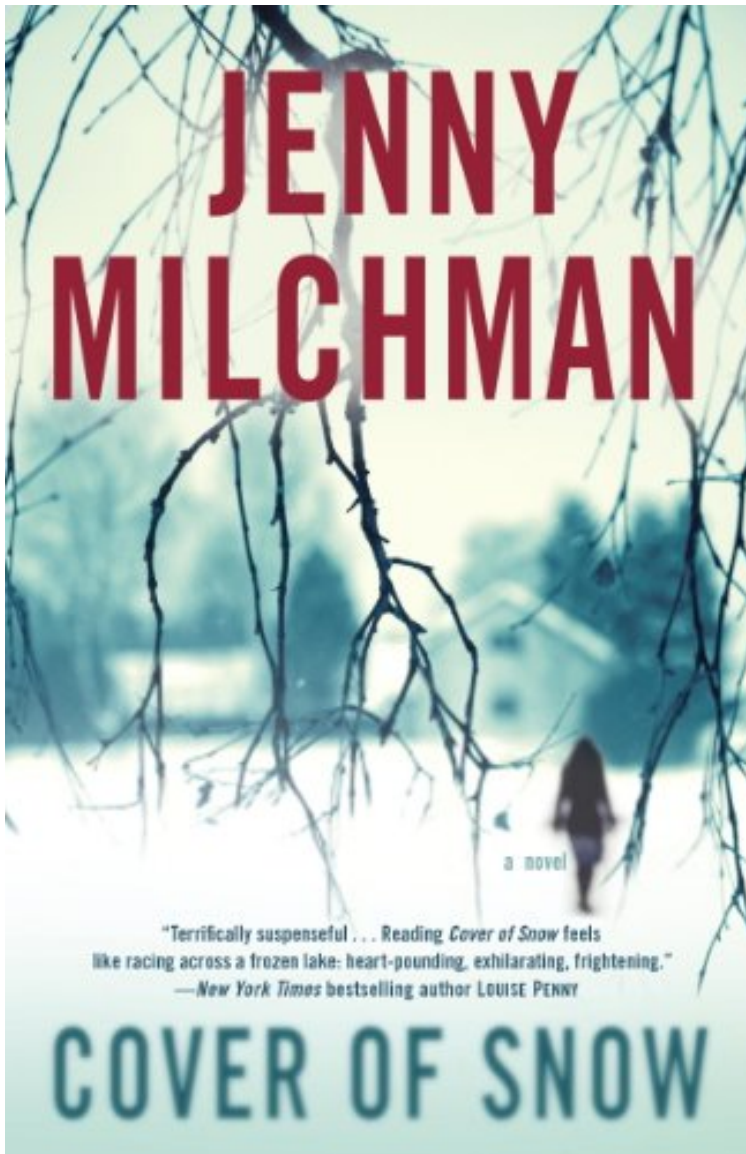


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Cover of Snow: A Novel



Par Jenny Milchman
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Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurWINNER OF THE MARY HIGGINS CLARK AWARDJenny Milchmans Cover of Snow is a remarkable debut, a gripping tale of suspense in the tradition of Gillian Flynn, Chris Bohjalian, and Nancy Pickard.Waking up one wintry morning in her old farmhouse nestled in the Adirondack Mountains of New York, Nora Hamilton instantly knows that something is wrong. When her fog of sleep clears, she finds her world is suddenly, irretrievably shattered: Her husband, Brendan, has committed suicide.The first few hours following Noras devastating discovery pass for her in a blur of numbness and disbelief. Then, a disturbing awareness slowly settles in: Brendan left no note and gave no indication that he was contemplating taking his own life. Why would a rock-solid police officer with unwavering affection for

