



The Blackbird Season

Kate Moretti

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Known for novels featuring “great pacing and true surprises” (*Kirkus Reviews*, starred review) and “nerve-shattering suspense” (Heather Gudenkauf, *New York Times* bestselling author), *New York Times* bestselling author Kate Moretti’s latest is the story of a scandal-torn Pennsylvania town and the aftermath of a troubled girl gone missing.

“Where did they come from? Why did they fall? The question would be asked a thousand times...

Until, of course, more important question arose, at which time everyone promptly forgot that a thousand birds fell on the town of Mount Oanoke at all.”

In a quiet Pennsylvania town, a thousand dead starlings fall onto a high school baseball field, unleashing a horrifying and unexpected chain of events that will rock the close-knit community.

Beloved baseball coach and teacher Nate Winters and his wife, Alicia, are well respected throughout town. That is, until one of the many reporters investigating the bizarre bird phenomenon catches Nate embracing a wayward student, Lucia Hamm, in front of a sleazy motel. Lucia soon buoys the scandal by claiming that she and Nate are engaged in an affair, throwing the town into an uproar...and leaving Alicia to wonder if her husband has a second life.

And when Lucia suddenly disappears, the police only to have one suspect: Nate.

Nate’s coworker and sole supporter, Bridget Harris, Lucia’s creative writing teacher, is determined to prove his innocence. She has Lucia’s class journal, and while some of the entries appear particularly damning to Nate’s case, others just don’t add up. Bridget knows the key to Nate’s exoneration and the truth of Lucia’s disappearance lie within the walls of the school and in the pages of that journal.

Told from the alternating points of view of Alicia, Nate, Lucia, and Bridget, *The Blackbird Season* is a haunting, psychologically nuanced suspense, filled with Kate Moretti’s signature “chillingly satisfying” (*Publishers Weekly*) twists and turns.

The Blackbird Season Details

Date : Published September 26th 2017 by Atria Books

ISBN :

Author : Kate Moretti

Format : Kindle Edition 353 pages

Genre : Mystery, Fiction, Thriller, Mystery Thriller, Suspense

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Download and Read Free Online The Blackbird Season Kate Moretti

From Reader Review The Blackbird Season for online ebook

Zoe says

Ominous, haunting, and gritty!

In this latest novel by Moretti, she transports us to Mt. Oanoke, Pennsylvania, a small town that suddenly finds itself turned upside down not only by a sudden infestation of dead birds, but a teacher-student scandal that will test the limits of marriages, friendships, and community alliances.

The prose is chilling and eerie. The characters are multi-layered, damaged, and self-involved. And the plot told from multiple perspectives is ultimately a suspenseful ride riddled with poverty, familial drama, jealousy, obsession, abuse, love, infidelity, social strife, emerging sexuality, peer pressure, bullying, and murder.

The Blackbird Season is a dark, disturbing, compelling read that will keep you on the edge of your seat right from the very start to the unexpected ending you won't see coming. And even though I didn't find the characters to be the most endearing the overall pace, mood, and atmosphere of this story still makes it a good one.

Thank you to Simon & Schuster Canada for providing me with a copy in exchange for an honest review.

All my reviews can be found on my blog at <http://whatsbetterthanbooks.com>

Lindsay - Traveling Sister says

3.5 stars

This was an atmospheric psychological suspense mystery about a high school student who goes missing and the teacher who becomes the number one suspect. The author, Kate Moretti, did a fabulous job creating a vivid picture of the unthriving small town devastated by the mill closure years prior. The after effects lingering years later – on the people, on the buildings, on the overall attitude of the gossipy, close-knit community. The abandoned mill seemed to be a haunting character itself – hiding secrets and lies within its broken, run-down structure.

I enjoyed the way the story was revealed through four characters POV's. The chapter changes of narration kept a refreshing feel throughout the novel. The slower paced storyline kept me intrigued for the most part, but my connection to the book wavered near the end.

