



# Eye Contact

*Cammie McGovern*

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**Eye Contact** Cammie McGovern

**Adam, a nine-year-old autistic boy, is discovered hiding near to the body of his murdered classmate. Now the police are relying on Adam as the only witness to an appalling crime. But he can't tell the police what he saw—or what he heard. Barely verbal on the best of days, Adam has retreated into a silent world that Cara, his mother, knows only too well.**

A young girl has been murdered and the only witness is a child who cannot tell what he saw.

In the woods of a small town, Adam, a nine-year-old autistic boy, is discovered hiding near to the body of his classmate. They both wandered off from the school playground several hours earlier, and now the police are relying on Adam as the only witness to an appalling crime. But he can't tell the police what he saw—or what he heard. Barely verbal on the best of days, Adam has retreated into a silent world that Cara, his mother, knows only too well.

With her community in shock and her son unable to help with the police investigation, Cara tries to decode the puzzling events. Adam has never broken the rules before, so why did he disappear with the little girl during recess? As a single mother, Cara has devoted her life to opening paths of communication between her son and the outside world. Now, she must interpret the changes in Adam's behavior not only to help him through the trauma, but to help the police catch a killer. Cammie McGovern brings her own experience as the mother of an autistic child to articulate the struggles—and the victories—that consume the lives of parents raising children with special needs. A powerful story of the tangled emotional bond between mother and son, and a thrilling novel of psychological suspense, *Eye Contact* won't let you go. Lovers of *Mystic River* will be captivated by this fresh and fascinating journey into the world of a child in crisis and a mother who longs to bring him through unscathed.

## Eye Contact Details

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Author : Cammie McGovern

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## From Reader Review Eye Contact for online ebook

### William says

Eye Contact wants to be two books. The better book follows the path of acceptance and eventual, albeit limited, understanding between Adam, a nine-year-old autistic boy, and his mother Cara. The novel starts strongly with these two, especially in illuminating Adam's thought processes, and in describing the mother's difficult work of encouraging Adam to develop both within and beyond her expectations. But the half of Eye Contact that wants to be an engaging thriller is the half whose genes dominate the rest of story, creating a confusing, unfocused, quasi-mystery full of too many false leads, too many late revelations, and too many last minute characters to sustain interest and believability.

The book's turn from focusing on a youth group for developmentally challenged children to constructing a larger world in which so many characters are physically and mentally damaged is unnecessary, exaggerated, and potentially offensive. The point of Adam's particular way of thinking is lost in a crowd of less interesting secondaries whose flaws seem manufactured and insincerely characterized.

With so much of autism a mystery, and with an author whose own family experiences feed the very best and truest passages of this book, McGovern could have written a simple story of family to great benefit. In playing for a wider audience, the author's readers suffer, her plot is lost, and the topic in which McGovern so eagerly wishes us to engage is all but forgotten for a passing thrill.

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### Laya Mccoy says

I totally love this book. It's one of my favorite recent reads. I loved how the author, Cammie McGovern, sort of went deeper into the mind of autistic children. She showed that most of the time, they do know what they see, but they can't find the words to describe it, or they don't know the words to describe it.

I really liked the relationship between Cara and Adam. You can tell how much she loved her son and how determined she was to making sure that she could teach him, and she was so happy when she found that he might make friends and have someone to play with.

It really is a good read, and anyone that is into the sort of killer mystery books should really look this one up. Yes, I know, it's not really a mystery, but it is in its own way, because here these people are, trying to solve a murder when they have only one witness who doesn't even really know what's going on. I thought it was just amazing, how Adams mind and his understanding start to unfold throughout the book, and this really is one of my all time favorite books. Keep on writing, Cammie!!

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### C. says

Eye Contact (Paperback)  
by Cammie McGovern

What a great story! McGovern touches our heart, inspires us and entertains us with a great psychological mystery. The author has an excellent insight into the topic and builds up the story cleverly. Cara is Adam's

mother, a 9 year old child on the autism spectrum. She is a very good single mother and is devoted to his development and happiness. A tragedy happens in his school. A little girl has been found dead and Adam is the only witness; but his ability to communicate is very limited. We also visit Cara as a younger girl who had two good friends, Suzette and Kevin. Each one of them with psychological and health issues. The plot is outstanding and the characters are so well developed you feel a closeness to them.

I highly recommend this book for everyone, especially to those interested in the autism spectrum, as parents, relatives, friends, teachers and for anyone in the community to gain more awareness of this epidemic in today's world.

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### **Mariah says**

This book went in waves of being good and confusing. Also, a little unrealistic at parts.

Throughout the whole book I struggled because the chapters were extremely long and the book is from multiple point of views. That's not a great combination. I had a hard time keeping everyone straight. Eventually, I did learn the characters and they became very captivating.

