



THE  
GOOD  
GIRL  
MARY  
KUBICA

A Novel

BOOK CLUB KIT

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## AN INTRODUCTION TO *THE GOOD GIRL*

Dear Reader,

I hope your favorite reading chair came with a seat belt, because you're going to need it for Mary Kubica's pulse-pounding debut thriller, *The Good Girl!*

*The Good Girl* is about an abduction that goes horribly wrong and the subsequent investigation that unravels a story more bizarre than anyone imagined. Jam-packed with riveting plot twists, complex characters and a stunning ending you won't see coming, *The Good Girl* is an impressive first novel. But particularly striking is Mary's fresh, razor-sharp voice, and the way she expertly weaves together a rich, multi-layered narrative that leads readers down a winding rabbit hole that surprises at every turn.

As an editor, it's rare for a debut thriller to suck you in, chew you up and spit you out yet leave you begging for more, but *The Good Girl* did just that. I hope that you'll agree.

Buckle up!

Sincerely,



Erika Imranyi  
Senior Editor

THE GOOD GIRL  
MARY KUBICA

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YOU WON'T SEE COMING....  
*AND NEITHER DID SHE.*



### SUGGESTED DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Please Note: These questions do contain spoilers.  
Please wait to review the questions until after you've finished reading the novel.

1. Initially Detective Hoffman wishes that he had not been assigned the case of missing Mia Dennett, and yet later, he finds himself completely preoccupied by it. Are his motives fueled more by professional or personal desire? Do you feel that his character evolves during the course of the novel, or does he remain true to himself throughout?
2. In the early pages of the novel, Colin Thatcher comes across as a hardened criminal carrying out a kidnapping plot for his own financial benefit. What would make a man like Colin decide to save Mia from her assumed fate?
3. Do you think it was admirable for Colin to forsake his own and his mother's well-being for a stranger, or should he have carried out the kidnapping plot as planned? Were his actions entirely selfless, or did his decision to save Mia also serve a selfish purpose?
4. Imagine for a moment that Mia went through with the abortion at her father's request. How would this have affected her once she learned of Colin's death? Do you think it would have been easier or harder for her to accept his death if she was not carrying his child?
5. Mia Dennett is portrayed in many different lights: the devoted teacher, the neglected daughter, a kidnapping victim, an underhanded conspirator and more. Which of these do you feel accurately portray the character, or is Mia truly a conglomeration of all these personas? Are any of these portrayals merely an act on Mia's part to fill some self-seeking need and, if so, how does this behavior differ from that of her father?
6. Eve Dennett exhibits a strong emotional attachment toward Detective Gabe Hoffman throughout *The Good Girl*, and yet, at the end of the novel, she chooses to forsake that relationship for the benefit of her daughter. Do you feel that Eve's feelings for the detective were genuine, or rather an instance of being caught up in the moment? In your opinion, was Eve appropriate in ending the relationship, or should she have continued on with Detective Hoffman regardless of Mia's mental state and emotional needs?
7. Dr. Avery Rhodes suggests that Mia's feelings for Colin Thatcher were an example of Stockholm syndrome: a psychological situation in which a kidnapping victim forms a bond with his or her captor. Do you feel that Mia was suffering from Stockholm syndrome or that the relationship she developed with Colin was authentic?

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## MARY KUBICA



8. Mia suffers from amnesia throughout the pages of *The Good Girl*. It's only in the last few chapters that her memory comes back and she is able to recall her days inside the Minnesota cabin. Knowing, however, that Mia staged her own kidnapping, is it also possible to imagine that she faked the amnesia throughout the novel? Was Mia truly suffering from acute stress disorder, or was this another act from a capable and conniving performer?
9. At the end of the novel we learn that Mia arranged her own kidnapping to seek vengeance against her father for a neglectful upbringing. Do you feel that Mia was justified in this behavior? What other actions could she have taken to get even with her father? Was his conduct as awful as Mia perceived it to be in her mind?
10. After reading *The Good Girl*, who do you feel was the true victim, or victims, and who the true conspirator? Have your opinions changed since beginning the novel, and if so, how?

### IN CONVERSATION WITH MARY KUBICA

***The Good Girl* is the gripping story of an abduction, where nothing is exactly what it seems. What was your inspiration for the story and characters?**

An atypical kidnapping plot was my inspiration, the first trace of a story I began to craft in my mind, a kidnapping plot that is not exactly what it seems. Add to it characters that appear at first one way but turn out to be far different than imagined. My hope was not only to keep the reader wondering, but also for them to fall in love with the characters and to feel pulled into the story, into the cold, Minnesota cabin with Mia and Colin, and into the loneliness and despair Eve Dennett feels when her daughter disappears.

**When you began the novel, did you have Mia's journey already mapped out? How did she surprise you along the way, and how did her story evolve over the course of writing and editing the novel?**

In all honestly, when I began writing *The Good Girl*, I had very little mapped out. As someone has since suggested to me, it was Mia and Colin who told me their story rather than the other way around. Mia certainly evolved over the course of writing and editing the novel, becoming someone I couldn't have predicted in the early days of writing *The Good Girl*. She became a much stronger persona, not only a victim, but so much more.

