



Sorting Out Billy

Jo Brand

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Billy is a lad. He's a laugh, he's loud, he behaves badly and Sarah is besotted with him. But after another 'accident' involving Billy's temper, Sarah's face and a night in the A&E, Sarah's friends Martha and Flower decide that it's time to take action. What should they do? Reason with him? Send him to anger management classes? Hire a hit man? Martha and Flower have problems of their own: Martha is seven months pregnant by one of three possible blokes (she did this mainly to wind up her sanctimonious vicar father); and hippie Flower's career as a stand-up comic is more sit-down after some nasty encounters with south London's finest hecklers. Will Martha survive single-motherhood on a council estate in need of a peace-keeping force? Will Flower find the perfect put-down? And will they sort out Billy before he gets to them first...? Jo Brand tells it like it is in her darkly comic and sharply observed debut novel.

Sorting Out Billy Details

Date :

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Author : Jo Brand

Format :

Genre : Fiction, Humor, Comedy, Womens Fiction, Chick Lit

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From Reader Review Sorting Out Billy for online ebook

Cheryl says

I'm not a big chick lit fan, but I found this more humorous than most. Did not know the writer was a comedian until I started looking at some of the Goodreads reviews. Other than Flower I didn't really like most of the characters. I found them shallow, mean spirited, purposefully ignorant and generally huge jerks. If it wasn't for Brand's funny writing I definitely would have abandoned this book, but her humour kept me going.

Sue Gill says

I just could not get into this book.

I didn't find I liked any of the characters. I was reading it with a growing sense of dread for how it was going to treat the topic of abuse.

All in all it was making me feel down whilst not enlightening me or empowering me. Having been there I know the topic of spousal/partner abuse is important and that is why I was attracted to this book. In the long run it may have had some important things to say but there was just too much dross at the start and I dreaded a book that just looks at how miserable the situation is, I know that already, I was there. I just couldn't see this book adding to my knowledge or understanding of the human condition and it surely wasn't going to make me happy or entertain me so why bother spending the time reading it?

Jennifer says

This was a frustrating book. I almost gave up on it and I don't think my life would have been the poorer had I done so, although I'd got far enough in that it would have felt even more of an annoying waste of time.

There are glimpses in this book of the very funny and intelligent Jo Brand and some interesting themes - heavily pregnant Martha's evolution into motherhood is subtly but realistically depicted, and you certainly experience the frustrations of seeing someone locked into a relationship with an abusive partner, just as Martha and Flower want to bang their heads over their friend Sarah's on again, off again 'romance' with Billy.

But it's just not good enough. The writing on the wall appeared in a short dull episode which includes the etiquette of defaecating in a friend's toilet.

OCD Keeping says

I did enjoy this book, eventually. It took a while for me to get into it but I soon became hooked and looked forward to the moments I could delve into it. I enjoyed the individual character stories and Jo's sarcasm and details of London's less than glamorous side were told in details that made me equally shudder and laugh. I really enjoyed the ending and I was sad to finish. I always judge a book based on how much I miss the

characters lives after I've finished reading and I can honestly say that I want to know what happens in all their relationships.

Jennifer Maguire says

This was the best book I've read in a long time. Such a fun read. Lots of laughs & I love that is was real life not the usual unrealistic storylines. A book about 3 friends that are nothing alike but care for each other & are brutally honest with each other at times! See each other through life's dramas. This book really shows in a comical way that life's not perfect but you can still see the bright side of life despite family conflict man troubles & a few run ins with the law!

Jane Pyle says

What a waste of reading time that was. Depressing characters, boring storyline and I actually gave up half way because I couldn't have cared less about what happened to any of them. Disappointing.

Andrea Fryer says

laughed so much I cried when I read this

Nadia says

[I thought there would be some plot about two women giving the abusive boyfriend of their friend taste of his own medicine, but they did nothing significant and at the end it looks like they just hope the things would work out for that couple. What? Are you for real? Domestic abuse isn't really that funny matter, and I expected that Jo would know that. I don't think that books have to teach us stuff but the author and publisher have some responsibility because b

Emily says

I know this isn't the most popular book, but my god, every time I read it, my ribs ache from laughing. It is no literary masterpiece but it is one that is entertaining within it's simplicity and it's dark humour. And it dealt with the idea of domestic abuse in a way that made light of it without belittling the people involved or the subject.

Sergei_kalinin says

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Aidan Matthews says

I'm so glad to have finished this book all I hope for is that I never have to read anything like this again. In my oppinion it is extremely poor, and least said by me the better. As the song says "don't look back in anger".

Rebecca says

'Sorting Out Billy' by Jo Brand was a fantastic book! It had me giggling and laughing and bawling the entire way through! It was laid-back, easy going and extremely girly!

Front Cover.

