



If you want to write crime novels but you got your literary start as a travel-news columnist and chick lit author, you might do what Serena Mackesy did, take on a pseudonym and live the life of Alex Marwood. Alex hails from South London and will be in the Lowcountry on November 19<sup>th</sup> as the guest author for the USCB Lunch With Author Series. Speaking at the Sea Pines Country Club, Alex will share why Stephen King describes her books as “scary as hell.” Her first book,

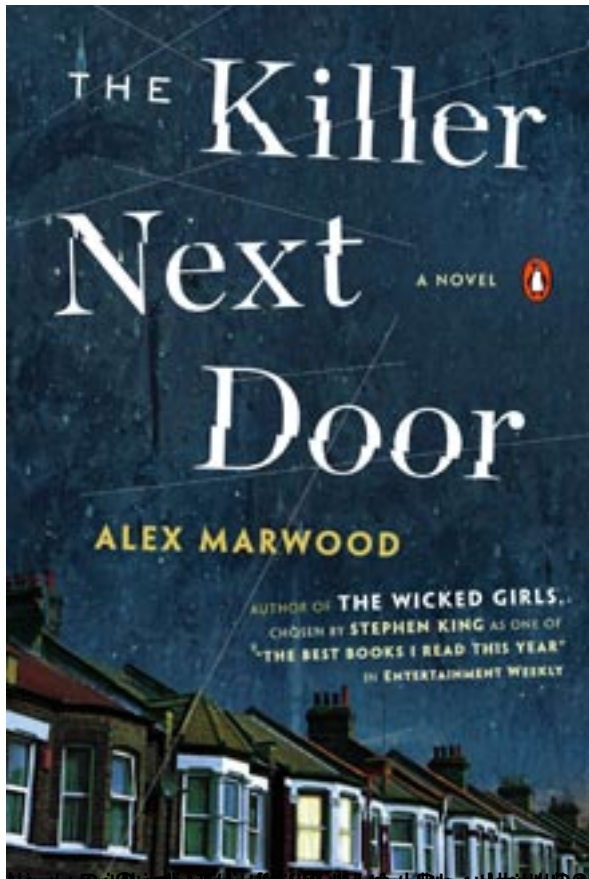
*The Wicked Girls*,

won the coveted Edgar Award for 2014 and with her second crime novel,

*The Killer Next Door*,

published this fall, there’s no doubt about Alex’s genre: it’s scary crime novels.

*The Killer Next Door* is a tightly-paced thriller that will leave you questioning just how well you know your own neighbors and questioning what they are doing behind closed doors. Right from page one you start questioning how these six individuals found this hotel that demands no lease, no credit check, and the rent paid in cash. 23 Beulah Grove is a last resort for its six residents. There is Cher, a runaway from social services, and Gerard, a recently divorced father who keeps to himself. Vesta, the oldest and longest-standing tenant, lives in the basement apartment, while quiet Thomas inhabits the top floor. Striking Hussein, a political refugee from Iran, tries to forget the horrors of his former life; and Collette, the newest resident, runs from a past that seems to inch increasingly closer. Presiding over them all is the obese, lecherous landlord who has no qualms about taking advantage of their vulnerability with frequent rent hikes and unsafe living conditions.



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