What I enjoyed most about this story was getting a glimpse into the life of a mothers love, struggles and commitment to her young autistic son. My heart broke for Alecia, Gabe's mother, whose entire world revolved around monitoring, scheduling, organizing and tracking Gabe's growth, development and progress through therapy, meetings, organized play, doctor appointments, etc. I could feel Alecia's stress and overwhelming sense of exhaustion. She was a wonderfully dedicated mother and by far my favourite character.

I was satisfied with the ending, but wished for it to have happened a bit differently. Throughout the novel, there are some good twists and turns, but overall the book lacked a “wow” factor for me. I would recommend it if you are looking for a more relaxed and slower paced suspenseful mystery.

A big thank you to NetGalley, Atria Books and Kate Moretti for providing an ARC in exchange for an honest review!!

I really enjoyed reading this along with my lovely Traveling Sister Brenda! To find this review along with Brenda’s review, please visit Brenda and Norma’s fabulous blog at :

<https://twogirlslostinacouleereading....>

Chelsea Humphrey says

Happy Pub Day!!!

When an author can fluently change the overall feel of each book they write, they have my attention. This is precisely how I feel about Kate Moretti; while you could technically group her last two books as psychological thrillers, the details ensure a wholly separate reading experience. I adored her 2016 publication *The Vanishing Year*, which was a classic domestic drama, and this year she has wowed me again with *The Blackbird Season*, a dark, slow burning suspense that was creepy and an overall perfect read for fall. The premise of what caused these birds to fall simultaneously, along with the domestic suspense completely hooked me before I even picked up the book. *Marriage+Lies=Having Chelsea's name written all over it*. I actually wondered throughout the entire story if it would take some sort of paranormal or fantastical turn, and while that vibe was present throughout, it remained firmly in the realm of realism.

One of the many downfalls of reading so many exciting, twisty mysteries is the fact that I have to keep my lips shut in regards to plot discussion. You have what you read on the back of the book, but the story is so much more than those couple of paragraphs that you'll just have to trust me when I say you'll want to read this and discuss. This would be THE perfect book club read, as there are a multitude of questions that could be discussed on so many levels. There are two factors I want to touch on though: 1) I was blown away by the quality of writing put into crafting the narrative with Alecia as a mother of an autistic son. As a special needs mama myself, it was so refreshing to read a book where I could empathize with every aspect of a character, so much so that I probably sounded like Madea at church to the people around me at the gym. *PREACH WOMAN!* 2) I felt there was a large plot point unanswered and left up to the reader to determine what they thought happened. While the detective in me wanted to know EXACTLY what happened and why and how and all that jazz, I 100% understand why the author chose to leave it as such and have all the more respect for such a ballsy twist. In a way, it makes the story feel a little more intriguing.

While the relationship between Nate and Alecia is a big feature in the novel, and it's done well, I also really enjoyed Bridget's character and how she grows as a person throughout the book. With a multiple POV format for telling the story (four narratives in fact), it would be easy to slack on the development of some of the minor supporting characters, and I was really happy to find out that each narrative was equally well done. If you enjoy the ever popular psychological thrillers that feature domestic drama, but are tired of the abusive relationship plot, I would highly recommend picking up *The Blackbird Season*. There is still the same level of urgent suspense, but with new ideas in the mix that will keep you guessing throughout. I was completely thrown by the ending and hope that you are too! If you need me you can find me in my corner patiently

waiting for Moretti's next novel. <3

***Many thanks to the author for providing my copy; it was a pleasure to provide my honest thoughts here!**

Susanne Strong says

3.25* Stars (rounded down).

Could you imagine a thousand starlings falling on you, while out watching a game? Would you call it a natural phenomenon, toxic poisoning or would you blame a young teenage girl who no one likes and several kids in her High School refer to as a witch?

