



Cruel to Be Kind

Cathy Glass

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Cruel To Be Kind is the true story of Max, aged 6. He is fostered by Cathy while his mother is in hospital with complications from type 2 diabetes. Fostering Max gets off to a bad start when his mother, Caz, complains and threatens Cathy even before Max has moved in. Cathy and her family are shocked when they first meet Max. His social worker has failed to mention that he is chronically obese; it's not politically correct. But his social worker isn't the only one in denial; his whole family are too.

Cruel to Be Kind Details

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From Reader Review Cruel to Be Kind for online ebook

Aveen says

I always enjoy Cathy's books but this one didn't leave me feeling the same as others. The story follows a young boy who is brought into care after being left home alone by his older siblings when his mother was in hospital. The child and his family have weight issues and as someone who has struggled her whole life with this myself, I did find that Cathy came across as very judgemental, whilst seemingly trying not to be. The story was very much about how the child kept wanting to eat and how she had to stop him - which yes, I think was in his best interests but it came across condescending in many ways. I will put it this way... I was thinking....so if Cathy Glass ever met me, she wouldn't see me as the person I am but would be having a dialogue in her mind about my weight being unhealthy. This is seen even years later when the young boy visits her and shows pictures of his sisters and she comments on all their weight losses or issues sort like - oh they are still fat...at least that is how it came across.

Sharfina Kiasati says

It's such a heartbreaking story! I couldn't stop crying on the last few chapters. I'm speechless, dunno what to say. This book is really great. I'm truly deeply in love with this book. This is kind of story you must read. I'm amazed with what Cathy has done. Can't wait to read another book by her! She's so inspiring! Love it!

Marcia Bourgeois says

Plainly written story of s foster mother and son in the UK and their struggles.

Stacie Moore says

although i'm a big lover of cathy glasses books was abit disappointed by the repetative storyline ?

kim lidgard says

A emotional story

Wow what a read I couldn't put it down once I started it, personally recommend this book. An emotional read ?

Diane says

Cathy came across as smug and patronising in this book. She made me cringe with her ignorance and prejudice attitude towards those of us who struggle with food and weight. I also didn't believe a lot of the story and in fact.. I felt as though the whole book was fictional.

Edel Ryder-hanrahan says

The writing style isn't the best in the world, but it mainly stays out of the way of the story, which is why you'd read this in the first place.

Kelly Long says

Another wonderful yet heartbreaking book by foster carer Cathy Glass. 5+ stars.

Jenny Cooper says

Cathy is a foster carer who writes books which tell the true stories of the children who come to stay with her. This particular book is about Max, a remarkably serene 6-year old child who comes from a troubled background and needs some respite care.

I was really looking forward to this book as I have read books by other foster carers in the past and have found them to be both fascinating and inspiring. On some levels this book did not disappoint. Max's story was a very interesting, if difficult one and despite the heartbreaking details which were revealed about his background and home life, he remained stalwart throughout and coped with everything that was thrown in his direction with astonishing composure. One particularly nice touch is that we hear what happens to him later on in life, many years after the time frame in which this story is set, and this is a really nice addition to the story as that information is often not available.

However, I was disappointed with various other aspects of the book. I don't know if it was a typical Cathy Glass book as I have not read any others but I had a problem with her attitude to so many things. Max was undoubtedly overweight and this seemed to be a huge issue for Cathy herself, who became almost obsessed with it. She also frequently came across as being both patronising and condescending, and seemed naïve on occasions, often saying things along the lines of "surely his Mother would..." when it was quite obvious that actually his Mother wouldn't. My final criticism (and I realise that I am sounding like a moaning nitpicker here – sorry about that) is that there is too much detail and too much repetition. For example, when Cathy puts the children in the car, do we really need to know that she checks that their seatbelts are securely fastened – and not just once, but on various occasions. There are quite a few similar examples which, unfortunately, gave me the impression that Cathy was more concerned with ensuring that readers thought that she was a good foster carer than she was about telling the child's story. Parts of the book did seem more like a manual for foster carers than the story of a disturbed little boy.

