



## Promise Not to Tell: A Novel

By Jennifer McMahon

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Forty-one-year-old school nurse Kate Cypher has returned home to rural Vermont to care for her mother who's afflicted with Alzheimer's. On the night she arrives, a young girl is murdered—a horrific crime that eerily mirrors another from Kate's childhood. Three decades earlier, her dirt-poor friend Del—shunned and derided by classmates as "Potato Girl"—was brutally slain. Del's killer was never found, while the victim has since achieved immortality in local legends and ghost stories. Now, as this new murder investigation draws Kate irresistibly in, her past and present collide in terrifying, unexpected ways. Because nothing is quite what it seems . . . and the grim specters of her youth are far from forgotten.

More than just a murder mystery, Jennifer McMahon's extraordinary debut novel, *Promise Not to Tell*, is a story of friendship and family, devotion and betrayal—tautly written, deeply insightful, beautifully evocative, and utterly unforgettable.

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## Promise Not to Tell: A Novel By Jennifer McMahon Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #111886 in Books
- Brand: William Morrow Paperbacks
- Published on: 2007-04-10
- Released on: 2007-04-10
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.00" h x .58" w x 5.31" l, .42 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 250 pages

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## **Editorial Review**

From Publishers Weekly

Part mystery-thriller and part ghost story, McMahon's well-paced debut alternates smoothly between past and present. In the fall of 2002, 41-year-old Kate Cypher, a divorced Seattle school nurse, returns to New Hope, the decaying Vermont hippie commune where she grew up, to visit her elderly mother, Jean, who's suffering from Alzheimer's. Kate has avoided New Hope since the grizzly, unsolved murder of her fifth-grade friend, Del Griswold, 31 years earlier. Kate fears she betrayed Del, a free-spirited farm girl. Did her betrayal cause Del's death? Who killed Del? Another local girl is murdered in a similar manner at the time of Kate's return. Could the killer be loose again? Meanwhile, Jean appears to be possessed with Del's spirit and may have the answers to these questions. As Kate investigates, she learns stunning truths about many events and people from her youth. McMahon does a particularly good job of portraying the cruelty of school children. (*Apr.*)

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From [Booklist](#)

This assured, ambitious debut novel offers an unusual mix of mystery novel and ghost story, with particularly well-drawn coming-of-age themes. School nurse Kate Cypher returns to her hometown in Vermont to care for her mother, who is suffering from Alzheimer's. It's not a happy homecoming, since Kate never liked the cultlike atmosphere of the commune she grew up in. Not long after her arrival, a local girl is murdered in the same way Kate's childhood friend, Del, nicknamed the "Potato Girl" by her mean-spirited classmates, was killed 30 years ago. Seriously spooked, Kate reconnects with her childhood sweetheart, who is utterly convinced that Del's ghost is afoot in the woods and intent on seeking revenge. McMahon deftly juggles a complex narrative, which smoothly interweaves the past and the present, while also credibly introducing supernatural elements by presenting them through Kate's skeptical viewpoint. But McMahon's real coup is her touching characterization of the brave and desperate Del. It is through that portrait that McMahon drives home the cruelty of childhood bullying. *Joanne Wilkinson*

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Review

"Well-plotted suspenseful fun." (Kirkus Reviews)

"Deeply disturbing and darkly compelling..." (Sara Gruen, bestselling author of WATER FOR ELEPHANTS)

"PROMISE NOT TO TELL takes you through the twisted world of adolescent friendship, betrayal and murder." (Pam Lewis, author of SPEAK SOFTLY, SHE CAN HEAR)

"This assured, ambitious debut novel offers an unusual mix of mystery novel and ghost story..." (Booklist)

"A great, dark, spooky book for the summer." (Today Show)

## **Users Review**

**From reader reviews:**

**Boris Hansen:**

The book *Promise Not to Tell: A Novel* will bring someone to the new experience of reading any book. The author style to explain the idea is very unique. When you try to find new book to read, this book very suited to you. The book *Promise Not to Tell: A Novel* is much recommended to you you just read. You can also get the e-book from your official web site, so you can quicker to read the book.

**Anna Gann:**

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**Michele Stein:**

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