



## Sisters and Lies

*Bernice Barrington*

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One hot August night, Rachel Power gets the call everyone fears. It's the police. Her younger sister Evie's had a car crash, she's in a coma. Can Rachel fly to London right away? With Evie injured and comatose, Rachel is left to pick up the pieces of her sister's life. But it's hard fitting them together, especially when she really doesn't like what she sees. Why was Evie driving when she doesn't even own a licence? Who is the man living in her flat and claiming Evie is his girlfriend? How come she has never heard of him? The more mysteries Rachel uncovers the more she starts asking herself how well she ever really knew her sister. And then she begins to wonder if the crash was really the accident everybody says it is. Back in hospital, Evie, trapped inside an unresponsive body, is desperately trying to wake up. Because she's got an urgent message for Rachel - a warning which could just save both their lives . . .

## Sisters and Lies Details

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Author : Bernice Barrington

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## From Reader Review Sisters and Lies for online ebook

### aprilla says

tried, tried hard.... could not continue. Might try it again some other time, might not.

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### Lexxie (un)Conventional Bookworms says

#### **This review was originally posted on (un)Conventional Bookviews**

Sisters and Lies is both tender and harsh, mysterious and sweet, nostalgic and filled with hope. A good story that kept me turning the pages, never fully guessing what was going on.

Sisters and Lies was well done, especially the psychological thriller aspect of the story. Evie and Rachel both had chapters told from their perspective, which made everything more chilling, as Evie was in a coma for most of it! Rachel had a lot going on at once, and dealing with the aftermath of her sister's accident definitely didn't make any of it any easier. The choices she needed to make were still there, but everything got an urgent feel to them, and she was unable to fully trust her instincts and her gut-feeling because she was so worried about Evie.

As the story of Sisters and Lies unfolded, the readers were brought into the sisters' past as well as sharing their present with them. I enjoyed getting to know both Evie and Rachel, and especially Evie's past made me want to bring her into a soft embrace and hug away all her hurt and sadness. Rachel's present was tough to read about as well, as she was having a lot of success in her professional life as a writer, but not so much in her personal life, as her marriage was falling apart. Added to all that stress was the fact that she had to stay in London to be able to visit Evie every day, and that instead of Janet, Evie's roommate, there was a guy living in Evie's apartment. A boyfriend she had never heard about. A boyfriend who thought Evie was an only child.

While still in a coma, Evie was trying to piece things together, just as Rachel was in the world of the living. But she was unable to find any help - the police thought Evie had tried to commit suicide, the boyfriend had no idea what was going on, and Janet hadn't seen Evie in months. But Rachel was sure there was more to the accident than what the police thought - there were too many things not adding up about Evie's secrecy between the boyfriend and the rest of her life.

Well written, Sisters and Lies kept me engaged from start to finish, and I found Evie's point of view to bring so much to the story, even if she was static, just sharing her thoughts. And I especially loved the strong bond between two sisters who thought the other didn't really like them all that much.

*Evie, my beautiful mixed-up Evie. How the hell could this have happened? But then it dawned on me. This day had been coming for a long time. Had, perhaps, always been coming. And I had done nothing to prevent it.*

*"The truth will come out, Rachel. It always does."*

*"Hmm," I said half-heartedly, as she headed for the door. To be perfectly honest, I never found that to be the case.*

*The trouble was we still loved each other. But, as the cliché goes, we wanted different things. To be specific, Jacob wanted a baby. He hadn't always wanted one. Before we'd got married, I'd explained that I didn't want children and he'd been fine with that. "You're all I'll ever want," he'd said, and I'd believed him.*

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## **Margaret Madden says**

4.5 stars

A phone call we all dread. Someone you love has been in an accident and clings on to life in a hospital bed. A heart-stopping moment that usually leads to unanswered questions, uncovered secrets and discovery of truths.

