The Murder of Bindy MacKenzie

Cassandra Fugal

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Reviewer: Cassandra Fugal
Reading Level: Young adult
Rating: Dependable
Genre: Fiction;
Subject: High schools--Juvenile fiction; Interpersonal relations--Juvenile fiction; Australia--Juvenile fiction; Books--Reviews

*The Murder of Bindy MacKenzie*, like Moriarty's previous two novels (*Feeling Sorry for Celia* and *Year of Secret Assignments*), is written entirely through transcripts, diary entries, emails, notes, and letters. Bindy at least in her eyes, is the most perfect girl at Ashbury High. She scores in the 99th percentile of all her classes, holds seminars to help her fellow students, keeps typed transcripts of everything that happens around her (she is also the fastest typist at school) and is one of the kindest students at Ashbury. That all changes at the beginning of Year 11 when she learns at her Friendship and Development (FAD) class that no one likes her. Now Bindy want revenge on her FAD classmates.

The story starts out rather tediously, as reading through her transcripts and diary entries reveal her to be arrogant, self-centered and without any social skills. Her quirky personality soon comes through and draws the reader into Bindy's far from perfect life. As the book progresses and her attempts at revenge hilariously fail to offend her fellow students, it becomes obvious that something is seriously wrong with Bindy: her increasingly lower test scores don’t seem to worry her, she refuses to go to the doctor despite being constantly ill. Is she just physically ill or is she mentally ill - or, as her FAD classmates suggest, is someone trying to kill her? While the climax of the book seems a bit far-fetched, the story is funny, a little bittersweet, and very entertaining.