

Good Me Bad Me

Reading Group Guide

Welcome to the Reading Group Guide for *Good Me Bad Me*. Please note: In order to provide reading groups with the most informed and thought-provoking questions possible, it is necessary to reveal important aspects of the plot of this novel—as well as the ending. If you have not finished reading *Good Me Bad Me*, we respectfully suggest that you may want to wait before reviewing this guide.

1. *Good Me Bad Me* is narrated by fifteen-year-old Milly. Discuss her voice. Why do you think the author chose to write the book in this style?
2. Milly is placed in a foster family that, on paper, looks ideal but behind closed doors is anything but. Is there such a thing as a normal family? Are the Newmonts “normal”? Do you think a different foster family would have changed who Milly became? Was it the right decision to place Milly in foster care or should she have remained in a secure, psychiatric unit—and for how long? Forever?
3. Why do you think the author chose a female serial killer who is also a mother? Are bad women somehow worse than bad men?
4. Milly strikes up a friendship with a younger, vulnerable girl named Morgan. Discuss their relationship. There’s a scene in Milly’s bedroom where she’s tempted to harm Morgan but doesn’t. What does that tell you about Milly, and why was Morgan an important relationship for her to experience?
5. *Lord of the Flies* is referenced a number of times in *Good Me Bad Me* and particularly in the school scenes. Do you think the prevalence of mobile phones and social media has made school a more savage place? Had it been a mixed school, both boys and girls, do you think Milly would still have been subjected to such brutal bullying?

6. Phoebe is painted as the bad cop in the book. To what extent could you say she is also the product of her mother? Was she justified in her feelings toward Milly? Are there similarities between the two girls, and what do you think would have happened if they'd teamed up instead of going head to head?
7. Milly testified in court against her mother but she didn't have to; she could have given evidence by a video link. Should she have been allowed to take the stand? Should any minor be allowed to? Why did she want to, need to, do this?
8. Following the court case, Milly makes a devastating confession to the reader about Daniel. Were you shocked by her confession? Did it make you feel differently about her?
9. Mike is a skilled psychologist and spent the most time with Milly, yet he missed what was going on between Phoebe and her. Or did he? How much did he choose to ignore the tension in his household so he could fulfill his own goals and have access to Milly's mind? Do you hold him at all responsible for what happened at the end of the book?
10. What scared you the most in *Good Me Bad Me*?
11. The nature/nurture debate rages on. Are there particular points you think the author is trying to make about this debate? Has reading this book changed your opinion on nature versus nurture?
12. Compare how you felt about Milly at the beginning of the book with how you feel about her at the end. Both the opening and closing lines of the book are "Forgive me." Does she need forgiveness? Do you forgive her? The ending was deliberately ambiguous; what do you see for her future?