Erm. As far as front covers go, this one was a bit **sh*t**. And before anybody starts preaching the words, "*You shouldn't judge a book by its cover*" to me, let me make it clear. I'm not judging the book by its cover, I'm just merely giving an honest opinion and saying it's not very nice. I don't get it. Yes. There's a heart on it. And then some symbols from off a pack of playing cards surrounding the heart. And it's the most *yackiest* shade of green I think I have ever come across...

The book's about...

So, '*Sorting Out Billy*' is about three women who are close friends, *Martha*, *Sarah* and *Flower*. *Sarah* begins seeing a guy called *Billy*, who is a **complete and utter asswipe**, and who treats her like a fool. Once they get so far into their relationship, *Billy* becomes worse, and starts emotionally **and** physically hurting her. After *Martha* and *Flower* receive a phone call from *Sarah* telling them what has happened and that *Billy* has lifted a hand to her, the three girls meet up and talk about what needs to be done to this vile, vile man. *Sarah* tries her best to cover up the seriousness of what has happened, and doesn't seem willing to take it any further, but *Martha* and *Flower* have other ideas.

Once *Martha* and *Flower* are alone again, they devise a list between them of things to do to *Billy*. The problem is, they have no other choice but to keep this list from out of *Sarah's* view.

So, the book is about three women, two of which want to split their best-friend and her abusive boyfriend up.

The characters were...

In my opinion, I thought the characters were **perfect** for the story!

You have *Martha* who's pregnant, but she's refusing to tell anybody who the father is. She's messy, lazy, and a complete **gob-shite**, especially towards her father, *Brian*, who she hates more than anything else in the world! Living in a particularly bad area in London, she's finding it hard to leave the house without being verbally abused or threatened by thirteen year old hooligans!

Next up is *Flower*. Brought into the world by hippy parents, hence the name *Flower*, she refuses to wear make-up and is trying her damn hardest to make it in the comedy world. As a stand-up comedian, she's travelling here and there trying to get her name known in the industry, but the problem is, people just don't find her funny! To accompany her to her gigs is her over-protective boyfriend *Charlie*, ready to punch up anyone who insults or laughs at his girl. *Charlie* is also a bit of a hippy himself, and has always wanted to have a dog. But with *Flower's* **PMT** spiralling out of control, he doesn't want to put a dog in any danger. *Flower* seems peaceful and at one with the world, but damn, she has one fiery temper!

Sarah is the third of the ladies. She's the one with the abusive boyfriend, the one who won't leave the house without her make-up done, or her eye-lash curlers for that matter. Sick of her friend's interfering with her relationship, *Sarah* is ready to make a stand. She's fine. Honestly. She's got it all under control. *Billy* won't take it any further than a push or a shove, surely. And she can stand up for herself anyway, right?

Did the author pull it off?

Damn right she pulled it off! As I said before, this book was absolutely **hilarious!** some of the things that *Martha* and *Flower* come up with on their list are down-right insane, but they really made me laugh until my sides hurt! All the way through the book, I just wanted to swing one in the general direction of *Billy's* face! Grr, piece of **SH*T!**

Surely there must have been one bad point?

I'd say that sometimes I think the comedy was taken maybe a bit too far... Sometimes I was left sitting there like, **wow**, did they really just say/do that? But the majority of the time, I was giggling, so meh, that doesn't bother me too much!

Final thoughts?

I'm just glad I didn't overlook it and picked it up! ;)

Bloomeenee says

Her writing is as good as her stand-up...

In fact I'm tempted to say it's better! The characters are all so real... all are flawed, some are completely endearing, some hateful, some pitiable, all are believeable. The situations in the plot are similarly written: it feels real.

Throughout all of this, much of which is dark in the way only a book which looks at real issues can be, there is a humour which sometimes elicits a wry smile, sometimes outright guffaws and snorts.

Zeynep says

It was a good story about 3 girlfriends who would go that extra miles for each other. And this extra miles could be anything you name it. I am not sure whether it is a cultural thing but I wouldn't chose these as solutions though.

The author is highly successful in portraying all each of their life and personalities along with their boyfriends and families. I had some names in my head on who could be Flower's heckler or Martha's baby's father but frankly I didn't see that was coming.

Birgit says

I started off this year by reading quite a lot of British chick lit. This book by Jo Brand was generally a fast-paced and witty read, but occasionally a bit overdone in the humor department and padded with (inevitably as the author is a stand-up comedian herself) stand up routines that I didn't find as funny as they were obviously intended to be. Actually, those parts of the book were mostly awful.

While I like the descriptions of those typical British characters and settings, this book hasn't been one of the best from the Isles, mostly because Brand could have made a lot more out of the storyline that centers around three friends and their problems, Billy being just one of them. It's mostly her sharp and descriptive writing style that (almost) save this debut novel.

In short: A below average chick lit novel, with a sense of humor that wasn't quite to my liking!
