



The Girl Next Door

Cynthia Eden

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He pledged to protect his neighbor, in New York Times bestselling author Cynthia Eden's Shadow Agents: Guts and Glory miniseries

When Gabrielle Harper's gutsy investigative reporting attracted a serial killer, her new neighbor began keeping an eye on her. But Cooper Marshall was more than his chiseled frame suggested. He was an Elite Operations Division specialist who thrived on adrenaline, who always took risks, whose every instinct was geared to protect. Even if it meant breaking cover. Gabrielle wasn't the sort to hole up in her Washington, D.C., walk-up, waiting to be the next victim. So when the time came, he'd throw her on the back of his motorcycle and ride with a vengeance to save her life. Until then, he'd watch and wait, and try not to get carried away with attraction to the girl next door....

The Girl Next Door Details

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From Reader Review The Girl Next Door for online ebook

Laylaw says

Another Cynthia Eden quick read for me. I always know what to expect from Ms. Eden, she is a fantastic story teller who always has you guessing who is the culprit behind the mystery. Each time you get a dangling carrot it is dragged away and replaced with reasonable doubt.

Tiny Shen ??? says

I am really enjoying this book. ???

Teri-K says

A romantic suspense story that managed to be pretty boring... I just couldn't bring myself to care about anyone in this book, there were no real connections between the characters and no sense of menace. The EOD people were supposed to be the best agents ever but they sure stumbled around a lot and took things for granted. And the heroine didn't work for me as a journalist or a MC. I kind of wished someone would put her in the hospital, the way she kept causing trouble and ignoring basic safety precautions. :)

Farah says

Definitely one of my favorites Oh Cooper I just might build a shrine for you or something yeah that's how much I liked the hero. The whole Mercer twist thing was a tearjerker and the villain was terrifying .. I'm glad he wasn't a character I happened to like. Time to jump right to the next one.

Anne says

Good romance suspense! I liked the characters and how they worked out the kinks in their relationship.

Danielle Gypsy Soul says

3.5 Stars. This is the 6th book in the Shadow Agent Series by Cynthia Eden. I've been skipping around in this series. I read the 1st and 5th books and now this one. I enjoyed this book, it's a good solid read. Nothing exceptional and I doubt I'd read it again but I did really enjoy it.

This book centers around Gabrielle a crime reporter and her neighbor, Cooper, who she thinks is a P.I. but is really a EOD agent. Cooper is undercover to catch a rogue EOD agent who is killing other agents and is the serial killer that Gabrielle is investigating. Gabrielle is a tenacious reporter with a lot of sources and when she uncovers some information that brings her to the attention of the killer. Gabrielle and Cooper both realize

she is the killer's next target and decide to work together so Cooper can protect her. Cooper wants to protect Gabrielle and keep her from exposing the EOD.

I liked both Gabrielle and Cooper, although I would have liked to know more about Cooper and why he was as closed off as he was before meeting Gabrielle. There were some hints to his character but I wanted more. Gabrielle was tough and smart. Once she realized she was in danger she reached out for help and she was incredibly loyal. The romance was hot and I enjoyed them together. The supporting characters were very interesting and in fact I really look forward to Rachel and Dylan's book.

Niquie says

3.5

This was a decent addition to the shadow agents series. Cooper who was introduced last book (and who is NOT Mercer's son) is the main lead and he's interested in his neighbor who happens to be a news reporter investigating a case EOD doesn't want her involved in. It was interesting how the dynamic changed in this book since Cooper had to hide his job from her and actively had to sabotage her investigation.

In fact I was enjoying this book until the latter half when Gabrielle finds out the truth about Cooper's job. But more on that later.

I liked Cooper, but I loved Gabrielle. Of course she had a tragic past that made her who she is, but she was so strong and kind. Her whole purpose was to give closure to the families of murder victims, and she was very good at her job. She managed to learn more about the killer than Cooper or EOD did (which is funny since the killer is a rogue EOD agent), but it made sense that she found what they didn't. She approached the investigation from a different place and when she and EOD combined their resources (sure she didn't know they were) they managed to figure out why the killer was doing what he was doing and who he is (okay that was just because he got impatient and went after Gabrielle and Cooper).

Cooper surprised me with how out of control his feelings for Gabby felt. He was constantly needing to be close to her and touch her and just his desire was so overwhelming and consuming. In comparison Gabby did not feel as strongly, she was more able to desire him but also function outside of wanting him. Not that Cooper couldn't do his job, just he was so aware of her. Part of this I blame on the fact that most of the time they got physical it was from Cooper's point of view, so the focus was usually on him.

