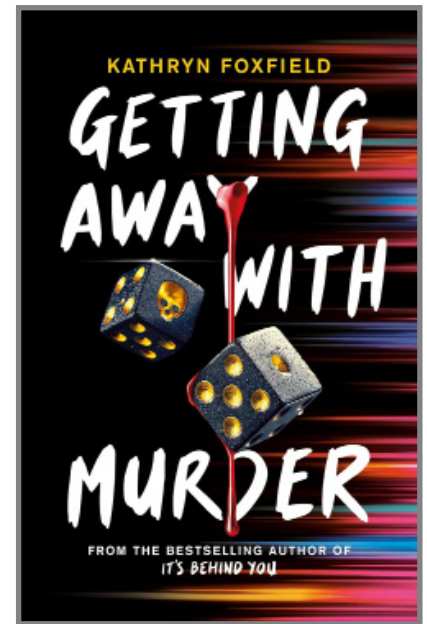


# Getting Away With Murder

AUTHOR

**KATHRYN FOXFIELD**



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**RECOMMENDED FOR:** Mid to Upper Secondary  
(Violence, Language)

## SYNOPSIS

Walking disaster Saffron and her perfectionist twin sister Georgia have only one thing in common—they are both obsessed with battle royale video game *Sole Survivor*.

While working at a brand new, high tech escape room complex, Saffron poses a question to the resident AI: which high school stereotype would survive the longest in a real life version of *Sole Survivor*? She is convinced a rebel like her would beat a know-it-all like Georgia. Unbeknown to her, the AI decides to determine the answer to her question by testing it out for real. It invites Saffron and Georgia's gamer friends to a preview of the escape rooms, but then it locks the doors and turns the rooms into a life-or-death battle to be the last player standing.

The rebel, the know-it-all, the princess, the jock, the geek, the weirdo, the star, the artist and the criminal. Just like in *Sole Survivor*, only one can survive the night . . .

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kathryn Foxfield writes dark books about strange things. She blames her love of the creepy and weird on a childhood diet of Point Horror, Agatha Christie and Dr Who. She writes about characters who aren't afraid to fight back, but wouldn't last 5 minutes in one of her own stories. Her first book *Good Girls Die First* was published by Scholastic UK in 2020.

Kathryn is a reformed microbiologist, one-time popular science author, cat-servant and parent of two. She lives in rural Oxfordshire but her heart belongs to London.

You can follow her on Twitter [@iloveweirdbooks](https://twitter.com/iloveweirdbooks) or visit her website [kfoxfield.com](http://kfoxfield.com).

## STUDY NOTES

- Before reading the story, as a class, discuss the book cover and title. Some things to include in your discussion could be:
  - What are the different elements that you can see in the cover artwork?
  - What does the combination of the cover artwork and the title tell you about the story?
  - What genre do you think this novel is likely to be, and why do you think this?
  - What types of events do you predict are likely to occur in this novel?

- How would you describe the cover artist's choice of colours?
- What is your emotional knee-jerk response to the cover artwork? What aspect/s of it do you think are the ones which trigger this response in you?
- After reading the first couple of chapters, as a class, discuss which character you think would be the most likely to survive a real-world version of the game.
- When Saffron and the others play *Sole Survivor* together, Saffron consistently changes Georgia's user name. What are some other user names that you think Saffron would be happy to choose for Georgia, given the state of their relationship at the start of the novel?
  - If you were going to play *Sole Survivor* with Saffron, Georgia, and the others, what user name would you choose for yourself and why?
- What information do the different user names chosen by the teenagers provide to the reader (and to the other characters) about how each of them perceives themselves? Do you think that the impression given of each character by their choice of user name is accurate? Why/why not and in what ways? Choose one of the characters in the novel, and write a brief analysis of how their choice of user name both highlights and conceals different aspects of their personality, attitude, personal history and behaviours.
- Design and colour an alternative cover for the novel. Be sure to consider the impact of your choice of colour palette, font, and design elements on the reader.
- Which is your favourite character in the novel, and why do you enjoy them and their behaviour the most? Would you actually enjoy spending time with them if they were a real person? Why/why not?
- Saffron says that everything you need to know about a person can be gleaned from how they play *Sole Survivor*. What does the opening in-game scene tell us about Saffron? What does it tell us about the other characters, and how much of what it says about them turns out to be comprehensive or accurate?
- When did you first realise what was going to happen to the teenagers?
- The converted bunker is 20,000 square metres in area. Compare this area to the size of your school and grounds to provide you with an idea of just how large it actually is.
- If you were given an empty bunker like the one that *Play a Game* is built in, what would you do with it or build inside it? In small groups, brainstorm as many different ideas as to what interesting and appropriate purposes such a space could be put to. As a class, share your ideas with each other, then individually write a short story set inside a repurposed bunker.
- On a scale of funny to cruel, how bad is it for Saffron to have created and posted the video of her reading Georgia's diary aloud? Why does Saffron refuse to take this video down, and how has having it up and people still viewing it affected Georgia and her day to day life?
- Why do you think that Millie didn't go to the police when she first started to receive threatening messages? What should someone do if this sort of thing happens to them? As a class, discuss the different ways that we can and should react if we ever receive threatening voice messages, text messages or DMs, emails, or letters. In small groups, create an advisory poster sharing the conclusions and advice from your class discussion, and place it in the hallway, foyer, or other public area for everyone to read.
- Millie says on p 61 that "Saffron's pranks aren't my thing." Do you think that anyone other than Saffron really enjoys Saffron's pranks? Why/why not? Do you think that whether or not someone enjoys them might be entirely dependent on whether they are a victim of one of her pranks, or a co-perpetrator with Saffron? As a class, discuss what makes something a prank, and if so and how pranks can be differentiated from bullying, cruelty and teasing.
  - Individually, write an analysis of Saffron's pranks as demonstrated within the events in the novel, discussing where Saffron draws the line between acceptable prank, and excessive bullying. Be sure to comment on why Saffron thinks that her actions are justified, and whether you think that Saffron fully understands the emotional impact of her actions on others. Include evidence from the text to support your assertions.
- Individually, in pairs or small groups, create a visual representation of the different story arcs and personal mysteries that are uncovered or revealed over the course of the novel. You might like your visual representation to take the form of a web of intersecting lines, a character map showing the interactions between the others, a timeline noting when and to whom different aspects of the various characters are revealed, a combination of all of these, or some

other visual depiction of the various plot points and how they interrelate and shape character perceptions of each other as the narrative unfolds.

- What is the most surprising fact about each of the characters?
- Choose one character, and write an analysis of all the different ways in which they both do and don't fit their nominated stereotype.
- What are some of the limitations of relying on stereotypes when considering the motivations and character of others? Discuss this topic in the context of the statement 'Stereotypes conceal as much as they reveal.'
- What was the most surprising aspect of how the novel ended? Why did it surprise you, and what had you expected to happen instead?

AUTHOR OF NOTES  
**RAE CARLYLE**