



Marked - Denis Martin

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Cully has moved to a coastal New Zealand town with his father. He tries to fit in to his new college but manages to upset the school bully. He realises he's in for a hard time.

While Cully is used to looking out for himself, he's not so sure about the good-looking girl who lives nearby. Kat shrugs off his concern when he warns her about a man who seems to be following her. Cully's curiosity and attraction to Kat gets the better of him. He doesn't take her advice to mind his own business. Before long, he's caught up in a dangerous, life-threatening drama.

Cully is a likeable teenager, loyal to Kat, yet plagued with youthful doubts and insecurities. Other characters are well-drawn with believable responses, although no-one is quite who they seem to be on the surface. This presents problems for Cully and Kat as they don't know whom to trust.

The storyline is well-paced as the tension mounts with each twist and turn of the plot. Details about motorbikes, guns and boats add authenticity and interest.

Marked is a suspense-filled thriller for young adult readers. An excellent read.

**Reviewed by children's book author
Jean Bennett**