Rachel and Evie are sisters, but have not much in common. Rachel is a successful, published author while Evie is stuck in a mind-numbing office based job, with no prospects. When Rachel receives a call from the police telling of her sister's accident, she begins a journey that unfolds in a way she never could have anticipated. Evie is trying to warn her sister of hidden dangers but is trapped in an unresponsive body. She can hear people visiting her in her hospital room, she even sense their presence when they don't speak, but she cannot do the one thing she wants to do. She cannot protect herself or her sister...

This is Bernice Barrington's debut novel and it starts with a bang. Rachel's story is revealed from the start, with day by day accounts of her quest to find out the truth about Evie's accident. Meanwhile, the reader is drip-fed Evie's side of the story. She has a hidden life. Her boyfriend knows nothing about her sister, her sister knows nothing about a boyfriend. Why the need for secrecy?

She is in a coma, yet her mind is frustratingly fine. She fills in the gaps for the reader but not enough for us to gain full insight. It's a clever approach, as the tension continues to build at a steady pace. The reader is collecting nuggets of information at a slightly different angle to Rachel and this leads to more twists in the narrative. Neither of the girls are perfect. Rachel leans towards the condescending, self-absorbed, while Evie is equally flawed with her motivations lacking in common sense. There are moments when I felt frustrated with the main protagonists, almost shouting at them like at a pantomime. They both had elements of sassiness (more Rachel than Evie) but then their random innocence seeped through. This was semi-believable in the case of Evie, but not so much for Rachel. She deserved more credit with obvious intelligence. But, for all this nit-picking, I really enjoyed this debut. It is a perfect example of the 'Grip-Lit' genre that is riding high in the fiction bestseller lists, worldwide. The story is one that connects from the first page, the intrigue is present throughout and the thrills are ever-increasing. This is an ideal read for fans of Girl on a Train. A page-turner that may have you shouting (in your head, I hope. Especially on public transport.) one minute and biting your nails the next. A strong debut, from a new Irish voice...

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## **Helen Carolan says**

this is a storyline that's been done many times before and much better. Rachel comes to London after sister Evie is injured in a crash. Que lots of secrets and a mysterious boyfriend and an ending that I guessed at the very start. This was pretty bad. I will not be reading anymore of this author anytime soon

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### **Karen says**

Sisters Rachel and Evie are not as close as they could be, especially following their mother's death and it is only after Evie is involved in a car crash and lying in a coma that Rachel realises there is so much about her sister's life that she doesn't know. The more she delves into Evie's life, the more lies and secrets she uncovers – it was unclear whether Evie was even driving the car at the time. Nobody seems to know what happened and the police seem to be unconcerned about any suspicious circumstances.

Whilst Rachel is trying to find out what really happened, Evie, from her hospital bed, is desperately trying to recall her memories of the time leading up to her accident; she may be unable to speak or to move but she can sense people around her, hear conversations and is alert to danger. Gradually, from seeing past and present events from both points of view, we get a more rounded and detailed insight into Evie's life and the suspense builds up.

The two sisters have very different personalities and both have their personal issues to deal with. I found myself becoming more sympathetic to Evie, being the more fragile and vulnerable of the two. Rachel was capable and very determined in her quest to find out the truth, although there was something about her manner that grated on me a little, she seemed too quick to jump to conclusions and didn't give people the chance to explain.

This was a very intriguing and accomplished debut from Bernice Barrington. Having Evie narrate her own story, albeit whilst comatose, actually works quite well and although there are times when the story slows a little, the suspense still builds up as I wondered exactly what was going on in Evie's life and who was telling the truth. I had my suspicions about certain people but with each new reveal and twist I kept changing my mind.

A very enjoyable and tense read that kept the suspense going right up to the very end. Bernice Barrington is certainly an author to look out for in future and I look forward to reading more.

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### **Louise says**

I got an 'advance review copy' of *Sisters & Lies* and overall I enjoyed this novel. It was a book that I kept going backwards and forward on. This debut definitely shows promise. It was at times page turning and enjoyable. The characters of both sisters overlapped a little, and the story could have been told in a shorter frame with less repetition, but that goes down to editing. I would certainly read another book by this author as there were good things there, which is why I've given this novel a four stars.

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### **Lynn McCarthy says**

The Characters in this book were well thought out.