In Mt. Oanoke, a small Pennsylvania town, as soon as the birds fall, things go from bad to worse. Lucia Hamm, is a teenager who is a social outcast. If it weren't for the support of best friend Taylor and her teacher Nate Winters, she wouldn't have anyone. It's the support of her teacher however, that throws a wrench in everything as you can imagine. Nate is the cool Teacher and Coach. The guy who has his finger on the pulse of the High School. He has fake Facebook and Twitter accounts and knows what is going on with everyone. The parents in town love him. He's Mr. Popular. The only person he's not all that popular with is his wife Alecia. The reason? He's hardly ever home and doesn't seem all that interested in helping her take care of their special needs son, Gabe. Needless to say, it puts a strain on their marriage.

After Nate is accused of having an affair with Lucia, well things get worse. Once she disappears, well you can imagine how things might go from there. The outlook for Nate? It's not very good.

Bridget Peterson is a teacher at the High School. She is also one of Nate and Alecia's closest friends. She is the only one who believes Nate and she will stop at nothing to find out what happened to Lucia and prove Nate's innocence.

The story is told in alternating viewpoints: Lucia's, Alecia's, Bridget's and Nate's. It is very effective. That being said, "The Blackbird Season" was an enjoyable mystery which held my attention until the end, when my interest waned. I felt that there was just something missing, and I can't quite put my finger on what. On the whole, I did enjoy it and would read other books by Ms. Moretti.

Thank you to NetGalley, Atria Books and Kate Moretti for an ARC of this novel in exchange for an honest review.

Published on NetGalley, Goodreads, Amazon, Twitter and Facebook on 10.22.17.

Kathryn says

***The Blackbird Season* has all the makings of a Lifetime thriller.** Teacher accused of sleeping with his student. Student disappears. Police become involved. Fingers are pointed. Small-town secrets revealed. Scandal mounts. Marriages are rocked. Susan Lucci makes a cameo appearance.....

Okay, maybe the Susan Lucci bit was a tad of an exaggeration. Really though, this book is poised to become a love to hate-watch flick. The **sheer volume of tropes contained within are staggering**. We've got the **Hometown Hero/Golden Boy, Most-Popular-Teacher, All-the-Students-Love-Him** guy played by **Nate**. When Nate is accused of sleeping with one of his students, the death-obsessed, pseudo-goth, **wrong-side-of-the-tracks Lucia**, their **small town ERUPTS**. Could Everyone's Favorite Teacher & Baseball Coach be capable of such depravity??? **GASP**. Who knows, but this wee hamlet's mighty eager to raise their pitchforks. Add in heart-rending side-stories about Nate's troubled marriage, autistic son and a co-worker coming to terms with her husband's death and....oh, what's that noise? It's the violins. They're playing already.

In and of itself, **the writing is good**. Kate Moretti can string together a sentence like a pro. She clearly intended *The Blackbird Season* to be a **character-driven** piece. Narration duties rotate between the four major players: Nate, Lucia, Bridget (*aforementioned grieving co-worker*), and Nate's wife Alecia. In each section, a HUGE and I mean HUGE amount of time is spent on backstory and needless description. If I read one more passage on the town woods, I s2g....Character-driven doesn't signify multiple paragraphs of flowery, pointless prose. And **with all this extraneous STUFF the narrative thread was lost and story stalled**. It simply became **dull**.

And then there's the characters....there are morally gray characters, which I fully support, and then there are those who are **simply unlikeable**. Unfortunately too many of *The Blackbird Season's* players tended toward the latter. **It's hard to feel much sympathy for Nate when he's just so.....DUMB**. The guy makes bad choice after bad choice. No, you **SHOULDN'T** go chasing after an 18-year-old girl. Especially, an 18-year-old girl who's just told everyone you're sleeping together. Especially **AT NIGHT**. Especially, **IN THE WOODS**. No, you **SHOULDN'T** buy said girl a motel room. **NO**, you **SHOULDN'T** share your personal cell number with your students. The list goes on and on. **C'MON DUDE.....USE YOUR BRAIN**.