It was after Gabrielle finds out the truth that I stopped enjoying the book as much. (Not sure if this counts as a spoiler.) Silly me, I thought that Gabrielle would be different, that she wouldn't react like other female leads have when they find out their lover is a secret agent with a job they can't reveal. But nope, she reacted the exact same way and even did that stupid thing they do where they run off even though they know their is danger. I'm not going to get into too much detail, but I was disappointed. Maybe her reaction was reasonable, maybe it wasn't, it's just I wish someone would react differently. It's frustrating and the scene with the killer didn't help. It wasn't a bad scene, just I'm not sure I believed (view spoiler).

I did love the scenes between Mercer and Cooper especially as you learn what Cooper really is to Mercer. That was nice.

Not sure what to think about characters being introduced with names like Deuce and Dragon.

Also the killer had to be crazy because his reason for killing was a serious case of misdirected anger.

The book ends with a bit of a cliff hanger. Cooper and Gabrielle's story is over, but another agents story is just beginning and since Eden doesn't have anything on her website indicating there will be another book in this series I'm concerned. Especially since she has written a book with three potential sequels before and not followed through (yeah I'm talking about Never Cry Wolf, she introduced three potential couples that could have gotten their own books and never did anything with them. So until she indicates on her website that there will be more books in this series the ending is just a tease of nothing.

EDIT: Amazon now has the next book in the series up! Evidence of Passion and it is Dylan and Rachel's story. Coming out August 1, 2014. Man Cynthia Eden is just knocking these out.

Griz Girl says

Cynthia Eden is an amazing author--who usually writes for "real" publishers...so it's surprising to find her writing little fluff books for Harlequin.

However--her stories are far from fluffy! This book is a fantastic continuation of her Shadow Agents series. It pulled together some loose ends and really made me love Cooper Marshall. A great hero matched up with a determined & smart heroine.

All in all, I have thoroughly enjoyed her series for HQN--don't be put off by the cheesy Harlequin covers or the small size! These stories pack a real punch...all in 219 pages. :)

Jessica says

I'm not a big fan of nosy reporter heroines but if done right I can find them likable, Gabrielle was not one of the likable ones. She annoyed me and made me see red a few times with how she threw herself in the middle of deadly investigations and possibly corrupting evidence. She knows how dangerous it is to investigate the murders and has the nerve to be shocked when she sees her home was broken into and that she's being monitored by the killer. Her whole role in trying to figure out who was killing these people was dumb, if she wants to get justice for victims she should have gone into law enforcement not journalism. Her job is to write about and report the news not looking for killers. She's got her professions mixed up and she's bound to get herself killed if she keeps doing what she's doing. Whereas law enforcement isn't in the spotlight, she's in the media and people know who she is, what she looks like, where to find her if she's getting close to helping solve a murder.

Cooper was alright but there was nothing special about him. He obviously felt bad for lying to her and there's no doubt in my mind that his first priority was to protect her above all. I just don't understand why he felt so much for her when he barely knew her. There wasn't really anything about her that stood out to me. I'm sure she did care about the murder victims to some extent but it seemed more like she wanted the story and attention than to get justice for them. He seemed to develop this bond with her over nothing. Their whole coupling kind of just bored me the whole time. I stopped reading the book so I could start this review as an excuse to take a break from it. The story, the characters, none of it interested me. I just wanted it to be done and over with. This is probably the most dull in the series so far and I will never pick it up again.

Pamela(AllHoney) says

Someone is killing people and reporter Gabrielle Harper is investigating. But Cooper Marshall of the secret Elite Operations Division is investigating too. And he needs to keep Gabrielle from learning too much.

It was just okay for me. I liked it enough to keep at it and it did entertain me but it just seemed to lack something.

Susan says

This sucked me in from the first page and didn't let go until I'd finished. Cooper was checking up on an ex EOD agent who had been out of contact for awhile. With agents being murdered his job was to warn them what was happening. In this case he was too late, arriving just after the man was killed. As he was investigating Gabrielle showed up and Cooper was barely able to escape without being seen. When she then showed up at yet another murder scene, Cooper realizes that she's investigating the same thing he is and it has put her in danger. He's determined to keep her safe even if he has to reveal some of his secrets. And it would be all too easy to do that as there is something about Gabrielle that is really messing with his focus.