his wife, job, and quaint hometown suddenly choose to end it all? Having spent a lifetime avoiding hard truths, Nora must now start facing them. Unraveling her late husband's final days, Nora searches for an explanation but finds a bewildering resistance from Brendan's best friend and partner, his fellow police officers, and his brittle mother. It quickly becomes clear to Nora that she is asking questions no one wants to answer. For beneath the soft cover of snow lies a powerful conspiracy that will stop at nothing to keep its presence unknown . . . and its darkest secrets hidden. Praise for *Cover of Snow* Well-defined characters take us on an emotional roller-coaster ride through the darkest night, with blinding twists and occasionally fatal turns. This is a richly woven story that not only looks at the devastating effects of suicide but also examines life in a small town and explores the complexity of marriage. Fans of Nancy Pickard, Margaret Maron, and C. J. Box will be delighted to find this new author. *Booklist* (starred review) *Milchman* reveals an intimate knowledge of the psychology of grief, along with a painterly gift for converting frozen feelings into scenes of a forbidding winter landscape. *The New York Times* *Milchman* makes [readers] feel the chill right down to their bones and casts a particularly effective mood in this stylish thriller. *Kirkus* s *Milchman* tackles small-town angst where evil can simmer under the surface with a breathless energy and a feel for realistic characters. *The Seattle Times* The plot unfolds at an excellent clip . . . ultimately rushing headlong to a series of startling revelations. *San Francisco Journal of Books* *Milchman* expertly conveys Nora's grief in a way that will warm hearts even in the dead of a Wedneskyull winter. *Publishers Weekly* (starred review) From the Hardcover edition. [Excerpt 9780345534217](#) | excerpt *Milchman / COVER OF SNOW* Chapter One My husband wasn't in bed with me when I woke up that January morning. The mid-winter sky was bruised purple and yellow outside the window. I shut bleary eyes against light that glared and pounded. A second later I realized my toes weren't burrowing into the hollows behind Brendan's knees, that when I flung out my arm it didn't meet his wiry chest, the stony muscles gone slack with sleep. I slid my hand toward the night table, fingers scrabbling around for our alarm clock. Seven-thirty. It was late. As if drugged, my brain was making sense of things only after a dull delay. But it was a full hour past the time I always woke up. We always woke up. Brendan slept a cop's sleep, perpetually ready to take action, and I had been an early riser all my thirty-five years. Bits of things began to take shape in my mind. The morning light, which entered so stridently through the window. Brendan not in bed with me. He must've gotten up already. I hadn't even felt him move. But Brendan had been working late all week; I hadn't yet found out why. My husband had good reason to sleep in. And if he had risen on time, why didn't he wake me? I felt a squeezing in my belly. Brendan knew I had an eight o'clock meeting with a new client this morning, the owner of a lovely but ramshackle old saltbox in need of repair. My husband took my burgeoning business as seriously as I did. He would never let me miss a meeting. On the other hand, Brendan would know that if I slept late, then I must be worn out. Maybe getting Phoenix off the ground had taken more out of me than I realized. Brendan probably figured he'd give me a few extra minutes, and the morning just got away from him. He must be somewhere in his normal routine now, toweling off, or fixing coffee. Except I didn't hear the shower dripping. Or smell the telltale, welcome scent of my morning fix. I pushed myself out of bed with hands that felt stiff and clumsy, as if I were wearing mittens. What was wrong with me? I caught a glimpse of my face in the mirror and noticed puddles of lavender under my eyes. It was like I hadn't slept a wink, instead of an extra hour. Brendan? Honey? You up? My words shattered the air, and I realized how very still our old farmhouse was this morning. Padding toward the bathroom, one explanation for the weight in my muscles, not to mention my stuporous sleep, occurred to me. Brendan and I had made love last night. It had been one of the good times; me lying back afterward, hollow, cored out, the way I got when Brendan was able to focus completely on me, on us, instead of moving so fiercely that he seemed to be riding off to some distant place in the past. We'd even lain awake for a while in the waning moments before sleep, fingers intertwined, Brendan studying me in a way that I felt more than saw in the dark. Honey? Last night tired me out, I guess. Not that it wasn't worth it. I felt a smile tease the corners of my mouth, and pushed open the bathroom door, expecting a billow of steam. When only brittle air emerged, I felt that grabbing in my gut again. Cold tile bit my bare feet. Brendan? My husband never started the day without a shower; he claimed that a night's sleep made him ache. But there was no residue of moisture filming the mirror, nor fragrance of soap in the air. I grabbed a towel, wrapped it around my shoulders for warmth, and trotted toward the stairs, calling out his name. No answer. Could he have gone to the station early? Left me sleeping while my new client waited at his dilapidated house? Honey! Are you home? My voice sounded uncertain. No answer. And then I heard the chug of our coffee pot. Relief flowed through me, thick and creamy as soup. Until that moment, I hadn't let myself acknowledge that I was scared. I wasn't an overreactor by nature usually. I headed downstairs, feet more sure now, but with that

