



# The Good Neighbour

*Beth Miller*

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**The Good Neighbour** Beth Miller

**Everyone has secrets. How far will you go to protect yours?**

After living next to the neighbours from hell, Minette is overjoyed when Cath and her two children move in next door. Cath soon becomes her confidante, a kindred spirit, even her daughter's babysitter.

But Cath keeps herself unusually guarded and is reluctant to speak of her past. And when Minette witnesses something unspeakable, she begins to question whether she really knows her new friend at all...

**An addictive and gripping novel, perfect for fans of Liane Moriarty and *Daughter***

## The Good Neighbour Details

Date : Published September 10th 2015 by Ebury Press (Fiction) (first published March 26th 2015)

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Author : Beth Miller

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## **From Reader Review The Good Neighbour for online ebook**

### **Renita D'Silva says**

An absolutely amazing book! I read and loved this author's debut, 'When We Were Sisters' and this one is even better. I was right inside the story from the very first page and could not put this wonderful book down. I read a lot of psychological thrillers and most are predictable but not this one. With many twists and turns, this story kept me guessing, made me wanting to turn the pages. I was finding ways to return to the book, and thinking about the story even while I was doing other things. The book's strength lies in its wonderful, believable characters. Absolutely LOVED Davey. Wanted to reach out and give him a hug. Adored Minette too, an unlikely yet very likeable heroine. The author is very skilled at getting inside the characters' heads, so that, even when we don't necessarily like them, we know why they are doing what they are doing. This book is a story of families and relationships and yet it is so much more. A story, and characters, that will stay with me for a very long time. A wonderful read. Can't wait for what Beth Miller has in store next.

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### **Rossy says**

3.5 stars

The plot is amazing, it immediately grabs your attention and you can't put the book down.

Minette and Cath are great characters, complex and mysterious in their own way. Davey, Cath's son, is adorable and you feel from the beginning that he's going to have a big part on the plot.

BUT (always a but...) the last pages made me angry, I felt the end was too perfectly wrapped-up, too simple, and it really let me down.

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### **Liz Barnsley says**

The Good Neighbour is a multi layered family drama with a dark underbelly, looking at one little street community and focusing on the new arrival and her relationship with those around her.

Minette is extraordinarily happy to have a new next door neighbour – her relationship with the previous occupants had been fraught and confrontational and as a new Mum, Minette already had enough on her plate. At first Cath seems like the perfect replacement, friendly, willing to help with the baby and someone Minette can rely on. But as time goes on, she realises that something is not QUITE right about Cath...

It was very easy to get drawn in to this story – two equally fascinating but very different women, both of whom annoyed the heck out of me at times, Minette especially in the beginning when she is accepting everything Cath says and does at face value. At the same time she is drawn into a situation that could destroy her own family, seriously there were times when I wanted to slap her.

We hear from both Cath and Minette and it quickly becomes clear that Cath is, well to put it mildly, a bit odd and definitely hiding secrets. In the midst of all this we also hear from Davey, Cath's son who is disabled – he too knows that there is something wrong with his Mum and his situation but struggles to know what to do as he is so young. This made up some of the most compelling parts of the tale, especially the relationship he

has with both his Mum and his younger sister.

As things come to a head this is very addictive reading – I loved how Beth Miller managed the layers of the story especially the friendship between Min and Cath as it begins to break down, Min realising that there really is something very wrong here. There is a lovely depth to the characters and some terrific writing that puts you right on the spot.

The ultimate resolution is one that opens up debate – and whilst some suspension of disbelief is required in the things that Cath gets away with, it is a very authentic look at mental disorder and the masking of true character – how well after all do we really know those closest to us. A very enjoyable and thought provoking read.

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## **Agi says**

"The Good Neighbour" is Beth Miller's second novel, and as soon as I've read the blurb, I was sure that I want to read this book. It sounds so intriguing and hooking, and well, my gut feeling was again right, as I enjoyed this book immensely. It was mind blowing and though - provoking, full of surprises, twists and turns, and not predictable. It is going to keep you guessing and ask many questions and I'm sure you won't be able to put it down - just like I couldn't.