I really liked Gabriella. She is determined, focused, and very smart. Because of the violent death of her father and the fact his killer had never been found, she uses her investigative powers to help the victims get justice. She had a relationship with a local cop that didn't work out, but she shares what she finds out with the cops to help them solve their cases. She figured out a connection between murdered women and the agents (though she didn't know they were agents) that Cooper and the EOD hadn't because she was looking at a different angle. All she knew about Cooper at first was that he was there when she needed him. When she started receiving threatening calls and attacks, she asked for his help in keeping her safe. She begins to trust him as she goes about checking out leads for her story. There's also an intense attraction between them that is trying to distract her. I loved her focus and the way she wasn't going to let anything stop her from finding out what she needed to know. She knows Cooper is hiding something from her and when she finds out what it is there is a certain amount of betrayal in what she feels. I loved the way she stood up to everyone at the EOD office, including Mercer. I liked seeing her give Cooper the chance to talk to her about his past as things started spinning rapidly toward the conclusion, and she realized that a lot of her anger toward him was because of the way she felt about him.

Cooper really surprised me when it came to Gabrielle. When we met him in the previous book he was the typical agent - cool, in control and ready to do whatever necessary to get the job done. In this book there are definitely cracks in that exterior. He has been frustrated by his inability to warn the agents in time to save them. Finding Gabrielle in the middle of both scenes wasn't doing anything for his peace of mind. He is also under orders to keep her from finding out about the EOD, though that doesn't work too well. He's pretty impressed by what she has found out so far. When she becomes the victim of several attacks his protectiveness ramps up. I really enjoyed his confusion over the way that she has got him wound up. He is not used to feeling so out of control around a woman and isn't so sure he likes it. As much as he'd like to lock her up to keep her safe, he knows that's not possible. I liked seeing the way that he supports her with what she needs to do with her job even though it's really hard for him. There was a great conversation with Mercer that really opened his eyes to what he was feeling and doing. The final confrontation put the finishing touches on them. There was a nice twist at the end that had been hinted at during the end of the previous book and is fully explained by the end of this one.

I loved the suspense. From the beginning there was always something happening that added to the tension. It was interesting to see the two approaches to the investigation and how important Gabrielle's information turned out to be. I liked the bits of the story that were from the killer's point of view because we get a little of what is driving him. It also adds to the chance to figure out who he is. There were a couple possibilities and I was happy to see I had picked the right one. I'm really looking forward to the next one.

Saly says

Rating 3.5 stars

The heroine is a reporter with a nose and she lands into an investigation that could bring EOD to the forefront and it is the hero's job to stop her because there is a rogue EOD agent on the loose killing people. I really enjoyed the book, the heroine was damn smart and could ferret things out, while the hero didn't like deceiving her especially since he was falling for her. Overall I enjoyed the book a lot.

Dina says

3 1/2 stars (rounded down to 3 stars, because it was hard to believe that Gabrielle was smarter than all those EOD agents)

Bobby Underwood says

The Girl Next Door by Cynthia Eden is more than just a top-tier Mills & Boon Intrigue offering, but a very good little mystery/romance thriller on its own. The Mills & Boon Intrigue branding may be why many readers pick up this one, but were it missing those labels it would satisfy any reader's appetite for a lean-and-to-the-point, swiftly-moving romantic thriller. Coming in at 216 pages in my edition, few words were wasted as the author economically drives both the thriller elements and the romantic entanglement forward without sacrificing atmosphere. This makes it an enjoyable page-turner and easily outshines more ballyhooed books "supposedly" a cut above the Harlequin/Mills & Boon lines, which have their origins in the pulp stories of yesteryear.

This one takes place during summer in Washington, DC, and opens with a bang as EOD agent Cooper Marshall finds former agent Keith Lockwood with his throat slit. Enter reporter for the DC Inquisitor, Gabrielle Harper, walking right into the crime scene because of a tip. Cooper, her neighbor at a DC brownstone, can't let her know he arrived on the scene first, but also must contain the story. No one but a few know about the elite EOD, but the recent killings Gabrielle is investigating threaten to blow the lid on the most secretive of government agencies. Each of the victims is either directly connected to the EOD, or one of its operatives. It seems one of their own has gone rogue, and for some reason as yet unknown, he/she is killing his own. Cooper has to find the most deadly of killers before he/she blows the whole lid on the town, and exposes the EOD.

