



A Good Girl's Guide to Murder by Holly Jackson

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Discussion Questions

1. Setting is an important part of any story. Why do you think Holly Jackson chose a small town for the setting of this book? How, if at all, would the story be different if it happened in a major city?
2. Reputations and personal biases play a huge part in *A Good Girl's Guide to Murder*. How and why would the story be different if Andie and Sal had had different reputations?
3. Do you consider Pip relatable? Why or why not? How does your answer effect your feelings about the story?
4. Why is Pip the right person to follow in this book? How would the story differ if it followed Ravi instead?
5. Is it significant that the characters in *A Good Girl's Guide to Murder* are teens rather than adults? How would the story change if its protagonists were older? Similarly, is it significant that the book is categorized as YA? How might the read be affected if this were categorized as an adult novel?
6. When do you think Pip changes from a student who doesn't actually want to solve the case to a sleuth hoping to find the real murderer?
7. There were many potential suspects and motives for murdering Andie. Before you knew the truth, who did you think was the culprit, and why? Which suspect surprised you the most?
8. Andie uses several modern detective techniques during her investigation, including searching Facebook and finding a person's secret Facebook account. Do you think Andie could have still solved the case if she'd had to do without modern technology?
9. What are some of the most effective ways that Pip keeps track of her progress with the case? Which were least effective?
10. What would you have done differently from Pip?

Author Interview

What made you want to write a murder mystery?

Murder mysteries and crime thrillers have always interested me as a consumer, in both books and TV shows/ films. But the real inspiration for AGGGTM was the world of true crime: podcasts and documentaries. I became a true crime obsessive and wanted to write a book which replicated this 'real' amateur detective angle.

What were the challenges of having a teenage girl as your 'detective'? How did you manage them?

I didn't see having a teenage girl as the detective as a challenge at all. I saw it only as a strength with so many possibilities to explore. One of my favourite parts of writing was coming up with ways that Pip could turn everyday tech into crime solving tools as – being a teenager – she doesn't have the full resources of a police force. Other characters under-estimate her and Pip is able to turn that complacency into a weapon against the adults involved in this case.

What was the thing you most enjoyed about working with Lindsey on the book? Why?

Given the inspiration for the book, I really wanted the book to have a 'true crime' feel, with multi-media elements and found-footage type items to create an immersive experience. Lindsey totally embraced this from the beginning, and though those multi-media elements often caused formatting hijinks while editing, I think the final book is all the better for them. So I'm very grateful that Lindsey fully supported this dual format from the get-go and was this book's greatest champion.

What was the most challenging thing about writing the book? What aspect are you most proud of?

I think, with any crime thriller, a lot of pressure is put upon having THE BIG TWIST. It's an expected part of the genre and you want to strike the right balance between shocking the reader, but also that they accept the twist was guessable all along, they just didn't see it. I think that was the most challenging part, coming up with an original way to surprise a reader who is likely well-versed in crime thrillers and their tricks, as quite often books in this genre seem to live or die upon their final reveal. And, from reading reviews, I think I largely pulled this off, for which I am very relieved!

What advice would you give to debut authors?

My piece of advice, which I often did not heed myself, is to try to remember what is at the heart of this career: the joy of storytelling. During the publishing process, it is sometimes easy to forget this when you're scouring the manuscript for errant semi-colons at 3 a.m., or panicking about word count or getting stressed about any of the other details about the business of book-making. Because it will be stressful. But at the end of the day, try to remember that your ultimate job is to tell a story that you yourself would have loved to read, and that is the best job in the whole world.

<https://branfordboaseaward.org.uk/interview-a-good-girls-guide-to-murder/>

Author Biography

Holly Jackson started writing stories at a young age, completing her first (poor) attempt at a novel when she was fifteen. She graduated from the University of Nottingham, where she studied literary linguistics and creative writing, with a master's degree in English. She enjoys playing video games and watching true-crime documentaries so she can pretend to be a detective. She lives in London. *A Good Girl's Guide to Murder* is her debut novel. Follow Holly on Twitter and Instagram at @HoJay92.