***The Good Girl* is told in alternating first-person perspectives, both before and after Mia is recovered. Why did you choose to narrate the story this way, and why did you choose the perspectives of Colin, Eve and Detective Hoffman?**

Mia is the character that is central to this novel, and yet Mia's voice is rarely heard. For this reason, I wanted to make certain the other characters fully encapsulated Mia Dennett in their narratives, and I chose those characters who were closest to both Mia and to the investigation to portray her life and tell her story.

Alternating first-person perspectives told a more comprehensive story than other points of view, leaving no stone of Mia's life left unturned. It was important to me that the reader see her from all angles: the neglected daughter, the powerless victim and the many other personas she exhibits throughout the novel.

**What was your toughest challenge writing *The Good Girl*? Your greatest pleasure?**

My toughest challenge in writing *The Good Girl* was simply finding the time to write. My daughter was just a year old when I began writing the novel, and my son had yet to be born. As parents know, finding the time to do just about anything with little ones around is oftentimes a daunting task. So I thank my children excessively for "sleeping in" every morning (as if 6:30 a.m. counts as sleeping in), and for taking reliable, daily naps that gave me the time I needed to write.

I wrote *The Good Girl* in complete secrecy, not telling anyone other than my husband, of the work in progress. I sent the manuscript off to literary agents without so much as having a friend proofread for

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grammar. I waited alone on pins and needles, for the many months it took to acquire an agent, and then later, to sell the book to Harlequin MIRA. The greatest pleasure of the entire process was finally telling family and friends that not only did I write a book but that it was going to be published!

### **Can you describe your writing process? Do you write scenes consecutively or jump around? Do you have a schedule or a routine? A lucky charm?**

My absolutely favorite time to write is around 5:00 a.m. every day with my first cup of coffee, when the house is still quiet and quality writing time has yet to be hampered by dirty laundry and grocery shopping, endless games of Chutes and Ladders, and all those other daily tasks that otherwise occupy my time. As an animal lover, I'll gladly admit that I wrote the majority of *The Good Girl* with Maggie, a little orange tabby cat, on my lap, and I'm certain she was my lucky charm.

I chose to write *The Good Girl* in three different segments, merging them together upon completion: Eve and Gabe in the *before* chapters, Eve and Gabe *after*, and finally, Colin *before*. I found that I was able to empathize with each of the characters and all of their complications when focused on a single, or in some cases, dual, perspective and a single time frame. Merging them together was such fun, as the three sections I had been working on individually finally became one, telling a story altogether different than the individual parts.

### **How did you know you wanted to be a writer, and how did you come to write *The Good Girl*?**

I remember it exactly, the moment I knew I wanted to write: I was around eleven or twelve years old with a cousin at a sleepover at our grandparents' home. My cousin, Carrie, was about the same age as me when she produced her first manuscript for me to read, and I remember holding the crisp computer paper (the continuous feed paper with perforated edges) and thinking: this is where books come from. It was then that I knew I wanted to be a writer.

Writing for me, however, was always more of a dream or hobby and less of a career, the kind of thing I did as a girl when I stole away with the family's typewriter and hurried off to my bedroom to write in private. More practically I dreamed of becoming a high school history teacher, and I did just that after graduating from college. But though I loved teaching, that urge to write—the *need* to write—never disappeared, and I would find myself brainstorming plot lines when writing lesson plans, pillaging student names for characters. After giving birth to my daughter and taking time off to raise her, I was able to refocus on my dreams of writing professionally, and thus, in the quiet, early mornings and sleepy afternoons that she napped, *The Good Girl* was born.

### **Can you tell us something about the book you're working on now?**

Right now I'm working on another suspenseful tale, a story of a Chicago woman who stumbles upon a young, homeless girl waiting with a baby in the rain, beside the Chicago "L." The woman becomes fixated on both the young girl and her baby, going to great lengths to discover who she is and why she's come to be there, digging into a past she'll soon wish she hadn't chosen to uncover.

# THE GOOD GIRL MARY KUBICA



**MARY KUBICA** holds a bachelor of arts degree from Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, in history and American literature. She lives outside of Chicago with her husband and two children and enjoys photography, gardening and caring for the animals at a local shelter. *The Good Girl* is her first novel.

[www.MaryKubica.com](http://www.MaryKubica.com)





# THE GOOD GIRL MARY KUBICA

## PRAISE FOR MARY KUBICA & *THE GOOD GIRL*



**“KUBICA’S POWERFUL DEBUT...  
WILL ENCOURAGE COMPARISONS TO  
*GONE GIRL*...[BUT] THIS *GIRL* HAS HEART.”**

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**“PSYCHOLOGICALLY RICH AND  
PULSE POUNDING, *THE GOOD GIRL* HAD  
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A DEBUT. FANS OF *GONE GIRL* WILL EMBRACE  
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**“KUBICA’S DEBUT THRILLER BUILDS  
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READERS GUESSING WHAT’S REALLY  
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