Rachel's sister is in a coma following an accident the police seem to think it was an attempted suicide she drove into a wall at speed and the weather was good.

While Evie is lying in a coma she tries to warn her sister of hidden dangers she can hear people in the room

but can not protect herself or her sister.

Rachel tries to piece things together but nothing makes sense.

Good book full of twists and suspense good ending also.

Thank you Netgalley the Author and publisher for a chance to read this book.

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### **Dem says**

Sisters and Lies by Bernice Barrington was an enjoyable read with a good, if not original, storyline. Contains loads of suspense, family drama's, mystery but just too repetitive at times and a little bit too twee. The characters are well drawn but I found Rachel in particular a very frustrating character. A successful career person who was well travelled, determined and very capable yet on the other hand, made ridiculous hasty decisions and buried her head in the sand for most of the story.

Overall I enjoyed the read and a good debut novel by Bernice Barrington.

I look forward to future Novels by this author.

*My thanks to Penguin Books for the opportunity to read this Novel in return for an honest review.*

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### **Trish at Between My Lines says**

This review was originally posted on [Between My Lines]

Green Giants is my feature where I share some of my favourite books by Irish Authors. I'm passionate about Irish Authors, they supply us with an entertaining and exciting mix of books, hopefully you will find something new to try. Today I'm featuring **Sisters and Lies by Bernice Barrington** which kept me up late reading and reading until I had uncovered every last twist!

**Sisters and Lies** was a well-paced book set around two sisters who don't know each other half as well as they think they. I always love books set around family dynamics as there is so much to relate to and add in some toxic elements and I'm sold! That's pretty much the premise here and I was glued to it!

**First Line of Sisters and Lies by Bernice Barrington:**

“Afterwards, everything she had done made sense.”

### **My Thoughts on Sisters and Lies by Bernice Barrington:**

From the very start, this book has an uneasy feel. Evie is in a coma in London and Rachel flies to her side from Dublin in a panic. But it's all very troubling, as she finds that Evie has a boyfriend her sister never knew about and he didn't know that Evie had a sister. The circumstances leading to Evie's accident are as clear as mud and it's all adding up to something very wrong.

It's told in dual POV – from Rachel's point of view after the accident and from Evie's point of view mid-coma but reflecting back on the events that led to this point. I was so hooked and couldn't wait to unravel it all. I felt I guessed 'the who' early on but I really wanted to know the motive and that kept me in suspense for most of the book.

I also felt that even though I suspected whodunit, that the lines were blurred enough that I could easily have been wrong. So I enjoyed guessing and second guessing myself. I also really enjoyed the character development in both sisters. I could understand what drove them both as their back stories were well-rounded and believable.

Overall with lots of manipulation, lots of intrigue and characters that crawl into your psyche and make you want to uncover everything, this is getting a huge thumbs up from me. It's an impressive first novel and I look forward to reading more books by Bernice Barrington in the future.

### **Who should read Sisters and Lies by Bernice Barrington?**

I'd recommend this to you if you like psychological thrillers in a domestic setting. Also recommended for anyone who loves reading about family dynamics (especially sisters) and for those who love seeing just why a character is the way they are. It should also appeal to fans of Liane Moriarty, Melissa Hill, Tina Seskis and S J Watson.

Thanks to Penguin Ireland for giving me a copy of this book in exchange for an honest, unbiased review.

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**Talk to Trish: I love books about sisters as it's such a relatable theme. What is your favourite family dynamic to read about?**

### **Liz Barnsley says**

Sisters and Lies is a great combination of family drama, mystery and romance – the mystery element feeding into the rest, with some great characters and an intriguing vibe throughout.

Rachel is desperately trying to uncover the truth behind the accident that put her Sister into a coma –

meanwhile in the hospital, Evie is alert within her own mind and struggling to make sense of it herself..

There is a lovely flow to this – as we hear from both Rachel and Evie, start to understand something of their personalities, it is compelling stuff – and as to the main plot, that which may or may not have happened to Evie, this unfolds at a great pace and allows the author to explore themes of bullying, mental health and family dynamic.