At the beginning I had a feeling that the book drags on a little, and I was also a little confused, because according to the blurb I was expecting much more about Cath herself, Cath and her secrets, and what I mostly got was a story of Minette, her private life and her affairs. But! That move was so, so clever! How inventive it was to start the novel this way! There wouldn't be such a gripping story without this introduction, and soon my patience paid off, because after Minette's digging around, it was a real U - turn. It was truly amazing and I felt as if I was watching a thriller. Yes, watching, because this book was written in a truly incredible, vivid way, when reading feels like watching a film, when the scenes move in front of your eyes. The writing style was so lively, brilliant and easy to follow and I didn't notice the time passing by when I came out for a breath.

There were many secrets and uncertainty and eventually I truly wasn't sure whom should I trust, who's telling lies and who's telling truth. Actually, after some time it was clear that there is something wrong, that one of the characters lies, blackmails others and there is something wrong with her, yet I was all the time waiting that perhaps there is going to be some kind of explanation, that maybe there is going to be the biggest twist ever that's going to surprise me. Well, no, and it ended as I expected but nevertheless, the book truly blow my mind and I can't forget the thrill, disbelief and fear that I felt while reading the story of Cath and her children.

The author has this incredible talent to get into her characters' heads and thanks to this I had a feeling that I am also in their heads, and even though I might not support their decisions I could understand why they are proceeding and behaving like this. They were all totally different, and all totally believable, and all their actions, the way they behaved were like in a real life. What the author did with the characters was really incredible. I don't remember me changing my opinion about a character so radically. At the beginning I was so bored with Minette, always whingeing and unhappy with her own life, spending time with her little daughter Tilly, bored and going slowly crazy without adult company, and every time she knocked on Cath's doors I was thinking, sheesh, poor Cath, Minette is visiting her again. She was like an ivy twining around a

person for me, while Cath seemed to be so friendly, open and so greatly coping with her difficult life: a single mother of two children, both of whom were handicapped: Davey had Muscular Dystrophy and was in a wheelchair, and Lola was suffering with allergies, and Cath spends her time training for a triathlon to raise money for Muscular Dystrophy charity. But then soon it turned out that white is not always white and our lovely, friendly Cath is in fact awful. From the beginning, there was something cold in her, she was like a snake finding her way everywhere and poisoning everything on her way, and soon it turned out that she was a manipulative woman who wasn't afraid of blackmail.

The book is told in chapters alternating between Minette, Cath and Davey's point of views and slowly the story begins to complicate, and also the secrets start to arise and to unravel and the author gives us a chance to think and to spot things that are really not all right. The tension is building and you start to wonder, and Beth Miller strikes a lot of doubts in us and it was so brilliantly and cleverly organized and written, I am really in awe how intelligent read this book makes. It starts off so innocent and so neighbourly, and then it turns out into a real thriller, as more and more secrets start to appear on the pages.

Beth Miller fills the pages of her book not only with incredibly interesting plot and characters, but also with many interesting and sensitive issues, such as children with handicaps and coping with their diseases, with domestic abuse, mental health, lies, trust and people manipulating other people.

There are some things that I missed a closure to, I missed some kind of a wrap up. Cath left her freezer by Gina - I didn't find any information what was inside (although I am of course guessing what it was). There was also the thing with those two children that died in the hospital where Cath has been working - it was also left open. Also, Cath's illness was, too, a big question mark, I assume that Minette and Cath's husband were right about it, yet we didn't get any certain answer that would assure us in our beliefs. But - as much as I like my books neatly wrapped up - I truly appreciate the fact that the author let us guess, that she left the end so open and allowed us to write our own end, to assume, to guess. Yes, it would be great if Cath were to be punished, to get some answers from her and hear her explanation, and I missed it really in this book, but nevertheless, the book left me satisfied, and I whole-heartedly believe that it truly deserves 5 stars. It was amazing read that I couldn't put down for a single second.

"The Good Neighbour" was a truly terrific, compelling read and I will be looking for more from Beth Miller - I haven't read her debut novel yet, so am going to make up for it as soon as possible, and will be keeping my eye on her in the future. I truly liked this novel and will be recommending it now to everyone.

