addressing the reader every now and then. Whatever Jane does through the story, you can't but fall in love with her and her unique characters, even when she becomes a criminal killing people who are hurting the people she cares about the most. She has been sent away from where she used to reside with her aunt to a boarding school where she commits a murder and escape with her school friend to London where her character changes dramatically due to the events she faces with her friend Rebecca Clarke. Then she learns that the place where used to reside need a governess and applies for the job because her mother once told her that this place belonged to her but her aunt Patience took it from them. She becomes the governess of the residents that now belongs to Charles Thornfield and falls in love with him but he himself has a dark past of his own that we discover at the end. I myself fell in love with Charles Thornfield with his wittiness and sweet language when addressing Jane, either when comforting her or teasing her, he's such a magnificent man.

"Jane Steele" is a fascinating, gripping thriller that I read over the course of two days in a manner that can only be described as "manic." I would turn off my phone, shut my laptop, and basically pretend to be dead in order to read large chunks of this novel as fast as I could, like a former street dog afraid someone will take this delicious bowl of snacks away from them. It's been a long long time since I read Jane Eyre, and even though I can barely remember how the plot went it didn't matter in the least. Jane Steele is her own person and stands entirely on her own, both as a character and a story. Those who are adverse to violence, discussion of things of a sexual nature, and want non-stop thrills (the book paces itself and that paid off in the end for me) may want to look elsewhere. I guess I have to add a "disclaimer" that I personally know Lyndsay and have been tracking this book since she first announced it, but trust me when I say that if it didn't thrill me to pieces I'd have let this review request by slip quietly into the night. BUT NO. You should definitely read this book. And then you should get in line behind me to marry Mr. Thornfield.

The writing is very good, but I just could not like "Jane". I never warmed to her throughout the book. Some of the things she did were not necessary and took away from the story. The last part of the book was action packed and intriguing. If I could have liked Jane, this would have been a 5 star book.

Although the premise of this book (Jane Eyre as a serial killer) was not entirely fulfilled, it is still

enormously entertaining from start to finish. The ways in which Faye used the various elements of Jane Eyre to construct this story were exquisite and unexpected. Oh but I love this Jane and her Byronic hero. The banter between them is hilarious. And the twist on Jane's childhood friend was a welcome perspective as were some of the harsher aspects of Jane's childhood at home and school; Bronte may have been too polite to talk about those harsher realities but they do not seem out of place for the era. If you like Jane Eyre or the idea of Jane Eyre as a serial killer or, like me, you will never stop finding "Reader, I murdered him" clever, then pick up this book and read it. If you've never read Jane Eyre (heathen!), you can still enjoy this book; however some elements may go right over your head in terms of how awesome they are.

Well done writing with an unusual perspective. But, I could not get past the really murderous behavior that Jane Steele seemed calmly to accept as what probably simply needed to happen. Just too creepy for me. So, writing is a four and everything else way below that, thus three stars.

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