And then there's Nate's wife, **Alecia**. Man, I really wanted to like her. I mean, she's a stay-at-home mother caring for a 5-year-old autistic child. That's unbelievably difficult. I feel for her struggle. *I tried* to like her. But she just makes it so damn hard. She's **endlessly shrill, critical, and resentful**. A friend delivers a cheesecake to her house and she's **ANNOYED**. **That's Alecia in a nutshell**. And when her **HUSBAND** has lifechanging, horrific accusations leveled at him, she just....**BAILS**. Or rather, kicks him out. He gets no benefit of the doubt. No faith. Nothing.

"Why do you defend him so much? Like you don't even think of taking my side?" The whine came out, petulant, and Alecia could hear it but couldn't stop it.

WHY DON'T YOU DEFEND HIM??? He's *your* **HUSBAND**.

And this sort of betrayal happens repeatedly throughout the book. There's multiple instances of Alecia using this case as an outlet for her pent-up frustration with Nate. He doesn't get a presumption of innocence. Not from his wife. He gets *"Did he catch her? Kiss her? Kill her? Alecia had no idea."* Did you ever, even for just a moment, consider that maybe--just, maybe--your husband is innocent?

Now, Nate's no picnic. In addition to his blatant lack of common sense, **he has the emotional maturity of a Kardashian**. Read: not much. He acts like a manchild who's in competition with his **AUTISTIC SON** for his wife's attention. Grow up, bro. Really, the only redeemable character here is Bridget. And I just wanna say to her: **RUN BRIDGET RUN!!!**

To sum up: **good writing, but predictable plot & (mostly) irritating characters**.

Thanks to netgalley and the publisher for an advanced, complimentary copy in exchange for an honest review.

Elizabeth of Silver's Reviews says

A husband, a father, a teacher, a coach, and now a suspended teacher accused of having an affair with a student.

Did it really happen, though, or did Lucia make it up?

Nate was always involved with this students on a personal level and helped the ones who appeared to be in distress. Did this backfire on him?

THE BLACKBIRD SEASON is mainly about the characters and their lives after the blackbirds fell and after Lucia disappeared. Did Lucia have anything to do with the blackbirds falling from the sky or did the blackbirds have anything to do with Lucia's disappearance? Her fellow students do call her a witch.

THE BLACKBIRD SEASON is considered a thriller, but it didn't seem like a thriller to me. I saw it more as an investigation into people's lives and what some people have to go through on a daily basis or during a crisis.

Addressing teenagers and their behavior was a major theme as well.

The book has four main narrators, and we hear from each one and how each one is connected to each other and to the situation.

The intrigue for me was in the behavior of the characters. The characters did grow on you toward the end as you became familiar with their lives instead of feeling annoyed with them.

Nate seemed to be too helpful for his own good.

Poor Alecia was so overwhelmed with her special needs child and had no clue about anything her husband, Nate, did.

Bridget, still mourning the loss of her husband, seemed genuine and a bit shaky about the situation Nate was in since he was a good friend.

Lucia was a troubled teenager with a bad home life and a teenager who needed attention and got attention in the wrong way.

The flocks of blackbirds seemed to serve as the background for the ominous situations that occurred in the small, gossip-ridden, mill town of Mt. Oanoke, Pennsylvania.

The book kept my interest because I wanted to see what happened to Lucia and if Nate would be found innocent. The suspense definitely was not edge-of-your-seat.

If you enjoy digging into the lives of folks and their emotions along with a lot of questionable choices, THE

BLACKBIRD SEASON should be a good read for you.

Let me know what you think of this book. I started out with a rating of 3/5, but raised it to a 4/5 because the ending was suspenseful.

This book was given to me free of charge and without compensation by the publisher and Net Galley in return for an honest review.

Selena says

Thank you NetGalley for an ebook copy of The Blackbird Season.

The book was a little slow to start but was thrilled when it picked up. The writing and descriptions are so wonderfully done. I love how Kate Moretti wrote from different points of view from the characters (Nate, Lucia, Alecia and Bridget. The Blackbird Season is written with great suspense.