Copy received from publisher in exchange for a review.

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## Aditi says

*"Good neighbors always spy on you to make sure you are doing well."*

----Pawan Mishra

Beth Miller, an English author, has penned a heart-touching yet intriguing part-thriller-part-contemporary fiction in her latest book, *The Good Neighbour* that unfolds the story of two women who are neighbors to one another and each have children of their own, and their bond of trust grew with each passing day, but did they know everything about each other's secrets that can destroy the lives of both these women?

## Synopsis:

*Everyone has secrets. How far will you go to protect yours?*

*After living next to the neighbors from hell, Minette is overjoyed when Cath and her two children move in next door. Cath soon becomes her confidante, a kindred spirit, even her daughter's babysitter.*

*But Cath keeps herself unusually guarded and is reluctant to speak of her past. And when Minette witnesses something unspeakable, she begins to question whether she really knows her new friend at all...*

Minette, the newbie mom of a little angel, is finally glad and satisfied that the nosy and terrible couple from the next door has moved out. And now the new occupants of that house will be much more understanding, as her new neighbor is a single mother, Cath, with two little kids, Lola and Davey, among whom one is suffering from allergies whereas the other one is permanently wheelchair-bound. Soon Minette and Cath becomes close as they share about their daily lives while Cath opening up about the fact that she is also glad to move away from "Trouble-town" and her husband is travelling due to work, hence can't give them company. In fact, Cath is around Minette whenever she needs help managing her little new-born baby. Their bond of friendship as well as trust start to deepen eventually, but Minette can sense something is wrong or the fact that Cath is lying about her past as well as about her present. And then Minette discovers the truth, that has a power to destroy both Cath and Minette. What is the secret that Cath is hiding about her life?

This is no the first time that I'm reading any book by this author, having read her previous book, I had an advantage on knowing about the author's writing style, prose and other such stuffs. The writing is bold and articulate with an emphatic narrative that is shifting among a string of characters, hence the readers are in for a treat when they can view this story from so many various perspectives. The story is arresting from the very first page itself and doesn't let go of the readers' attention until the very end. The pacing is slow in the beginning but later catches up with speed when the author begins to unravel the key twists in her story.

The mystery part is well concocted by the author as she depicts the secrecy thing with lots of twists and turns. In the first half of the story, the readers might feel a bit restless to know about what might go wrong, as the sense of "something is terribly wrong" is very evident from the beginning of the story itself. Minette's relationship with a good looking neighbor might distract the readers from Cath's life, but in the background, the author has skillfully projected the mysteries related to Cath's life, that keeps the readers on their edges till the very end. As for regular thriller fans, this story might sound a bit foreseeable, as some of the twists are easy to anticipate.

The characters are real, honest and flawed, and yes, the author has successfully portrayed them with their psychological defects that will grip the readers with their individual narrative, which shifts from Minette's to Cath's to Davey's. Yes of course, when it comes to which narrative is the best one, then the answer will have to go to Davey's which the author has strikingly captured through his innocence and thoughtful demeanor. Minette is brave but her curious minds will keep the readers guessing till the very end. Cath, on the other hand, is secretive yet determined and strong to protect the kids as well as the secrets from her past.

But the disappointing part of this story would be the author leaving out some of the key questions unanswered those arose in the book and also played a key role in building up the mystery.

In a nutshell, this is an interesting story that has so many layers like relationships, medical health problems, trust etc and each layer has been unwrapped with great care to ensure that the readers can easily comprehend

with the complexity of the plot thus making them engrossed and captivated with the story.

**Verdict:** *A domestic drama with a flair of psychological thrill that will keep the readers on the edge of their seats.*

**Courtesy:** *Thanks to the author, Beth Miller, for providing me with a copy of her book, in return for an honest review.*

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## Anne says

Minette is a young mother, her daughter Tilly keeps her busy but she has struggled with motherhood and the challenges and changes that it has brought to her life. One of her biggest challenges has been the elderly couple who used to live next door. Their constant complaints about the noise have worn her down, tiptoeing about the house, trying to keep Tilly quiet, constantly on her guard. This, coupled with the seemingly endless days filled with trips to the toyshop, and no adult conversation has made her tired and desperate for something more in her life.

