



The Trouble with Goats and Sheep: A Novel

Joanna Cannon

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Part coming-of-age novel, part mystery, *The Trouble with Goats and Sheep* is a quirky and utterly charming debut about a community in need of absolution and two girls learning what it means to belong.

England, 1976. Mrs. Creasy is missing and the Avenue is alive with whispers. The neighbors blame her sudden disappearance on the heat wave, but ten-year-olds Grace and Tilly aren't convinced. As the summer shimmers endlessly on, the girls decide to take matters into their own hands. Inspired by the local vicar, they go looking for God—they believe that if they find Him they might also find Mrs. Creasy and bring her home.

Spunky, spirited Grace and frail, nervous Tilly go door to door in search of clues. As the cul-de-sac starts giving up its secrets, the amateur detectives uncover much more than they could have imagined. Instead of finding their missing neighbor, they must try to make sense of what they've seen and heard, and a complicated history of deception begins to emerge. Everyone on the Avenue has something to hide, a reason for not fitting in. It's only in the suffocating heat of the summer, that the ability to guard these differences becomes impossible. Along with the parched lawns and the melting pavement, the lives of all the neighbors begin to deconstruct. What the girls don't realize is that the lies told to conceal what happened one fateful day about a decade ago are the same ones Mrs. Creasy was beginning to peel back just before she disappeared.

For fans of Jeannette Walls's *The Silver Star*, this "is a gripping debut about the secrets behind every door" (Rachel Joyce, author of *The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry*).



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