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The Seeing

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~~Editor's Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

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Set in 1956, this bleak, edgy story is reminiscent of William Trevor's novel **Children of Dymouth**. Once again the setting is a seaside town after the war within which a dangerously disturbed older child gains dominance over a contemporary unable to escape from the psychological trap they find themselves caught up in. Only Trevor does it all so much better. Diana Hendry is also a good writer, but her plot becomes increasingly hard to believe. Time becomes oddly compressed, with people chased out of the town by the poison pen letters planted on them by Natalie and Lizzie ? the two girls in question ? in a matter of a few days. Their campaign arises from Natalie's belief that the town is full of left-over Nazis from the last war based in turn on her conviction that evil never stops. Her neglected younger brother Philip is her seer in all this, apparently adept at spotting secret Nazis but in reality simply reacting to the pressure his demented sister is bringing on him. Throw in Natalie's prostitute mother and a visiting artist who has lost relatives in Auschwitz and the result is an omelette far too over-loaded with eggs for its own good. Hendry has previously won the Whitbread Prize with her sprightly novel [Harvey Angell](#) [4]. This latest, extremely chilling offering may still gain readers, but less plotting would have made it so much better a book.

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