I am a special education teacher, so this book was fascinating to me. It was written 10 years ago, so it was cool seeing the difference and similarities. Also, the growth and perspective that autism has given and the understanding of it.

Fascinating read with an interesting mystery attached.

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### **Elizabeth C says**

This book was amazing, the very description of a thriller. Little clues were in the entire body of the book, and putting them together on the journey through the book was simultaneously exhilarating and chilling. The characters felt incredibly real and the revelation on the last page was genuinely sweet enough to bring tears to my eyes. I'm so glad I read this.

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### **Ryann says**

This book was all over the place. It has potential if it had been more focused. The bits about autism were interesting, there were too many characters so that none could be fully developed. It tried to be murder mystery, informative autistic book, love story, and drama. None of it was pulled off well. It wasn't terrible, but it really wasn't very good.

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### **Sarah says**

I have no clue why I wasted my time and finished this book. It was all over the place and I was almost to the point where I don't even think the author knew who the killer was going to be until the last second. The book just did not fit for me. It was like a stew was mixed together and whatever was in the fridge was added to the

story.

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## **Aleathia Drehmer says**

This afternoon I finished reading "Eye Contact" by Cammie McGovern. The only thing I knew about this book was that it was a psychological thriller. I liked the cover of the book as it was a blurry and eerie picture of a girl standing in the woods.

This quick reading novel seems to be about a young girl, new to town, that gets murdered in the woods near her elementary school. This could be any parents nightmare and I must confess, it has altered my own sleeping patterns and made me stand guard a bit more vigilantly with my own child than I am used to. This folks, is the sign of a good book. When a book somehow takes over your subconscious enough to alter the way you live your life, the writer has done something right. It was not an overly scary book in the sense that it contained gore, but what made it interesting was the several points of view from which it was told.

It was told from the view of a single mother whose entire life is caring for her autistic son Adam. It is told from the point of view of a middle school child struggling to be invisible and visible at the same time. It is told from the point of view of the autistic child. The common thread throughout this book is the need for friendship or for rekindling lost bonds. It is also about letting people have the freedom to map their own world out and how by making things easy for someone only allows them to never make the effort for themselves. It is about will and strength of character in the face of something tragic. And in some ways, it is about hope.

The author has an autistic child, so the description of mannerisms and how strange a life a child like this has, were very accurate. I think it was interesting to be able to see into this world a bit more deeply. The brain of an autistic is a complex rewiring that many of us will never understand. They have super gifts in some areas, but often never take pleasure in the simple things our life has to offer like friendship, physical closeness, or being able to follow the abstract. We take these things for granted, I believe.

This book was what I would call an "easy read" in the sense that I did not feel like I would have a mental meltdown after it was done. It isn't hard hitting in a cerebral sense, but a good 300 pages of brain candy to curl up with on a string of rainy days

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## **Jeanette says**

this book was on the table at the domicile for \$1 for cancer awareness fundraising. it was worth a TON more. it is definitely in my top 10 favorite books. a beautiful, sad, horrifying story of an autistic boy who witnesses the murder of a schoolmate. half of the characters in the story are children/adults with special needs. the story reads from different perspectives and the murderer isnt revealed into far into the book. the story is not so much about the murderer, but about trying to figure out how to communicate with those who dont have language or a limited ability, and how we all struggle through life with our different demons. there was so much i could relate to, as my niece has special needs and my sister is raising her on her own, as was the mother in this story. the author of the novel has a son with autism so it reads as non-fiction. she is extremely educated on dealing with a child with autism and the story is so believable. the characters struggles, her sons

struggles, and the struggles of everyone in the novel are so real. a great great read.

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### **Laura says**

I've waited a while to write my review giving myself a chance to really digest what I thought of this book. I think it's because I wanted to give it a high rating and my initial reaction was not to do so. However, it's been a week and I'm still feeling like it was an "eh" kind of book.

It felt like this book wasn't exactly sure what to be. There's a portion devoted to a family dealing with Autism. There's a portion dealing with broken relationships, and then there is the murder mystery. I think the whole thing could have been handled a lot differently, for the better. The relationships never fully develop to a satisfying point, and, honestly, there are just too many people to keep track of. I think, conceptually, she might have been trying to show the connections we all have with people and the complexity of relationships, but it came across as confusing and unconvincing. There were bright points in the observations and actions of the autistic main character and his relationships. However, the leaps made in how his behavior were clues to this murder seemed forced and unrealistic. However, I was mostly going along with it and enjoying the book until it reached it's peak and we had the whole solving of the crime. Good Lord, it was convoluted. It was like some cheap paperback mystery was dropped in as the ending of the book, and the real ending was removed.

Whoever wrote the review that's on the book comparing it to "The Curious Incident of a Dog in the Night Time" was delusional. There is not one single thing to draw comparison to, from a literary perspective. They both have autistic characters, and that was it.

Unfortunately, this wasn't a highlight book for me.