When Cath and her two young children move in next door after the departure of the neighbours from hell, Minette is overjoyed. Cath appears to be a breath of fresh air, someone who will be a friend, someone to admire and who inspires her. Cath's children have multiple medical problems, yet she seems to cope so well. She makes friends easily, soon becoming a central part of the neighbourhood, throwing parties, finding out about everyone, making introductions and pulling the neighbours together. She also manages to care for her son Davey who is in a wheelchair whilst ensuring that her daughter Lola avoids the many things that she is allergic to. Oh, and she's training for a fundraising triathlon at the same time.

Cath becomes the centre of Minette's world. After all, her relationship with her partner Abe is not at its best at the moment. He works hard, he's tired, their sex life is non-existent. Cath makes Minette feel alive again.

I have so many things that I want to discuss about *The Good Neighbour* and I'm looking forward to talking to my friends who have also read it. It's difficult to address my questions in a review, as by doing so, I would give too many things away about the characters and about the plot.

I can say that *The Good Neighbour* is set on a street that seems to be populated by the weirdest bunch of people I've ever come across in one novel. Minette is a complex character, who appears to be quite meek and mild, downtrodden and struggling, yet at times she makes some mind-boggling decisions that don't seem to fit in with what we have learnt about her. Whilst she does defend her thought processes with brief glimpses into her past, I really wanted to know more about her, pre-baby.

Cath. Where to start? I didn't like her at all, even when the reader learns her full back story, I still didn't like her. She's an extraordinary character who is quite frankly, fucked up. She also succeeds in fucking up most of the people that she meets. She speaks in a dialect that seems to be a cross between London and Yorkshire and refers to herself as Cathykins. She's dangerous, manipulative, and I really couldn't warm to her at all. There is so much more about Cath and her past that I wanted to know in detail. Again, like Minette, the reader is treated to brief snapshots of the past, but I need to know more. I need to be able to find my empathy for Cath, I want to understand her, but I really can't.

The Good Neighbour is a puzzling, yet intriguing look at life behind the front doors on a typically average street in an English town. I must admit that I had worked out what Cath was up to fairly early on in the story. I put that down to having worked in a very famous high-security forensic psychiatric hospital, and I think this proves that Beth Miller writes with authority and authenticity about issues that are complex and difficult to understand.

The Good Neighbour is a page turner and despite my loathing, yes loathing, of most of the characters, I found myself turning the pages so quickly, desperate to see how things would turn out. The ending is quite unexpected I'm happy to say, but again, has left me with so many questions that I am desperate to discuss with other readers.

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### **Damaskcat says**

I was totally hooked by this book from the very first page and read it in less than 24 hours. Minette is overjoyed after suffering from the neighbours from hell when Cathy and her two children move in next door. Cathy seems very friendly and her two children - Davey and Lola are delightful. Davey has Muscular Dystrophy and is confined to a wheelchair and Cathy spends a lot of her time raising funds for charity.

Minette is at home with Tilly her nine month old daughter and is starting to go a little crazy without adult company and conversation so she is probably more ready to be friendly with Cathy than perhaps she would have been normally and she is also just so glad not to have to creep around to avoid offending her previous neighbours.

It is difficult to say much more about this book without giving away the plot but the reader will have no difficulty spotting there is something not quite right about Cathy, though Minette and other neighbours are less observant.

Gradually the tension builds and details of Cathy's past emerge, but not before Minette is embroiled in something that she wishes she had never got involved with in the first place. The chapters are told from the point of view of the different characters - Cathy, Minette and Davey and gradually the reader can piece everything together.

I found I just had to keep reading to find out what happened in the end. It is a real roller coaster of a book with the tension building piece by piece. It will make you wonder about your own neighbours for a while - how well do you know them? Is what they tell you the truth? Should you trust them with as much information as you do? Highly recommended - especially for book-clubs as there are lots of potential discussion points. I received a free copy of this book from NetGalley for review.

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### **Lisa says**

I devoured this book in 24 hours. A complete page-turner from the start. Loved it so much. Great characters and an intriguing plot. When done right, British psychological thrillers are my absolute favorite. 5 stars.

