

BEFORE I LET YOU IN by Jenny Blackhurst

Published by Headline

My latest book recommendation is '*Before I Let You In*' by Jenny Blackhurst. It is a tragic story about three close friends whose long friendship is torn apart by obsessive jealousy and the desire to be needed.

THE PLOTTLINE

Karen, Eleanor and Beatrice (Bea) have been best friends since they were teenagers. Having chosen a career path, Karen is now a well-respected psychiatrist, although she has managed to keep the fact her boyfriend, Michael, is a married man to herself. Eleanor, in contrast, is now a stressed-out housewife, married to Adam with two children, while Bea is still unattached and enjoying a carefree social life. Despite their lives having taken very different paths, the friends are still as close as ever ... that is until Jessica Hamilton walks into Karen's consulting room and becomes her patient.

At first, their sessions seem to go well, but when Jessica starts to comment on Karen's private life and her relationship with her friends, Karen begins to feel uncomfortable. Convinced the girl has developed an unhealthy obsession with both her and her friends, Karen decides to risk betraying patient confidentiality by warning them about her patient. Unfortunately, they all think she is the one with an obsession. However, after hearing Jessica admit to having an affair with a married man, when Karen sees her in a shop, touching Adam's arm affectionately, she is convinced the married man is Eleanor's husband. Therefore, believing her friend has the right to know, she wastes no time in telling Eleanor, who reacts badly to Karen's accusation.

With suspicion, self-doubt and resentment now coming between Karen and Eleanor, the close friendship they all used to enjoy starts to show the first signs of cracking. Following a series of tragic and harrowing events, which befall both Eleanor and Bea, the cracks continue to widen until finally, as the truth of who is responsible is eventually revealed, the friendship is blown wide apart.

MY REVIEW

'*Before I Let You In*' is a cleverly constructed thriller. Both gripping and intriguing, it will keep you engrossed right until the final chapter.

The novel begins with Karen looking back on the events leading up to the disintegration of her friendship with Eleanor and Bea, her closest friends. The following chapters then focus on each of the

women in turn, highlighting the dynamics of their friendship while telling the story behind its tragic demise. With so many twists and turns along the way, the tension is expertly maintained throughout the novel. All the characters are well-rounded with believable strengths and weaknesses, making it easy to care about them. The ending is both breathtaking and sad. I must admit, it was the first time I have ever felt slightly sorry for the villain.

THE AUTHOR

Jenny Blackhurst grew up in Shropshire where she still lives with her husband and children. Growing up she spent hours reading and talking about crime novels so writing her own seemed like natural progression. She is the author of *'How I Lost You'* and *'Before I Let You In'*.

'Before I Let You In' is published by Headline and is available in ebook, paperback and audiobook format from Amazon. It is also available in paperback from Waterstones, W H Smith and Foyles.