



The Bad Lady

John Meany

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Monsters do exist. They really do. They are not a fairy tale.

Ten-year-old Billy Hall met a monster in his own seemingly peaceful neighborhood in Hampton, Ohio. Her name was Nancy Sutcliffe; she drove the Good Humor truck. All the kids on the block loved her, as did their parents. That is until one day when Nancy would do the unthinkable, harm a child. Harm Billy.

This would set the stage for warfare a showdown between Billy's mother and the Good Humor employee. Someone was going to die.

The Bad Lady Details

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Author : John Meany

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Sheila says

Billy gets a ride with the ice-cream lady and tells her his mom really doesn't care much where he is since he just broke her favorite lamp. He listens to neighbors talking about his mother in their homes, and their insults hurt. They call her a witch and deride her for the men she goes out with. They wonder how "a freak" can raise a child while their own conversation puts him down. So perhaps it's no surprise that the ice-cream lady's kindness draws Billy in. Her attentions make him feel special—so much more enticing than being "dysfunctional."

Betrayals come in various shapes and sizes in this honest and haunting novella, and people's different responses each cause their separate wounds. Billy's mother's far from perfect, and the supposed "bad lady" has a haunting power, all told in the narrator's bleakly honest voice. Looking back with experience on a child's innocence, with kindness on a child's determination, and with honest questions—"Why pass blame without evidence to back it up?"—the narrator leads the reader to see through a ten-year-old's eyes and know a ten-year-old's hurt. Then he leads us forward to see how that hurt plays out.

The writing's imperfections are carefully crafted to fit voice and content, and the whole is a truly haunting, scarily believable work of fiction, blessed with innate kindness and hope. Abuse happens. Children are sexually victimized by surprising predators. And nothing's ever as simple as we'd dream. Sometimes we look the wrong way and see the wrong answers without noticing the questions.

Disclosure: I was lucky enough to find this when it was free.

Tina Ambury says

not what you might think. a difficult narrative in many ways. not my cup of tea.

Georgiann Hennelly says

The Bad Lady is the story of Billy he is Ten years old and he becomes friends with Nancy the ice cream truck driver. After she abuses him sexually the truth comes out later at a friends house. Billy's mother is a single women who uses drugs and has frequently changing partners she is also Schizophrenic. Bad Lady is her alter ego. The book is full of suspense, honest and very explicit about Billy's feelings. We also follow the after math and the effects of the abuse on Billy. And we see how Billy resolves to move on with his life. I look forward to reading more books by John Meany

nikkia says

Wow

This book was sad. I know his mom had problems but she should have Sent to the cops. But knowing what happened to billy her son she was coping with what her son went threw. It's a deep book and very sad. And the sad thing is this happens all over the world ? till this day. I hope someday people will stop abusing children and women etc. It needs to end cause for people who were or have got melosted will always think it was our fault somehow. It's hard for victims to cope no matter what she you are. If your going to read this book make sure your prepared from the victims point of view.

Aston Hisley says

A great ending for a terrible story. Child abuse is never a fun game, but throw in a mad mother and things can get better. It reminds me of that mother in New Orleans that waited until the judge released her child's abuser on probation. She stood up in court with a revolver and blew the abuser away.

Christoph Fischer says

"Bad Lady" by John Meany is the story of 10 year old Billy who befriends the much older ice cream truck driver Nancy. After she abuses him sexually gradually the truth comes out at his friend's house. Billy's mother is a drug user, a single woman with frequently changing partners and also a schizophrenic. Bad Lady refers to her alter ego, which takes even more issue with the child abuser than Billy's mother.

The book is well written and full of suspense, moving, honest and explicit about Billy's feelings. It is a drama that pulls your heart strings and exposes the shocking reality of Billy and the problems in his life.

We follow the aftermath ad the multiple effects of the abuse until much later in Billy's life. The book does not stop at the abuse, the story continues and the book ends with the victims resolve to move on with his life.

There is great dialogue between the quarrelling women and inspiring words in the conversation between Billy and his therapist.

Patricia Hogan says

I so should have read the blurb before diving into this one. I have a habit of liking to be surprised and just going with the book title and cover art. Same with movies. I don't want to know anything about the plot. I just want to start at the beginning and go with it. Well let me tell ya, this was not what I was expecting. Bad Lady's son gets raped by the freaking ice cream man. Then things get worse somehow. This book did my poor head in. The writing was excellent. I give top marks for the writing, but the subject matter was dark.

Shadira says

It took me two days to read this book, it is one of those books that offers a riveting story in addition to raising profound questions when it comes to ,sexual abuse and mental illness and how far would a parent go in protecting their child.

I had a little bit of difficulty in trying to understand why the mother never went to the authorities, but after reading the reasoning behind it I as a parent can relate.

The author did a wonderful job in keeping the reader's interest with a good story line and the characters, I felt so sorry for Billy having to deal with abuse but at the same time the mental illness of his mom. there was good character development and good writing skills.

I would recommend this book to anyone who loves psychological thrillers with suspense and also to parents. after reading the book, it only confirms what I have always believed in.....that a child needs know that abuse is never their fault!! And I am so proud of Billy after all these years finally decided to be free.