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## **Malia says**

This is the second book I have read by Beth Miller and I'm already looking forward to any she plans to write in the future! Her books have mysteries and are quite engaging, but not grim or violent, which makes for a nice change after the rather grim stack of murder mysteries I've been binging on...

"The Good Neighbor" is a story that could be very ordinary, it's set in a normal neighborhood with characters, who, on the surface appear quite average. Yet Miller has a clever way of slowly peeling back the curtains and revealing the mess inside. This was a very fast-paced, gripping read and I can highly recommend it to fans of Liane Moriarty or Louise Candlish!

Find more reviews and bookish fun at <http://www.princessandpen.com>

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## **Joseph - Relax And Read Reviews says**

Even though I'm mostly a crime fiction lover, every now and then I find it refreshing to read a book not involving murders, blood or gore. This book was very different from what I usually read but I found it equally enjoyable? and very absorbing.

'The Good Neighbour' is a story about families, relationships, lies and secrets. At its centre lie the mystery and complexity of human behaviour.

**How well do we really know our neighbours? How much can we trust them? What secrets lie hidden behind their closed doors?**

*"All families have their secrets."*

Having finally got rid of her neighbours from hell, Minette is excited to meet and welcome the new occupiers of the house next door - Cath and her two kids, Davey and Lola. Cath is friendly and helpful and soon Minette begins to feel at ease with her, however over time Cath's behaviour begins to make Minette wonder just how well she really knew her neighbour. We know that Cath is escaping from a place she refers to as 'Troubletown'. Why? What had happened there? Her past and secrets are uncovered little by little.

**Never in a million years could Minette have known of the tangled web of lies and deceit she will eventually find herself in.**

Chapters are written from the pov of Cath, Minette and Davey. All characters are realistic and very 'human' with strengths and weaknesses. I think there are no 'good' or 'bad' characters in this book, because like in real life, they all live in their own individual situations and have different aspects to their personalities.

My heart went out for Davey, I really wanted to help this young brave boy. I particularly liked Minette with all her flaws, naivety and fears. Though she takes irrational decisions, she shows great sensitivity and a big heart. However, undoubtedly the star of the book is Cath. She must be one of the smartest, determined and strongest-willed female characters I've ever read about. Though I didn't find myself emotionally attached to her and didn't like her behaviour at all, I admired her courage, resilience and intelligence.

With a very clever, well-written plot, I think this book is brilliant. I really enjoyed it and will surely be

reading other books by this author.

With thanks to the author, Random House UK, Ebury Publishing and NetGalley for approving my request to read this book.

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### **Sarah says**

The Good Neighbour is a great book that makes you think what really goes on behind your own neighbours doors and do we really know our neighbours that well at all?

To be honest apart from saying hello or the odd pleasantry that's about as much as I have to do with my neighbours. Busy lifestyles don't give many of us the chance to get to know our neighbours, which, after reading this book I actually think that it may be for the best to keep it that way!

Minette is just getting over the last neighbours from hell so when she meets Cath, mother of two, who seems quite friendly and laid back, a drastic change from the last ones, she is more than happy to get to know and befriend her.

As the story goes along, we soon realise that something is not quite right. Even though Cath seems like a lovely friend and mother, along with Minette, we start to see cracks appearing in Caths seemingly perfect life.

I have to say as the story goes along I found myself disliking Cath more and more. To be fair there isn't many likeable characters in this story. The only people I did like was Minette and Davey, Caths son. Minettes husband Abe I had mixed feelings for, he was to much of a door mat and I wanted him to grow a back bone, though by the end I did start to think he was actually a lovely guy though still very much a door mat.

The Good Neighbour really makes for an intriguing read. I felt like a nosy neighbour peeking through the curtains whilst having a good old gaup at what was going on. With quite a few surprises, The Good Neighbour certainly makes for a memorable read and a must read for anyone with neighbours!

Many thanks to Beth Miller and Ebury Press for a copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

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### **Karen says**

If you've ever lived next door to the neighbours from hell who complain about every little noise, then you would understand Minette's joy at discovering that her obnoxious neighbours had moved away and a new family had moved in – Cath, her absent husband and her two young children.