Gabrielle Harper had a visceral reaction to Cooper the first time she met him — when she brought him cookies as a housewarming gift — and that reaction was mirrored by Cooper. But as he tags along with her under the guise of friendly neighbor, wanting to keep her safe, he has to keep lying to the reporter, even thwarting her skilled efforts to get at the truth. And then the killer takes aim at the resourceful Gabrielle, and has her doubting who and what Cooper is, despite her heated attraction. When she finally gets the truth about

Cooper from her boss Hugh Keller, who covertly slips her the information even as he's headed for a forced vacation — Cooper's boss Bruce Mercer pulling strings — she naturally feels hurt and used. Cooper has no option but to bring her in for her own safety.

Yes, it sounds kind of routine, and perhaps even slightly cheesy, but to the author's credit it isn't. It's incredibly well done, laced with some exciting moments, some revelations, even some grit and a touch of real violence — but nothing too gory. The two sex scenes are handled fairly well, not being too graphic or unrealistic, and they don't slow the pace of the narrative in any way. The relationship and the background of the two leads, Cooper and Gabrielle, has just enough flesh and bones on it to make them, and the relationship, seem real. The story itself is tightly woven — even a bit more complex than expected once some side tangents are revealed near the end. Though I guessed the killer I wasn't 100% sure, because there were other ways it could have gone. Though there is a cornball moment when all is said and done that felt more at home in a Harlequin romance than an Intrigue offering, it didn't give me diabetes or anything.

All in all, this is just a terrifically entertaining read. Mills & Boon Intrigue fans who enjoy a bit more complexity and story to their thriller/romance will love this one, but it's good enough that I'd suggest it to those who don't normally read a Mills & Boon Intrigue. A swift and involving narrative that's hard to put down make this a fun little genre read. Highly recommended.

Ramblings From A Chaotic Mind says

Being neighbors with a P.I is finally starting to come in handy for Gabrielle. With a killer on the loose and her hot on his trail she may need some additional help. Getting that help from her hot neighbor is just icing on the cake as far as she's concerned. But she's smart and she knows Cooper is hiding something. Maybe more than his growing feelings for her.

Cooper isn't a P.I but he certainly can't tell Gabrielle he's actually a part of an elite block ops team trying to find a rogue agent that may have suddenly become fixated with her. Instead he'll do his best to keep his secrets under wraps while still protecting her. Gabrielle isn't like most females though, she's willing to walk right into trouble in order to get her story and justice for the killers victims. Keeping her out of harms way may be his toughest assignment yet.

I've loved this series since book one and The Girl Next Door wasn't any different! I found it to be typical of a Cynthia Eden book, and by that I mean top notch. Her characters are always engaging, the world building always complete and her vision becomes my own...every time.

I've enjoyed Cooper since he first turned up as a mystery a few books ago. He's kind of been on the sidelines, but always willing to jump in to help his fellow agents, even if they weren't aware he was there. With a rogue agent on the loose he knows he can't really trust anyone except maybe the head of their team, Mercer. When he's asked to keep his neighbor, a reporter, out of their hair he figures it should be an easy feat. Instead he finds out rather quickly that Gabrielle has no intention of letting these murders go unsolved. Instead she hires him to be her bodyguard, completely unaware of who he really is.

As Cooper helps her solve the murders while still keeping her out of harms way, and his secrets intact, he begins to fall for the tenacious woman. Her need to get justice for the victims pulls at his heartstrings and his boldface lies muddle his conscience. He hates lying to her but his conviction to his team trump his need to explain who he really is. When things heat up though and attempts on her life start, he has no choice but to come clean. Cooper is just an awesome character. His tough, smart and loyal...not to mention smoking hot and lethal to a womans panties.

Gabrielle is an amazing heroine because while she may be scared, her drive to solve the case spurs her on, even if it is dangerous. I love women who can stand strong in the face of danger. Eden excels at writing strong heroines and Gabrielle is just another example of that. She's tough but vulnerable. Loyal and full of conviction. And, the perfect other half to Cooper.

The Girl Next Door has plenty of action I've come to expect from Eden and it's short enough to devour in one afternoon (or for me a few hours because I refuse to move once I've started a Cynthia Eden book). It also continues the story line that's been evolving over the course of this series. While you don't really need to read them in order, I recommend that you do anyway since they are all wonderful.

I give The Girl Next Door by Cynthia Eden 4.25 stars!