Reviews

"The **popular** YA mystery crime trilogy." —*Teen Vogue*

"BookTok sensation." —*Seventeen*

"What teen girl doesn't dream of solving her own murder?" —*The New York Times*

"Gripping." —*E! News Online*

"The perfect **nail-biting** mystery." —**Natasha Preston, #1 New York Times bestselling author**

"Holly Jackson plays off of our collective **true crime obsession** brilliantly." —*PopSugar*

"If you love true crime, **murder mysteries**, and unstoppable young women, this is the perfect easy-read thriller." —*Business Insider*

"A **knockout** series." —*The Nerd Daily*

"An instant shocker that will leave you on the edge of your seat." —*Los Angeles Times High School Insider*

"This is a great, **twisty** read for fans of YA." —*Book Riot*

"A taut, **compulsively readable**, elegantly plotted thriller." —*The Guardian*

"A **fun, gripping, and skillfully constructed** novel of suspense. I loved Pip—her relatable quirks, her inventive investigative approach, and her willingness to step outside of her safe world in search of the truth." —**Emily Arsenault, author of *All the Pretty Things***

"**Dark, dangerous and intricately plotted**—my heart literally pounded." —**Laura Steven, author of *The Exact Opposite of Okay***

"Well-executed.... **A treat for mystery readers** who enjoy being kept in suspense." —*Kirkus Reviews*

"Legions of **fans of true crime podcasts** may therefore flock to this one, and they're unlikely to be disappointed." —*Bulletin*

"**Fans of true crime will be hooked** by the hunt for a killer, but there's more to this Guide than just a whodunit. It's a story of families, community and the ways a crisis can turn them against one another in the blink of an eye." —*BookPage*

<https://penguinrandomhouselibrary.com/book/?isbn=9781984896360>

Read-Alikes

***A Long Stretch of Bad Days* by Mindy McGinnis**

A lifetime of hard work has put Lydia Chass on track to attend a prestigious journalism program and leave Henley behind—until a school error leaves her a credit short of graduating.

Bristal Jamison has a bad reputation and a foul mouth, but she also needs one more credit to graduate. An unexpected partnership forms as the two remake Lydia's town history podcast to investigate the Long Stretch of Bad Days—a week when Henley was hit by a tornado and a flash flood as well as its first, only, and unsolved murder.

As their investigation unearths buried secrets, some don't want them to see the light. When the threats escalate, the girls have to uncover the truth before the dark history of Henley catches up with them.

***The Naturals* by Jennifer Lynn Barnes**

Seventeen-year-old Cassie is a natural at reading people. Piecing together the tiniest details, she can tell you who you are and what you want. But, it's not a skill that she's ever taken seriously. That is, until the FBI come knocking: they've begun a classified program that uses exceptional teenagers to crack infamous cold cases, and they need Cassie.

What Cassie doesn't realize is that there's more at risk than a few unsolved homicides—especially when she's sent to live with a group of teens whose gifts are as unusual as her own. Soon, it becomes clear that no one in the Naturals program is what they seem. And when a new killer strikes, danger looms close. Caught in a lethal game of cat and mouse with a killer, the Naturals are going to have to use all of their gifts just to survive.

***Truly Devious: A Mystery* by Maureen Johnson**

Ellingham Academy is a famous private school in Vermont for the brightest thinkers, inventors, and artists. It was founded by Albert Ellingham, an early twentieth century tycoon, who wanted to make a wonderful place full of riddles, twisting pathways, and gardens. "A place," he said, "where learning is a game."

Shortly after the school opened, his wife and daughter were kidnapped. The only real clue was a mocking riddle listing methods of murder, signed with the frightening pseudonym "Truly, Devious." It became one of the great unsolved crimes of American history.

True-crime aficionado Stevie Bell is set to begin her first year at Ellingham Academy, and she has an ambitious plan: She will solve this cold case. That is, she will solve the case when she gets a grip on her demanding new school life and her housemates: the inventor, the novelist, the actor, the artist, and the jokester.

