

Behind Her Lives

Briana Cole

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A twisting tale of deception and overlapping mysteries, Briana Cole's psychological thriller *Behind Her Lives* follows a woman who refuses to believe that her younger sister is dead.

Deven is overwhelmed. Her relationship with her on-again, off-again boyfriend is strained; she works long hours at the hospital. But when she's asked to identify the body of her estranged younger sister, Kennedy, it seems like a bizarre prank. The body looks like Kennedy, and was found in Kennedy's apartment with her identification, but Deven is adamant that it can't be her.

The police declare Kennedy deceased following an accidental overdose; Deven remains convinced that Kennedy is on an overseas trip. She mounts an investigation, and the mystery deepens. She reconnects with a friend of Kennedy's who hides a darker side and realizes that Kennedy might not be the same fun-loving girl who she grew up with.

Deven's quest for the truth is moved by love. It leads her to losses and danger, but she refuses to accept failure. Interspersed with scenes from her investigation are flashbacks to Kennedy's childhood trauma and events that Deven endured months prior. Clues abound about Kennedy's whereabouts during the decades when the two sisters were apart, but none of them make sense to optimistic Deven, who sees the best in the world and in her younger sister. Pains fail to color her perception—but still may have blinded her to hard realities. The story crescendos in a shocking climax that addresses Kennedy's fate and Deven's relationships, amid other surprises.

In the psychological thriller *Behind Her Lives*, childhood traumas affect two sisters in their adulthood, leading them in stark and contrasting directions.

JOHN M. MURRAY (November / December 2022)

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