Brenda - Traveling Sister says

Traveling Sister Read with Lindsay

The Blackbird Season is a dark, slow-burning, eerie, haunting, suspenseful psychological thriller with some great elements to make it a haunting read. A dying town where people know everything and will turn on each other without a care, an abandoned mill haunted by the loss of jobs and hope, dead birds, and a missing girl. We both really enjoyed those haunting elements to the story and found them to be unique and suspenseful.

The Blackbird Season is a story of jealousy and obsession that explores the bonds of friendship, and marriage and the cruelty of teenagers. Kate Moretti does a great job bringing some layers and depth to this story of a missing girl where all eyes point to her teacher by adding a well-developed plot with his strained marriage to his wife and their son who has special needs. The dynamics and desperation of the dying town add to the depth of the story and allowed us to see how easy they can turn on each other.

Kate Moretti cleverly had us guessing with whose truth is the truth and whose perception is the truth leaving us guessing throughout the story. She paces this all very well and we both didn't figure the twists out until the very end. I won't say much about how we felt about the ending as it would give too much away however overall we were satisfied.

Thank you, NetGalley, Atria Books and Kate Moretti for a copy to read and review.

Our full Traveling Sisters Review can be found on your sister blog:
<https://www.twogirlslostinacouleeread...>

Lori Lamothe says

4.5 stars

Mt. Oanoke is a dying mill town where nothing happens—at least until opening day at the high school baseball field, when a thousand starlings fall out of the sky. Some blame the polluted air, others believe it's an omen. Whether the dark rain is manmade or supernatural remains a mystery, but a series of disturbing events soon follows. A troubled teenage loner accuses Nate Winters, a popular teacher and coach, of having an affair with her. Not long afterward, she disappears. Is Nate an adulterer and a killer? Or is Lucia Hamm, the white-haired girl who finds dead blackbirds and reads tarot cards, exactly what her classmates say she is: a real-life witch who uses her power to ruin lives?

"The Blackbird Season" is a fast-paced, well plotted psychological thriller that kept me reading. The shifting timeframes and points of view added a certain edginess to the story that I liked. The characters are complex, each with their own struggles, weaknesses and doubts. Though there were fewer chapters written from Lucia's POV, her character drew me in more than the others. Alecia, Nate's wife, who has left the corporate world to care for their autistic son, also appealed to me. At times Nate's character seems too obtuse to be believable, but by the end of the book I wondered if those closest to him, and even Nate himself, may not understand who he really is. Finally, Moretti's depiction of the town is richly drawn (no irony intended...). I grew up next to an old mill town and much of what she describes—the lack of jobs, the environmental damage, the drug issues, the longing to escape—rings true.

This is the first novel I've read by Moretti and I look forward to reading more of her work. Much thanks to Atria Books and NetGalley for providing me with an ARC in exchange for an honest review.

Matt says

First and foremost, a large thank you to NetGalley, Kate Moretti, and Atria Books for providing me with a copy of this publication, which allows me to provide you with an unbiased review.

Having no previous knowledge of Moretti's work, I was able to read this novel without preconceived notions. It is worth noting, though, I did falsely presume the premise of the story that would develop. When thousands of starlings fall from the sky in the sleepy Pennsylvania town of Mt. Oanoke, everyone is left baffled as to what it might mean and how it could have happened. The reader may feel ready to synthesise a story that plays directly into this phenomena, but the narrative takes an interesting turn, plunging into more heartfelt mysteries. Told from the perspectives of a few characters and using flashback chapters, the reader is able to meet Nate and Alecia Winters, who are struggling through parenting their autistic son, Gabe. Nate is the high school baseball coach and a teacher with whom many of the students have a close relationship. When an allegation arises that a high school student, Lucia Hamm, and Nate are having a sexual relationship, the town splits as authorities try to decipher what is going on. Added to the mix is the role of Bridget Harris, Lucia's creative writer teacher, who has come to learn some of her darkest thoughts through an ongoing journaling assignment. As the story continues, the reader learns that this 'starling' event proves to be the dividing line between Nate's apparent 'institutional assault' of Lucia and the fallout that leads to the girl going missing. Alecia is torn and unsure whether to support her husband, seeking to juggle the pointing when she is out in public with the realisation that Gabe might never be the 'normal' child she seeks. Lucia's disappearance turns into an even darker mystery, one that will make the massive avian raining event seem like a distance memory. Moretti draws on the dramatic development of small-town living to create this thriller that leaves the reader wondering how things will come together. A great read for those who enjoy a sense of surprise enveloped in a mystery fuelled by fractured relationships.

