

by Dominic Stevenson

Someone Like Me

M R Carey is someone that regulars to these pages will be familiar with. He's the bestselling author of *The Girl With All the Gifts*, *The Boy on the Bridge*, and *Fellside*, to name just a few. He is, or was, a Muswell Hill local and so he might even be reading this page right now (Hello Mr Carey!).

His latest literary offering is *Someone Like Me*, and it surprised me. It wasn't based in the UK for starters, but M R Carey is a writer whose career has taken him around the world and back many times over. He is well versed in writing characters from other countries – but this is, I believe, his first foray into doing this with a novel.

The story seems complex at the beginning, but he is building the landscape for what is to come and the complexity pays you back tenfold with an exhilarating story.

We meet Liz Kendall, a woman in a domestically abusive relationship, her two children, and her son's on/off best friend/girlfriend, Fran. Their lives entwine in ways that mean they flit between this world and others.

One day, when her husband assaults Liz, she finds an inner strength that she's never had before and fights back – what she doesn't know is that this inner strength has an agenda of its own and it is soon out to inhabit the world of Liz.

Fran was abducted as a child and we follow her journey as she explores a way back through the minefield of post-traumatic stress

disorder, accompanied by her own inner strength which exists in the form of a fox, who is a knight, and who steals her memories so she can't remember the worst of the trauma.

You follow Fran and Liz, and their own inner strengths, as they battle to find the good in the world and banish the evil before Liz's two children face the consequences.

This book is a wonderful exploration of myths and legends, as well as a sensitive portrayal of the mental health challenges victims of trauma and abuse may face.

Just because you enjoyed *The Girl With All the Gifts* doesn't mean you'll like this book, but it is an excellent book and well worth your time. I found the plot to be original, innovative, and exploratory, meaning that I was kept on my toes throughout.

M R Carey is one of the best writers working today who occupies that grey area in between fantasy and reality. His work is engaging, thorough in its research and realism, and terrifying at times because of how he traps you in a fantasy version of reality.

If you're feeling like your bookshelves need a shake up, then get yourself a copy of *Someone Like Me* from your local book shop.

