

Lois Duncan's "Killing Mr. Griffin" was an interesting read. Throughout the story, I found myself excited to turn the pages and find out what happened to the characters. However, the ending fell flat and read like a rushed exit.

The story's plot revolves around Susan McConnell, Betsy Cline, David Ruggles, Jeff Garrett, and Mark Kinney. They are high school students who plot to kidnap and manipulate their strict and unforgiving teacher Mr. Griffin. The students succeed in capturing Mr. Griffin and take him into the desolate mountains outside of town. They leave him tied up in the wilderness without his medication and he dies from a heart attack. The students go through numerous challenges to keep their sin hidden from their families and the world, but they are of course found out in the end.

The beginning and the middle of the book had a driving plot that kept me entertained. I felt compelled to read more and more about these psychopaths, hoping they got caught. However, the ending was lackluster and paled in comparison to the rest of the book. It lessened the impact of the characters' actions and left me unsatisfied.

The fates of the teens are reduced to a single, vague paragraph. The ending focuses mostly on the lead Susan, who is left emotionless because of her trauma. The criminal trials of the teens are mentioned, but quickly dismissed, simply for the sake of putting a period at the end of the story. I had feverishly followed these characters who had done so much and struggled through so many challenges while they developed and grew together. All of that depth was taken away by the abbreviated ending that left me wishing there was more. Overall, the story was amazing and tense, and would have been all the better with a more fleshed out epilogue.

Author Lois Duncan was born on April 28th, 1934 and died June 15th, 2016. She was well known throughout her career as a writer and poet. Other books of hers, some of which have been made into movies, include "I Know What You Did Last Summer", "Down a Dark Hall", and the true crime novel "Who Killed My Daughter?," about the mysterious murder of her 18-year old child.

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