There is a great feel to this novel and Moretti's writing, as it pulls the reader in from the outset. Without

being able to compare it against some of her other work, I am left to offer my own independent sense of how things developed. While the seemingly core event, the starling mass death, opens the novel, it can soon be seen to take a backseat to the dramatic development of the alleged sexual relationship between Nate and Lucia. Moretti builds up all the characters, both central and surrounding, to reflect the news of this event, but also fleshes out a strong backstory to individualise them. Woven throughout the novel is the angst felt by teenagers as they grow into their own personalities and the struggles of trying to raise a child who does not fit easily into society's notion of normalcy. However, there is also the exploration of a couple torn apart because of their diametrically opposed interests in the family dynamic and the 'third wheel' friend/teacher, who is able to glimpse into the struggles of the student mind and the pain of seeing a colleague lose his way in his broken marriage. In essence, it is placing love in its various forms under the literary microscope. The mystery, which develops throughout the novel, is less the birds than the disappearance of a young student, one who has an agenda to divorce herself from the world and struggles to accept that she is not the most important person to the man she adores. Moretti ties things up effectively and yet tosses a curve at the end, leaving the reader wondering how it all developed and what could have happened to precipitate such a drastic outcome. A novel that forces the reader to play an active role and choose sides, Moretti is surely an author who deserves much attention by those who enjoy the genre.

Kudos, Madam Moretti, for taking me on this journey. I was left wondering throughout, both as it relates to the starlings and the larger town crisis.

Like/hate the review? An ever-growing collection of others appears at:
<http://pecheyponderings.wordpress.com/>

A Book for All Seasons, a different sort of Book Challenge: <https://www.goodreads.com/group/show/...>

Sandy *The world could end while I was reading and I would never notice* says

EXCERPT: 'He felt sick. No matter what happened now, everything had just gotten worse. All the pieces he'd been clinging to had flown apart, scattering what was left of his life in a million directions. He was in trouble, he'd been in trouble, but now he was more than in trouble, he was as dead as a person could be while still being alive. In one heartbeat, he envisioned Alecia and Gabe huddled together on the couch, himself in prison, a 20/20 special.He had no way of knowing that this moment would become the linchpin, the moment that all the moments after would hinge upon. The papers would call him a murderer; the police would come to him; his ex-friends, his gym buddies, the guys who knew him for God's sake; and say, Nate was the last one to see her alive, right? The last one is always the guilty one.'

THE BLURB: "Where did they come from? Why did they fall? The question would be asked a thousand times...

Until, of course, more important question arose, at which time everyone promptly forgot that a thousand birds fell on the town of Mount Oanoke at all."

In a quiet Pennsylvania town, a thousand dead starlings fall onto a high school baseball field, unleashing a horrifying and unexpected chain of events that will rock the close-knit community.

Beloved baseball coach and teacher Nate Winters and his wife, Alicia, are well respected throughout town.

That is, until one of the many reporters investigating the bizarre bird phenomenon catches Nate embracing a wayward student, Lucia Hamm, in front of a sleazy motel. Lucia soon buoys the scandal by claiming that she and Nate are engaged in an affair, throwing the town into an uproar...and leaving Alicia to wonder if her husband has a second life.

And when Lucia suddenly disappears, the police only to have one suspect: Nate.

