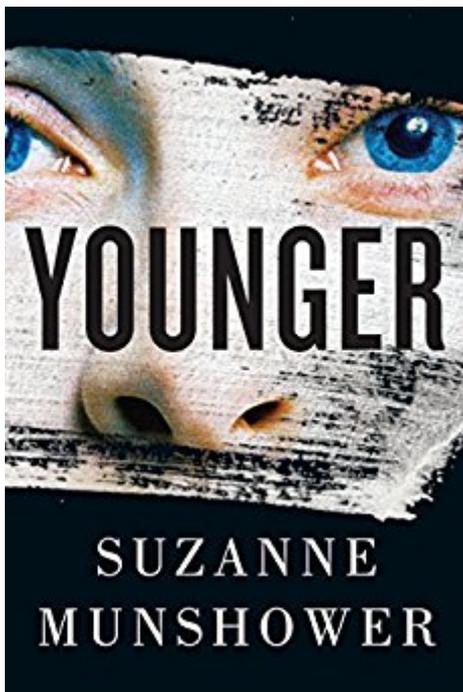


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# Younger



## Synopsis

When PR pro Anna Wallingham gets dumped by her last client, she finds herself running out of options in LA, where she looks for a new experience. Desperate to prove she is still relevant, the fifty-something accepts a shady job offer from Pierre Barton, secretive billionaire owner of Barton Pharmaceuticals. Isolated in a facility outside London, she agrees to test a new top-secret product guaranteed to make her look thirty years younger. Anna is starting to look on the outside the way she feels on the inside: ageless. But she soon discovers that her predecessor died under mysterious circumstances, leading her to research just who stands to gain—and lose—with this miraculous product. When Pierre drops dead in front of her, she takes off on a dangerous journey across Europe hoping to stay alive long enough to uncover the truth. With the hard-won knowledge that younger isn't always better, Anna is determined to escape and reclaim her life before it's too late.

## Book Information

File Size: 1894 KB

Print Length: 326 pages

Publisher: Thomas & Mercer (April 1, 2015)

Publication Date: April 1, 2015

Sold by: Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B00NWS4AMQ

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #17,273 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #33 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Literature & Fiction > Genre Fiction > Medical #37 in Books > Literature & Fiction > Genre Fiction > Medical #59 in Books > Mystery, Thriller & Suspense > Thrillers & Suspense > Medical

## Customer Reviews

Having no interest in the fashion or cosmetics industries, I didn't have high hopes for this month's kindle first pick, "Younger". But since neither romance nor historical fictions are to my taste, for me

this was it. I've been reading more than usual lately- very good books, I might add- and I have to say that this holds up with most of them. And in my experience, that's an amazing thing for a kindle first selection. "Younger" is a true classic suspense thriller not the straight up mystery or psycho killer stories frequently marketed as a "thriller". The international locations, espionage and cross continent chase reminded me a lot of classic MacInnes and Ludlum if shorter and less complex. Ms. Munshower wisely jumps right into the middle of the story and I was hooked. I say wisely because one part of the book I found less than engaging was Anna's "backstory" in Los Angeles. The story does jump back and forth in time with progressions from the middle and beginning of the story until they ultimately converge. But the author manages this without being confusing. It is also surprising to me how "clean" the book is. For those that are concerned about those things, there is almost no cursing (I think I remember one or two expletives) and no graphic violence. Another thing that reminds me of classic thrillers. I imagine that a man might have even more hesitation than I did with the basic premise. But while the book is based on the problems society creates for women "of a certain age", it is first and foremost a good old fashioned thriller, And I think that anyone can enjoy it just on that basis. Is "Younger" a perfect book?

It would be easy for anyone who has experienced ageism in their career to empathize with the situation in which the protagonist, Anna, finds herself. It is not unusual for an older professional woman who has worked her way up, fighting sexism early on, to find both subtle and direct references to her age begin to creep into her daily life. Anna finds herself, in her late fifties, facing a future without an income. What makes the situation dire for her is the fact that she has lived her life at or above her means and has no savings. What is even worse is that she has led others to believe that she has a trust fund that she can lean upon and she is devastated to think that she will be seen as a failure. When a lucrative opportunity comes her way, she is eager to snap it up, forgoing any doubts about things that seem too good to be true. The mystery and intrigue around this new job is where the thriller aspect comes into play. Unfortunately, it becomes harder for a reader to suspend disbelief. The plot revolves around a product that can make an almost senior citizen look so young that people in their twenties consider her to be a contemporary. The book also has a number of shadowy secondary characters from various countries in order to bring in an element of international intrigue. Unfortunately, the characterizations of these characters are superficial. The characterizations of Anna's lifelong friends are more interesting but with the exception of an early love, don't take up much of the story. The reunion with her lost love is a secondary plot but it seems forced. The most interesting part of the book for me was the process that Anna went

through to change her identity and appearance to conform to younger generations.

Reading the blurb on this one, YOUNGER seemed to be a regular Thriller offering. Subject matter is the least of my criteria - I read with a strong suspension of disbelief, willing to enter into any world with openness to be entertained. However, what I was not prepared for was a novel that seemed to put the entirety of the plot on a backburner. Our protagonist spends more time, and I say this entirely in seriousness, looking at clothing, choosing food and drink, admiring the furnishings, than engaging in the actual promised plot of the book. I was expecting what the blurbs presented, and instead I found a strange hodge-podge that couldn't even bring the romantic line into focus. Less of a tale suspense, more of a decadent fantasy, a strange twisting of PYGMALION and FLOWERS FOR ALGERNON, an inner psychological tale dressed in a framework of Hitchcock-esque layering. Replete with bacchanalian details of attire, food, drink, décor, interspersed with long passages of character exposition, yes, even briefly met characters who have more space telling our protagonist about themselves than they have actual narrative use, the promised intrigue and chase only truly picking up about 60% into the book. Yet it does not last for long, and then the reader is treated to drawn-out explanatory plot exposition, a tame romance scene, yet more explanatory plot exposition, and then the climatic encounter's final "twist" with explanatory revelations... which I found more anti-climatic than satisfying. Of course, we must then have the explanatory Epilogue to wrap up the non-existent threads. Should have just followed suite in the fine filmic tradition and ended with a kiss, roll credits.

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