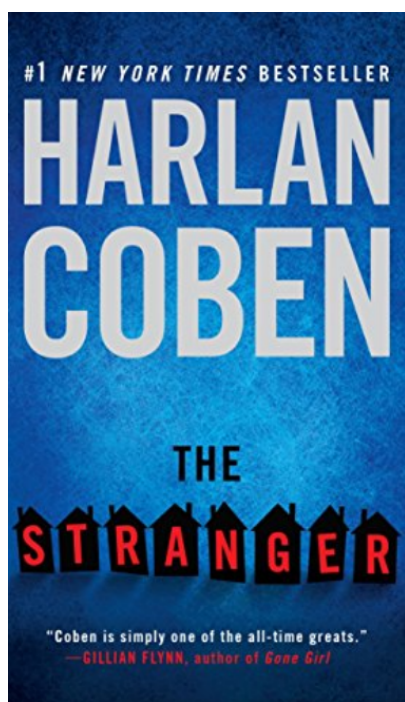


# Book review: 'The Stranger' disappoints Coben fans

By Kathryn Reed

If you want a fast read that has an interesting cyber-crimes premise, "The Stranger" by Harlan Coben is it. If a book that has undeveloped characters and leaves lots of questions is not to your liking, skip it.

My book club read the "The Stranger" (Dutton 2015) in September. While some liked it, most found it mediocre at best.



Those who have read Coben before said this was definitely one of his worst books, and were surprised because they've liked his previous works.

Secrets – that's the common theme in the book. Who gets to keep them and who gets to reveal them, and the consequences take center stage. This aspect of the book generated some interesting dialogue at book club. Would we pay to have a secret kept? None of us thought we had interesting enough lives that anyone would blackmail us in that way.

What was so disappointing was the story lines that were

introduced and then went nowhere. Actions by characters seemed so unbelievable. All the superfluous characters were hard to remember especially when setting the book down for a few days.

What kept me wanting to read it was hoping there might be more depth on the next page, and trying to figure out how Coben could tie everything together.