Nate's coworker and sole supporter, Bridget Harris, Lucia's creative writing teacher, is determined to prove his innocence. She has Lucia's class journal, and while some of the entries appear particularly damning to Nate's case, others just don't add up. Bridget knows the key to Nate's exoneration and the truth of Lucia's disappearance lie within the walls of the school and in the pages of that journal.

MY COMMENTS: I struggled somewhat to become involved with this book. I didn't particularly relate to any of the characters, which is not necessarily a problem. But I was just over 40% into the story before I began to feel any kind of real interest, a spark, and that didn't last long.

The Blackbird Season by Kate Moretti is told from four points of view, that of Alecia, Nate, Lucia and Bridget, which wasn't a problem.

The characters are well portrayed and rounded out. Nate's life revolves around his baseball team and his students, with his wife Alecia and autistic son Gabe trailing somewhere behind in his priorities. He is not a bad man. He is very involved in the lives of his students, who both like and trust him. As do their parents. If he has a fault, it is that he is naive and can be arrogant.

Alecia's life is consumed by Gabe, their five year old autistic son. She is totally focused on finding a 'cure' for him, so that he can live a 'normal' life; so that she can live a normal life, so that she can be a soccer mum and one of the mums in the cliques at the school gate. She resents that she is stuck in the house every day while Nate is out there 'cavorting with his students' and monitoring their every move on social media. She resents that he seems to care more for them, than for his own wife and child.

There is a recipe for trouble to start with. Add in Bridget Harris, Nate's coworker and colleague, who is still depressed following the death of her husband, struggling with her job and who has always had a bit of a thing for Nate. And Lucia, trashy, blonde, abused and considered wierd Lucia who is randomly accepted and discarded by her classmates on a whim, and who has only ever had one true friend, Taylor. But even that is changing.

I so wanted to be captivated by the 'haunting, psychologically nuanced suspense, filled with Kate Moretti's signature "chillingly satisfying" (Publishers Weekly) twists and turns', but I wasn't. I regret to say that I didn't find it any of these things. Instead of suspense filled, I got angst filled. Disappointing? Yes, but if the book had been depicted more accurately, my expectations may not have been so high.

Thank you to Atria Books via Netgalley for providing a digital copy of The Blackbird Season by Kate Moretti for review. All opinions expressed in this review are entirely my own. Therefore if you enjoyed the excerpt above, please go ahead and read this book. For an explanation of my ratings, please visit my profile page on Goodreads.com or my 'about' page on sandysbookaday.wordpress.com.

This review and others are also published on my blog sandysbookaday.wordpress.com.

Meredith says

3.5 stars

Decent mystery filled with unlikeable characters.

The disappearance of a mysterious high school student who was supposedly having an affair with a beloved teacher turns a small town on its head in *The Blackbird Season*.

Mt. Oanake, a small mill town in Pennsylvania, is the kind of town that traps people. With little means to get out, most people wind up stuck in this little gossipy place. Baseball is one of the few things the town has going for it, and coach/teacher Nate Winters is considered to be the town savior. However, Nate's status changes in an instant when his affair with enigmatic student Lucia Hamm becomes front page news. Nate becomes the town pariah; he loses his teaching and coaching jobs, and his marriage is put in jeopardy. Further complicating matters, Lucia goes missing and Nate was the last person to see her alive.

The Blackbird Season is told through the POV's of four main characters: Lucia, Alecia (Nate's Wife), Nate, and Bridget (Nate's best friend). **I found all of the characters annoying, and this made it a bit of struggle to get through the book. However, I appreciated the mystery and I liked how I was constantly questioning Nate's innocence.** The opening scene is one of the most compelling parts, and I wish that more had been done with the role of the blackbirds. I also felt like a few things didn't add up, but I am not going to harp on them. Nevertheless, *The Blackbird Season* held my interest.

I received a copy of this book from NetGalley and the publisher in exchange for an honest review.

Holly B says

The Blackbird Season is a character driven, dark tale with transitioning POV between the 4 main characters (Alecia, Nate, Lucia and Bridget).