But something strange is happening. Truly Devious makes a surprise return, and death revisits Ellingham Academy. The past has crawled out of its grave. Someone has gotten away with murder.

***People Like Us* by Dana Mele**

Kay Donovan may have skeletons in her closet, but the past is past, and she's reinvented herself entirely. Now she's a star soccer player whose group of gorgeous friends run their private school with effortless popularity and acerbic wit. But when a girl's body is found in the lake, Kay's carefully constructed life begins to topple. The dead girl has left Kay a computer-coded scavenger hunt, which, as it unravels, begins to implicate suspect after suspect, until Kay herself is in the crosshairs of a murder investigation. But if Kay's finally backed into a corner, she'll do what it takes to survive. Because at Bates Academy, the truth is something you make...not something that happened.

***One of Us Is Lying* by Karen McManus**

Pay close attention and you might solve this.

On Monday afternoon, five students at Bayview High walk into detention.

Bronwyn, the brain, is Yale-bound and never breaks a rule.

Addy, the beauty, is the picture-perfect homecoming princess.

Nate, the criminal, is already on probation for dealing.

Cooper, the athlete, is the all-star baseball pitcher.

And Simon, the outcast, is the creator of Bayview High's notorious gossip app.

Only, Simon never makes it out of that classroom. Before the end of detention Simon's dead. And according to investigators, his death wasn't an accident. On Monday, he died. But on Tuesday, he'd planned to post juicy reveals about all four of his high-profile classmates, which makes all four of them suspects in his murder. Or are they the perfect patsies for a killer who's still on the loose?

Everyone has secrets, right? What really matters is how far you would go to protect them.

***They Wish They Were Us* by Jessica Goodman**

In Gold Coast, Long Island, everything from the expensive downtown shops to the manicured beaches, to the pressed uniforms of Jill Newman and her friends, looks perfect. But as Jill found out three years ago, nothing is as it seems.

Freshman year Jill's best friend, the brilliant, dazzling Shaila Arnold, was killed by her boyfriend. After that dark night on the beach, Graham confessed, the case was closed, and Jill tried to move on.

Now, it's Jill's senior year and she's determined to make it her best yet. After all, she's a senior and a member of Gold Coast Prep's exclusive, not-so-secret secret society. But when Jill starts getting texts proclaiming Graham's innocence, her dreams of the perfect senior year start

to crumble. If Graham didn't kill Shaila, who did? Jill vows to find out, but digging deeper could mean putting her friendships, and her future, in jeopardy.

***Someone Is Always Watching* by Kelley Armstrong**

Blythe and her friends — Gabrielle, and brother and sister Tucker and Tanya — have always been a tight friend group, attending a local high school and falling in and out of love with each other. But an act of violence has caused a rift between Blythe and Tucker . . . and unexpected bursts of aggression and disturbing nightmares have started to become more frequent in their lives.

The strange happenings culminate in a shocking event at school: Gabrielle is found covered in blood in front of their deceased principal, with no memory of what happened.

Cracks in their friendship, as well as in their own memories, start appearing, threatening to expose long-forgotten secrets which could change the group's lives forever. How can Blythe and her friends trust each other when they can't even trust their own memories?

***The Cheerleaders* by Kara Thomas**

There are no more cheerleaders in the town of Sunnybrook.

First there was the car accident--two girls dead after hitting a tree on a rainy night. Not long after, the murders happened. Those two girls were killed by the man next door. The police shot him, so no one will ever know his reasons. Monica's sister was the last cheerleader to die. After her suicide, Sunnybrook High disbanded the cheer squad. No one wanted to be reminded of the girls they'd lost.

That was five years ago. Now the faculty and students at Sunnybrook High want to remember the lost cheerleaders. But for Monica, it's not that easy. She just wants to forget.

Only, Monica's world is starting to unravel. There are the letters in her stepdad's desk, an unearthed, years-old cell phone, a strange new friend at school. . . . Whatever happened five years ago isn't over. Some people in town know more than they're saying. And somehow, Monica is at the center of it all.

There are no more cheerleaders in Sunnybrook, but that doesn't mean anyone else is safe.