Cath seemed very friendly and Minette was so bored and lonely being at home with a young baby and a boyfriend who didn't pay much attention to her that she was more than happy to be friends and gratefully accepted Cath's offers to babysit. Feeling vulnerable, Minette does something completely out of character and confides her secret to Cath. Little does she know that Cath has her own secrets and may not turn out to

be such a good neighbour as she had thought.

From the very beginning I felt that something wasn't right about Cath, I didn't trust her and I didn't have to get too far into the book before I realised where the story was heading. Cath has two young children; Davey aged 8 and his younger sister Lola. Davey suffers from Duchenne muscular dystrophy and is in a wheelchair whilst Lola has multiple food allergies so Cath has her hands full trying to look after them both as well as doing her charity fundraising which included training for a triathlon. The closer Minette gets to Cath, the more she is drawn into her life; however the reader can see what Minette can't.

The story is told from the three viewpoints of Cath, Minette and young Davey. It was Davey's voice that I found the most poignant - he is wise enough to realise that things are not right but too young to know what it is that's wrong. The story kept me gripped all the way through. The deceit and the betrayal make for a very disturbing read and as the layers to the story are gradually revealed by the author I wanted to shake both Cath and Minette - for different reasons. There were some parts that had me shaking my head in disbelief and which I didn't feel were realistic however to say any more would spoil the story.

This is quite a difficult book to categorise. Its not a thriller but it is a bit darker than an ordinary family drama. It will however keep your attention with the flawed characters and disturbing storyline. Much like real life, there were certain people that I took an instant dislike to. People only let you see what they want you to and it does beg the question can we really ever trust our neighbours, however friendly they may appear to be. Looking back at Minette's neighbours - I wouldn't want any of them living near me. This is the first house I have lived in where I have trusted a neighbour with a house key, so I'm keeping my fingers crossed that mine are good ones!

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## **sue says**

Minette was overjoyed when the 'neighbors from hell' moved out at last and Cath and her family moved in.

Now Minette would have a neighbor that she could get along with, so she thought.  
I thought that too, but not long into the read you get an eerie feeling that all is not as it should be.

This and many more things keep you on your toes throughout this book.

Its not many books I have read that I so eagerly want to return to as soon as possible, and its not many reads that I have read where no matter what I am doing I think about this book.

It trouble gets into your inner being.

I read a lot of psychological thrillers and I have to say, this one took me by surprise. I LOVED IT.

I would like to thank Random House UK, Ebury Publishing for my copy via Net Galley

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## **Tracy Fenton says**

This dark, psychological thriller tells the story of Minette, a new mother who has lived next to nightmare neighbours until Cath and her family move in. Told from Minette, Cath and Davey (Cath's 8 year old disabled son) point of view this is an uncomfortable read. Do you ever really know what goes on behind closed doors? Not an easy read due to the subject matter but definitely gripping and tense.

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## **Bookread2day says**

Review by [www.ireadnovels.wordpress.com](http://www.ireadnovels.wordpress.com)

A MUST BUY MUST READ

Oh my gosh! The Good Neighbour is so addictive I couldn't let go of this book. A real must buy, must read!

Minette's neighbour's from hell have just moved out. Cath has just moved in with her son, Davey who is in a wheelchair and her daughter Lola who has a milk allergy.

Minette and Cath seem to have different types of parenting styles, but both have their flaws.

Davey has Muscular dystrophy that effects the muscles, causing weakness, that is why Davey is in a wheelchair as he can't walk Cath tells her new neighbour and everyone.

Cath has Munchausen by proxy syndrome a rare form of child abuse that involves the exaggeration or fabrication of illness or symptoms in a child. MBPS is a in a mental illness and requires treatment.

Cath has left her husband and changed their identity. Minette was naive to trust Cath.

While Minette is in Cath's house she witnesses something that she shouldn't have. When Minette confronts Cath about what she see Cath blackmails Minette as she has found out something about her. Everyone has secrets.

I loved this novel so much. Beth Miller I can't wait until your next book is out.

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