It begins in a small town in Pennsylvania at a high school baseball game. An ominous event....dead starlings raining down. This will become a recurring theme throughout the book.

The community is toxic in more ways than one. Lucia, a troubled and neglected teen-age girl is an outcast. Some of the other students have taunted her and labeled her a witch. Nate is a beloved and trusted teacher who becomes entwined in her personal life outside of school. Alecia is Nate's wife and wonders why he has taken such an interest in Lucia. Is it Lucia's wild white hair, her red lips, her youth? And then there is Bridget, a fellow teacher at the high school. She is a trusted friend of Nate and also Lucia's teacher.

After Lucia goes missing, the accusations and questions abound. What happened to Lucia? Why was Nate with her at a seedy motel? Who is to be believed, to be trusted? Will Nate's wife and close friends defend him or question his involvement?

The story is more of a mystery about what happened to Lucia. Although there were suspenseful moments, it was not an edge of your seat thriller in my opinion. Also, the mystery of why the birds fell was more of a

omen than integral part of the story. It is very well written with some shocking revelations, but not the type of thriller I was expecting! If you enjoy a story where you are questioning why and who, this is one you will enjoy.

Thank you to Netgalley/Atria books for Arc

Publication date is September 26, 2017

Book of Secrets says

3.5 Stars → When hundreds of dead starlings fall out of the sky, curious reporters flock to the grim scene - a baseball field in a small, down-on-its-luck Pennsylvania town. The birds prove to be a bad omen for local high school teacher, Nate Winters. One of the reporters spots him with a student named Lucia at a seedy motel, and then Lucia disappears. His wife Alecia is already at her wits' end, and the accusations against her husband are too much to bear. It seems the only person Nate has to defend him is fellow teacher and friend, Bridget Harris, who's read Lucia's troubling journal in class.

The mystery about what happened to Lucia was an intriguing one. The story is told by Nate, Alecia, Bridget, and Lucia in alternating chapters. Other than Bridget, none of them were particularly likable, though their predicaments held my interest. Something that was a bit jarring was how the dates/time jumped around from chapter to chapter. I had to go back several times to remind myself when something previous had happened. I think with four POVs the time jumps got confusing.

The setting of this book really stood out to me. The author captured the perfect dark and gritty atmosphere of a dying town with an abandoned mill. It gave me a feeling of unease throughout. I only wish the starlings had played a bigger part in the book. *THE BLACKBIRD SEASON* is a character-driven mystery with plenty of drama. Not a lot of big surprises, but it did keep me guessing.

Disclosure: I received a copy of this book from the publisher through NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.

Kendall says

The Blackbird Season was my first read by Kate Moretti. I have heard such wonderful things about her writing and was thrilled to explore this author.

Kate Moretti delivers a character based novel that alternates between our 4 main characters (Nate, Lucia, Alecia, and Bridget). This is a slow-burning mystery that takes you on one crazy ride trying to figure out who/what why?

Mt. Oanoke is a small town in Pennsylvania where nothing ever happens. Until, our opening scene at the baseball field where thousands of starlings fall out of the sky. (Can we say freaky?) The town starts gossiping and some believe it's bad luck or the air is polluted. Soon after the birds fall from the sky... darkness looms over Mt. Oanoke.

Lucia is a lonely teenager with a troubled childhood who accuses her teacher and coach Nate Winters of

having an affair with her. Not long afterwards, Lucia disappears and the town really starts to question what happened to her. Did Nate kill Lucia Hamm..the white haired girl who reads tarot cards? OR is something more sinister going on in this small town?

This novel is a slow burning suspense novel. I would not categorize this as a psychological thriller... not enough twists and turns for me. I definitely liked the shifting of characters which added a level of mystery for me. The characters are well developed and fits nicely into the story/plot line.

I was disappointed in the ending of the novel and was left wanting more. I felt like the mystery wasn't complete. I do have to say that I really liked how the blackbirds tied into the story... I loved how this had a supernatural/spiritual twist to it.

Overall, 3 stars for me.

Thank you to Netgalley.