I liked the romantic elements – the things that set Rachel at odds with her husband, the way Evie feels about herself that flows out into all her relationships – the mix of this type of drama on top of a “whodunnit” if indeed anybody did, makes for a great read.

Overall another highly readable, engaging tale focusing on sisters – one that I would recommend.

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### **Suze Lavender says**

Rachel and Evie grew up in Ireland, but Evie is now living in London. When Rachel gets a phone call from the police she travels there straight away. Evie crashed her boyfriend's car and is now in a coma. Only Evie doesn't drive and Rachel thought she was single. Slowly she starts to retrace her sister's steps. She tries to find out more about her sister's life, so she can discover the cause of the crash. Evie had a lot of secrets and Rachel wonders how well she actually knows her sister. What happened to Evie and will she ever wake up to tell the story?

Sisters and Lies is a gripping story about two sisters who are very different. Rachel is the pretty, confident sister who knows what she's doing. Evie is insecure about her looks, about her talents and about relationships. They are beautiful women, inside and out. I loved how Bernice Barrington gives both of them a distinct and equally compelling voice. I'm a big fan of stories about sisters and this is a really good one. Rachel and Evie are intriguing main characters. Their relationship is interesting, they have plenty of secrets, but they've also got a close connection. Their thoughts and feelings are being described in a vivid way. There's a lot of depth and I loved peeling off the numerous fascinating layers.

Sisters and Lies is a thrilling story. I felt like I needed to be on my guard the whole time I was reading. I didn't want to miss one single detail and I kept having the feeling that something was about to happen. There are many fabulous twists and turns and Bernice Barrington managed to surprise me plenty of times. The story is fast-paced and it kept me on the edge of my seat from beginning to end. The ending is great and fitting. I enjoyed reading this fantastic and fascinating thriller very much and highly recommend it.

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### **Renita D'Silva says**

Poignant and heartbreaking

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### **Chava says**

Too long and the audiobook wasn't great quality

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### **sue says**

The story in this book is a well thought out plot, its full of suspense, mystery and family drama, however, the downside to me was the repetitiveness of some things that did grate on my nerves at times as I saw no need to keep going over the same things, a reader has the vision and memory to remember such events or happenings, afterall, reading is about memory.

That being said, the characters in this book were strong, well thought out and developed and the author did a fantastic job in making them appear real to me.

Rachel's sister is in a coma following an 'accident' and certain events that happen within the story just doesn't compute with Rachel so she is determined to uncover the truth. Whereupon she also finds out the her sisters life is totally different to what shes been told.

On the whole this was a great interesting read for me.

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\* Thanks to Penguin Books (UK) via net galley for keeping me entertained\*

### **Clare says**

Listened to in audio format.

Author Rachel Darcy had just returned to Ireland after a book tour. Hours later she found out her younger sister Evie who lived in London had crashed her car and was now in a coma.

When Rachel arrived in London she expected to stay in the house Evie shared with her best friend Janet. Rachel was shocked to find Janet no longer lived there and had been replaced by Rachel's new boyfriend entrepreneur Donnagh Flood.

Rachel had only been out of the country for a few weeks and Rachel never mentioned she had a new boyfriend. She spoke to Janet and found out that she moved out after Evie made a pass at her boyfriend whilst drunk. Janet painted a picture that was unlike the Evie she knew. This 'other' Evie took drugs and drank heavily and was extremely hedonistic. Rachel was worried that things don't add up and decided to investigate what happened to Evie whilst she was away.

Meanwhile Evie was comatose but knew Rachel was there and was trying to speak her. From the POV of Evie she described how she was bullied by one particular boy at school which still affected her self esteem. Evie described meeting Donnagh and how their relationship developed and finally her car accident.

I really enjoyed this story and I liked the parallel story of the breakup of Rachel and Jacobs marriage. I liked

Evie but I didn't like Rachel who I thought was aggressive and a little balshy. Although the reader was partly privy to the full story I still wasn't sure who to trust. The finale of the story was gripping I was not expecting what happened. I highly recommend this book, I was sad Bernice has not had any other books published since.

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