What a beautiful end!!

Iain Clements says

The Bad Lady is a sad and poignant story that focuses on Billy Hall, a young 10 year old boy growing up with his mother Bridgette in Hampton, Ohio.

During the summer of 1998, Billy develops a friendship with an ice cream vendor who then sexually abuses him. The story explores the consequences of that act and the impact that it has on Billy and his mother.

As you can probably imagine, this novel is heavy going but the story is gripping and the characters are really well described. John Meany does an excellent job with the character of Billy, his sense of confusion surrounding the abuse are really well described.

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Ms. Nikki says

I wanted to quit this book so many times, but when the bad lady showed up I thought the story would take off. It did not. This was a manual for what not to do when someone is molested. After learning of the bad lady, I understood a little better about the choices and conversations Billy's mother was having.

For me, this read had flaws. Unrealistic reactions being the most important.

I finished it and I honestly don't know if I'll try anything else by this author.

This reads contain molestation. It's glossed over for sensitive people, but that is the main subject of the book.

Not for me.

Terri Poche says

Really....5 stars?

I stopped reading this book at chapter 5 because the grammar and punctuation was so bad it was distracting. I then checked the reviews and saw a lot of 5 stars so I decided to stick it out.... it must get better, right? Wrong! This story had great potential if only a better author had written it. I won't be reading anymore by Mr. Meany. My opinion is don't waste your time like I did.

Lillian Mackenzie says

This book chronicles mainly a two day period in the life of ten year old Billy. That summer without a care in the world, Billy was sitting on top of the world being the chosen friend of the Good Humor ice cream lady, Nancy Sutcliffe. With endless amounts of ice cream and the chance to steer the truck, he knew that he would be the envy of all his friends until all the treats that were given resulted in Billy having to pay the price in the end.

Later that evening plagued with the thoughts of the lewd acts Nancy Sutcliffe had him perform on her, his self-doubt caused him to admit to his mother the sexual assault that a very adult Nancy had perform on a very juvenile Billy. His mother was outraged with the developments vowing to make Nancy pay for corrupting the wrong child.

This book had my attention from the very beginning before the story started right to the final page. If you think all the focus of this book should be on Nancy, you are wrong. This story centers around Billy's potential schizophrenic mother, Bridgette, and his relationship with her. His mother has a lot of deep issues that grab at your heart strings outside of the molestation of Billy aspect of this story. Her wavering mental health shatters in the wake of learning the events that Billy had to endure.

The only negative that I can mention (and this is not a negative really) is during the description of Nancy and the acts, it had an almost erotic feel to the passage versus disturbing. After I thought about it for a time, I ended up changing my opinion on it. The passage was excellently written due to it being an account of Billy, and of course a lot of ten year old boys would view the act in that manner. It was a good balance of discomfort and prepubescent male hormones.

Awesome read for anyone who is willing to dive into the dark subject of pedophilia and mental health seen through the eyes of a ten year old Billy.

****Sidebar: I kind of like the original book cover better****

Rachael Norton says

Poorly written, horrific subject matter. Just grim. I wouldn't want my friends to read this book . It wasn't a psychological thriller it was a quick delve into child abuse and personality disorder. One star so I could review. Don't read this book.

Linda Strong says

From the author: *The Bad Lady is a work of fiction. However, it is based on a true story, which many years ago had appeared in The New York Times. The article left me both shocked and fascinated as I found how a child could possibly cope with being sexually abused and having to deal with a mentally ill mother who was addicted to heroin. it hard to imagine*

This novel mirrors that state of affairs in honor of child victims everywhere.

I wasn't sure I would like this or not ... being a parent, the thought of someone molesting either of my children, makes my skin crawl.

It's not only men that molest children of either sex. In this instance the driver of the Good Humor Ice Cream Truck is the molester ... a woman named Nancy. What happens to young Billy is explained in detail, but it's not graphic.

The real story begins when Billy decides to tell his mother what has happened. Unknown to Billy, his mother is hooked on heroin and has an alter ego who takes over now and then. Considering the title to this book is call The Bad Lady, the reader would probably guess this refers to Nancy. But it doesn't....

It's like a boomerang because of this, that happened. And that caused something else to occur. At one point, I wasn't sure who was telling the real truth. No one gets out of this story unscathed.

Billy tells his story as an adult looking back on everything that happened when he was a child. There are very few characters, so no one gets lost in knowing who he is speaking about. The only criticism I have is that the conversations between child and mother seem to be a little stilted. Young Billy seems to be far more mature than most children.

This is a novella, too long for a short story and not long enough for a novel. The chapters are fairly short, so its a quick read. If you are a fan of psychological meanderings, you will like this one.

3.5 Stars

NOTE: As of today's date. this one is free on Amazon.

Barrie says

Good read

I felt I understand the emotions of the child Billy as well as the adult Billy. As a mom I definitely understand his mother's actions although she was an addict and had multiple personalities disorder. I wish the book had shown more about the adult Billy. A second book maybe?