wobbly, airless feeling in the knees that comes as fear departs. The kitchen was empty when I entered, the coffee a dark, widening stain in the pot. It continued to sputter and spit while I stood there. There was no mug out, waiting for its cold jolt of milk. No light was turned on against the weak morning sunshine.

Nobody had been in the icy kitchen yet today. This machine had been programmed last night, one of the chores accomplished as Brendan and I passed back and forth in the tight space, stepping around each other to clean up after dinner. That thing in my belly took hold, and this time it didn't let go. I didn't call out again. The sedated feeling was disappearing now, cobwebs tearing apart, and my thinking suddenly cleared. I brushed past the deep farm sink, a tall, painted cabinet. With icy hands, I opened the door to the back stairs, whose walls I was presently laboring over to make perfect for Brendan. Maybe, just maybe, he'd skipped his shower and called in late to work in order to spend time in his hideaway upstairs. The servants stairs were steep and narrow, with a sudden turn and wells worn deep in each step. I climbed the first two slowly, bypassing a few tools and a can of stripper, then twisted my body around the corner. I took in the faded wallpaper I'd only just reached after months of careful scraping. Perhaps I didn't have enough momentum, but I slipped, solidly whacking both knees as I went down. Crouching there, gritting my teeth against the smarting pain, I looked up toward the top of the flight. Brendan was above me, suspended from a thick hank of rope. The rope was knotted around a stained glass globe, which hung in the cracked ceiling plaster. Brendan's neck tilted slightly, the angle odd. His handsome face looked like it was bathed entirely in red wine. Suddenly a small cyclone of powder spilled down, and I heard a splitting sound. There was a rip, a tear, the noise of two worlds cracking apart, and then a deafening series of thuds. The light fixture completed its plummet, and broke with a tinkling sprinkle of glass. A tangle of ice-cold limbs and body parts slugged me, heavy as lead blankets. And I screamed, and screamed, and screamed, until the warble my voice had been before became no more than a gasping strain for air.

Revue de presse Well-defined characters take us on an emotional roller-coaster ride through the darkest night, with blinding twists and occasionally fatal turns. This is a richly woven story that not only looks at the devastating effects of suicide but also examines life in a small town and explores the complexity of marriage. Fans of Nancy Pickard, Margaret Maron, and C. J. Box will be delighted to find this new author. Booklist (starred review) Milchman reveals an intimate knowledge of the psychology of grief, along with a painterly gift for converting frozen feelings into scenes of a forbidding winter landscape. The New York Times Milchman makes [readers] feel the chill right down to their bones and casts a particularly effective mood in this stylish thriller. Kirkus's Milchman tackles small-town angst where evil can simmer under the surface with a breathless energy and a feel for realistic characters. The Seattle Times The plot unfolds at an excellent clip . . . ultimately rushing headlong to a series of startling revelations. San Francisco Journal of Books Milchman expertly conveys Nora's grief in a way that will warm hearts even in the dead of a Wedeskyull winter. Publishers Weekly (starred review) Everything a great suspense novel should be tense, emotional, mysterious, and satisfying . . . Let's hope this is the start of a long career. Lee Child, #1 New York Times bestselling author of A Wanted Man Cover of Snow is a darkly atmospheric first novel that challenges all sorts of romantic notions we might harbor about small towns and the people we think we can trust. Luckily, heroine Nora Hamilton and writer Jenny Milchman have the skill and fortitude to lead readers through a suspenseful story of switchbacks and surprises. A mystery that will draw in fans of darker fare as well, Cover of Snow is reminiscent of Margaret Maron's work, which is about the highest praise I can bestow. Laura Lippman, New York Times bestselling author of And When She Was Good A terrific debut. Harlan Coben, #1 New York Times bestselling author of Seconds Away From the Hardcover edition.