



# All My Secrets

Books Reviewed:

[All My Secrets](#) [1]

Issue:

[213](#) [2]

Reviewer:

[Val Randall](#) [3]

~~Editor's Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

4

Evie Brown's life is turned upside down when a solicitor unexpectedly visits her home to inform her that she is to be the recipient of a £10 million inheritance from the mother she did not know she had. Her sense of betrayal is overwhelming: she cannot understand why her father has allowed her to live a lie. Unable to understand that he made the decision to lie in order to protect her and give her a stable and loving home life, she turns to the internet to learn more about her mother, idealising her in the process.

When she discovers that she has an uncle Gavin, she determines to run away from home and go and find him in order to learn more about her mother and escape what she feels is an intolerable situation at home. Her desperate need to make sense of the upheaval she has just experienced and her refusal to enter into any sort of dialogue with her parents make her extremely vulnerable and over-trusting of those who claim they will protect her. Therefore, when her uncle recommends to her parents that Evie might benefit from a month's stay in a specialist facility for troubled teenagers on the remote and forbidding island of Lightsea - which, he claims, is run by a man who knew her mother in his youth - she is keen to take up the suggestion.

The reader is repeatedly reminded of Evie's vulnerable state - and of the £10 million inheritance, which predictably attracts unscrupulous characters. When Evie is drawn first to one, then another of the boys on the island, McKenzie manipulates the reader's response - and we are invited to consider staff in the same way. Our belief about who is to be trusted wavers and changes, just as Evie's does.

The narrative provides a mixture of mystery, fast-paced action and romance - and the obligatory heart-warming ending. It addresses some of the classic problems which teenagers face - trust, alienation, confusion about identity - and presents them in a package likely to appeal to those who like their reading to be cinematic and larger than life.

---

**Source URL (retrieved on Sep '19):** <http://booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/213/childrens-books/reviews/all-my-secrets>

**Links:**

[1] <http://booksforkeeps.co.uk/childrens-books/all-my-secrets>

[2] <http://booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/213>

[3] <http://booksforkeeps.co.uk/member/val-randall>