Based purely on this book, the only one I have read by this author, I would probably not go out of my way to read more by Cathy Glass in the future. This is purely a personal opinion but I think there are other authors out there who do a more sensitive job of writing about their experiences.

Suzanne says

Well done again Cathy glass this was a sad one

Jackie Wadsworth says

Max is 6 and is going to live with Cathy Glass, foster carer, because his mother is in hospital and his father isn't looking after him properly. For properly, read, at all.

I usually enjoy Cathy's books, but this one was annoying. Max was six, but he had conversations like he was 14. I don't know if Cathy paraphrases, but honestly, he was talking like a grown up at times, he did nothing but read in his room and eat.

The mother was the typical "don't tell me how to raise my son" type, it was all a bit cliched. Max is massively overweight when he arrives and Cathy naturally starts helping him to lose weight.

I just found it all a bit impossible. The conversations with little kids is just unlikely. I know kids can be really eloquent, even at a young age (I have one myself, he never stops talking), but this was unrealistic.

I was a bit disappointed, to be honest.

sue says

I have always been a fan of this ladies books and how she portrays herself, plus her experiences over the years with different children she has fostered and minded whilst that child's parent or parents were unable to do so for all sorts of reasons.

With Max, it was because his mother had to stay in hospital due to having two toes amputated. His older sisters were looking after him but they went out one night leaving him alone.

Max comes to your attention as a young pleasing polite boy who is only too ready to please, the most outstanding part of it all is he is obese and being so young wears clothes several years older than his age which have to be hemmed up.

His mother was only folding them up to fit him but Cathy when she had to buy some clothes for him to fit several years above what he needed for size, she actually sewed them up to fit him.

We learn from Cathy Glass there are many things a foster carer can and cannot do from her previous books on this but if you have not read one of her books before it will be explained however, if you have already read one of her books before, be alert to know she retells the do's and don't of foster care and making logs for health, school, care, appointments etc.

One thing stood out to me, the extend we are 'overtold' about Max weight. Although she played it down around the children and indeed Max himself, I felt the inner self of Cathy came out above and beyond what

was already apparent to us readers. That she was concerned about his health, of course, but also the way she pointed out his sisters were overweight too and the amount of sweets on the hospital bed, OK that was good but just a little too much on the emphasis for my personal taste.

But I later learnt why, the darkness in this story doesn't become apparent until much later on. It really hit me to the core because I've been fat all my life.

I have been overweight all my life and this touched several nerves.

Apart from that I did enjoy the story, but it did grate a bit, I think most of us readers can see that Max needed to get healthier. I admire Cathy for taking this seriously as when children are young they need to be taught, to be educated about nutritional values just as much as any maths, history or other lesson.

My thanks goes to Harper Element for providing me with my personal copy.

My review is entirely my own.

Bonnie says

I need to get more books like her's they were very good!!

Charlie ☆ WLTB Blog ☆ says

I love Cathy's books

I can't wait for more by Cathy

Bookread2day says

A must buy must read, to read as a reading day or part of a book club or If you are thinking of fostering children, Cathy Glass gives you the right information that you need. Fostering includes the whole family, so everyone has to be fully committed. Foster carers are required to keep a daily record of the child or children that you may be looking after. The daily log will include appointments the child's health and well-being, education, significant events and any disclosures the child may make about their past. When the child leaves the record you have made is placed on file of the social services. Many children who come into care have unsafe and dangerous behaviour because of their early experiences. The child's social worker will call round and usually wants to see the child alone incase there are any issues the child wants to raise and didn't feel comfortable mentioning in front of their carer.

Cruel To Be Kind is about Max a six-year-old boy that weighs eight stone where he movements have become restricted. His teeth are decaying and he has to wear age twelve year old clothes. Max an intelligent and charming boy is staying with foster carer Cathy Glass while his mother recovers in hospital after having two toes amputated. A must buy must read.

