



Dodging Satan

**My Irish/Italian, sometimes awesome,
but mostly creepy, childhood**

By Kathleen Zamboni McCormick

Dodging Satan is a hilarious and heartbreaking novel of religious imagery as told by a girl growing up Catholic in New York City in the fifties and sixties. Bridget has an Irish mother and an Italian father. The in-laws hate each other. The mother is prone to throwing entire pies at her husband. Little Bridget sees the snake at Mary's feet not as a symbol of Original Sin, but as a nest of reptiles cloning in her closet. Her dresser drawers are full of snakes. Her mother sprinkles Holy Water everywhere trying to rid the apartment of these invisible pests. That helps, but it's not enough. She's dragged to the priest as well as a psychiatrist. The parents are horrified at what the experts say. From Spiritual Bouquets to ridding her friend of Satan's possession via a spontaneous exorcism (Sylvia was wearing entirely too much mascara that day and was obviously possessed), the adventures of little Bridget continues through Catholic catechism to Bishop O'Brien's *Child's Guide to Avoiding Temptation*. As Bridget approaches puberty, she assesses her mother and aunts, evaluates their lives and makes some decisions as to how she will grow up and run her own life in the future.

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About the Author

Kathleen Zamboni McCormick is a professor of literature and writing at Purchase College, State University of New York, where she has won many teaching awards and her creative and academic writings have been widely recognized. Her awards include the Modern Language Association's Mina Shaughnessy Award, the Bent Creativity Award, first prize in the Tiny Lights personal essay competition, and a New Millennium Writings Award. Her fiction has appeared in *Calyx*, *The Dirty Goat*, *Fugue*, *Italian Americana*, *Kestrel*, *Northwest Review*, *Paterson Literary Review*, *Phoebe*, *PMS poemmemoirstory*, *The Rambler*, *A River and Sound Review*, *South Carolina Review*, *Superstition Review*, *Westview*, *Willow Review*, and *Witness*, *Zone 3*, among others. McCormick lives in New York with her husband and cat.



WINNER of two EVVY Awards, 2016: GOLD, Religion & Spirituality; SILVER, Humor
WINNER, SILVER Illumination Award, Catholic Books
WINNER, Best Book, Humor, Foreword Book Reviews
WINNER BRONZE, Illumination eLit Award
WINNER Distinguished Favorite, NYC Big Book Award

Tender and ruthlessly honest, Kathleen McCormick's beautiful first novel draws us into the world of Italian Irish Catholicism as experienced by its unforgettably wise and desperately innocent girl narrator. There's magic in this world—and while we are charmed by its glow, we are also unsettled again and again by the darkness behind that glow. We follow Bridget with trepidation, captivated by her vulnerability and her fierceness, trusting there's much to learn from her journey.

Edvige Giunta

Writing with an Accent; Personal Effects

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