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### **Alaina Meserole says**

*Eye Contact* was a pretty good book but it's also kind of hard to write a review for. I'm just kind of hesitant to write this because it's another book I've read that deals with a kid having autism and I'm very picky about those kind of books.

Okay so this book is about two kids who go missing in the woods by school. One kid comes back after witnessing their playmates murder. Of course the kid, Adam, is autistic so he's a silent witness. Which of course leads to his mother Cara helping out with the investigation since she's the only person on this forsaken planet that can decode his behaviors.

So my brother is autistic and I know that not every form of autism is the same for every autistic person. After knowing this about Adam I was actually hesitant to dive into this book. I didn't want the author to give this kid every characteristic of his certain autism. Mostly because it would be realistic to me. I also didn't think I would end up liking the characters while reading.

Now I did give this book 3 stars. That doesn't mean I hated the book or the characters. No I liked them and

the story enough to finish it. I guess I was just kind of bored throughout it? I guess I just expected more from this book even though I was hesitant? I have no idea - I'm a conundrum people!!

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## **Rebecca McNutt says**

I'm honestly sort of neutral about my opinion on this book. While *Eye Contact* is not a badly written book and does have a compelling mystery to unfold, I'm not sure I agreed with or liked the way it portrayed an autistic child. Stopping to typical tropes and stereotypes about the "silent witness" (if you've ever watched the *Cold Case* episode "Saving Sammy" or read *House Rules* by Jodi Picoult, you'll find that the autistic child involved with a crime scene is a fairly common way for writers to add an extra element of mystique to fiction) - the nonverbal or almost nonverbal child staring off into space who knows something they're not telling you. Not only is this really not an accurate representation of autism or asperger's, but in the case of *Eye Contact*, we get a character who was written simply for the purpose of being there and being autistic while his mother is the one who truly becomes the most interesting and main character of the book, trying to uncover things on her own. It would be nice to see a book with an autistic character who isn't just "autistic". Who's not defined by a label, but instead by what they do and how they act in the story. To be fair not every autistic person is the same, but as usual this book falls into the trap of focusing so much on Adam's autism that we never as readers get a full picture of who he is as a human being.

There isn't a great deal of character development or a hugely complex story here in general, so it just seemed like a very basic thriller. Not bad, not great, sort of in-between. It has some strong dramatic and emotional moments, but there were so many false leads and odd events/characters that seemed to just be thrown in without going anywhere. This didn't really add any intrigue, but instead just made it very confusing and unclear, going off-track and dragging readers from one suspect to the next with no rhyme or reason. We get no pieces to a puzzle, but instead all these potentially very interesting characters who quickly get cast aside, and a mystery itself which starts out brilliantly but ends in a very dull sort of way. I won't reveal what happens, but I will say it seemed like a really bizarre choice for a book that was supposed to carry a powerful message to end on such an abrupt and random plot twist.

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## **Ainsley says**

It was all right, but kind of frustrating. I had pretty significant issues with the plot. Her knowledge of autism and ability to incorporate that into fiction is excellent, and her writing for Adam is the highlight of the book by far. The book is interesting and emotional and creepy at times.

I also appreciate the "strain of being a caregiver" theme that is present throughout the book through Cara, Suzette, Teddy, Kevin's mom, Morgan's mom, Olivia, Chris's mom, Harrison's mom, even Cara's parents to an extent.

However: the plot. The author tries to make it suspenseful by introducing one suspect after another, only to discount them and move onto someone else. It was Morgan! No, it was Chris! It was Bob Busker, Kevin, Kevin's mom. And then it turns out to be... some random bully? Who didn't even know Amelia? And who ends up confessing because he's sick of his mom defending him? What? And how many different people were in the freaking woods during the 45 minutes that Adam and Amelia were missing?

And there were all these dramatic references to Cara's past, and some terrible thing that happened between her and Suzette and Kevin that left them all isolated and messed up. Except in the end, not that much actually happened. And Kevin's wacky mom not only falsely confesses to the murder because she thinks that Kevin is guilty, but also suggests that he's responsible for the car accident that killed Cara's parents. Only he isn't, he was just driving behind them? What the hell?

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### **Alana Bullock says**

I had a real problem with the storyline of Kevin and how it was resolved. With the intention to manipulate and hurt Cara, he actually forges a plan which involves lying about a relationship with her best friend, doesn't come forward about the murder of a little girl or the (utterly pointless) fact that he was with Caras parents before their car crash. His mother tries to STAB Cara and yet ... 'sure Kevin, lets go play happy families. Whatevs!' I realised I didn't give two hoots about any of the *oh so many* characters in this book, Cara especially, she was unrealistic and her personality improbable. The knowledge about autism was defiantly the only thing giving this book any stability, plus the fact that I was intrigued to find out the murderer - only to be let completely let down. ALL THOSE CHARACTERS and it ends up being some random kid from the school?! Yikes.

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