



## **Girl in Snow**

*Danya Kukafka*

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*Who Are You When No One Is Watching?*

When a beloved high schooler named Lucinda Hayes is found murdered, no one in her sleepy Colorado suburb is untouched—not the boy who loved her too much; not the girl who wanted her perfect life; not the officer assigned to investigate her murder. In the aftermath of the tragedy, these three indelible characters—Cameron, Jade, and Russ—must each confront their darkest secrets in an effort to find solace, the truth, or both.

In crystalline prose, Danya Kukafka offers a brilliant exploration of identity and of the razor-sharp line between love and obsession, between watching and seeing, between truth and memory. Compulsively readable and powerfully moving, *Girl in Snow* offers an unforgettable reading experience and introduces a singular new talent in Danya Kukafka.

## Girl in Snow Details

Date : Published August 22nd 2017 by Simon & Schuster (first published August 1st 2017)

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Author : Danya Kukafka

Format : Kindle Edition 368 pages

Genre : Mystery, Fiction, Thriller, Mystery Thriller, Contemporary

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## **From Reader Review Girl in Snow for online ebook**

### **Linda says**

The creaking of a playground carousel in the night wind is the only sound that settles in the darkness. It cradles the lifeless body of fifteen year old Lucinda Hayes. Tiny snowflakes drift and cling to the strands of her long blonde hair. Making no sound.....much like Lucinda herself.

Murder never sits well. Especially in small towns. Small towns like Broomsville in northern Colorado. The shock has far less space to travel in.

Danya Kukafka propels *Girl in Snow* forward with characters beset with deep, dark, raging turmoil. Young Cameron Whitley, strange and elusive, is so taken with Lucinda that he sneaks out at night just to watch her every move through her bedroom window. His reputation at school is the class freak who will never fit in. Jade has always held such animosity for the popular Lucinda since they were children. Jade barely exists in the abusive home of her alcoholic mother and sister. Russ, a police officer, goes through the motions of his deadend job. His marriage to Ines suffers from anger issues never fully dealt with on both sides of this equation.

*Girl in Snow* is lined with more of a YA flavor. Kukafka reveals the heavy angst and disappointments that seem to swallow up the younger characters in this storyline. There is the far too noticeable depiction of the weight of daily teen life in a one-horse town. We hear over and over again that life totally sucks. Each character seems to suffer from over-exposure due to the sunami of bruised and raw emotions that follow from page to page. These added elements to the storyline seem to overshadow the essential thread of the murder itself. "Because you're a freak, too."

Perhaps this was Kukafka's intention all along.....to present a multi-pronged storyline dealing with weakened friendships, questionable relationships, and unrequited love. The murder itself serves as a backdrop for these broken characters who use it as a springboard to express their heavy-laden backstories. Although a good read, it was just too many spins across the dance floor for me.

I received a copy of *Girl in Snow* through NetGalley for an honest review. My thanks to Simon & Schuster and to Danya Kukafka for the opportunity.

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### **Wendy says**

Love this cover and this book!

A murder mystery where a *Who Did It* is almost secondary to the three main characters and the delving into their lives and stories.

Lucinda Hayes, a popular high school student, is murdered and her body found on the carousel of a local park.

Told through the point of view of three complex characters it is compelling to see how their lives intersect following this tragedy.

A very well-written debut novel!

I look forward to what's next from author Danya Kukafka.

Thank you to NetGalley and Simon & Schuster for an arc of this novel.

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### **Liz says**

This is supposedly a mystery about a teenage girl who is murdered. But it's really a character study of three individuals- a young man that stalked her, a girl who hated her and a policeman. It's not a fast paced novel at all, instead there's lots of internal dialog. In fact, it's the opposite of fast. It moves at a glacial pace.

It is well written with lots of well turned phrases. The two teenagers are both odd, damaged souls. Friendless, they live in their own little worlds. Cameron literally spends most of his time spying on his neighbors. Russ, the cop, seems stuck in a dead end job and his marriage is stupefying.

But in the end, I just needed more action to make this one interesting for me. 2.5 stars rounded up given the quality of the writing.

My thanks to netgalley and Simon & Schuster for an advance copy of this book.

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### **Britany says**

I was intrigued by the blue eye on the cover, an eye that won't stop staring at me, and one that (despite myself) I can't stop staring at... an eye cloaked in sadness.

Lucinda Hayes shows up in the wee hours of the morning with a cracked skull on the playground carousel. She's undoubtedly dead with a beautiful soft layer of snow covering her body. The small town of Broomsville, CO comes together to try to find out who murdered this young woman. I was enraptured from the beginning and never even guessed the ending until it smacked me in the face.

Told in three perspectives: Det Russ Fletcher- the police officer hiding a past and has a suspicious brother in law. Cameron Whitley- the boy who continued to stalk Lucinda late at night because he was madly in love with her and suffers convenient blackouts. Last narrator is Jade Dixon-Burns, she might just be my favorite-emo, and does not give a flying flip about what anyone thinks or says. She goes to school with Cameron and Lucinda and helps tie this book together.

Who killed Lucinda? The character development was excellent- I really felt like I knew this town and the people that inhabited it. Love affairs, rumors, and secrets riddle the sidewalks and made this one that I could not put down. The author does such a fabulous job creating broken characters and slowly putting them back together again- I can hardly believe that this is a debut! Looking forward to move from Danya Kukafka.

Thank you to Netgalley and Simon & Schuster for an advanced copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

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## Eryn🌀 says

*I received a copy off of NetGalley in exchange for an honest review. This does not persuade my true opinion of the novel.*

### 2.25

So, this was quite ... *strange*. Very, very, strange - if I might say. At first, the story showed signs of promise, even if it seemed like all of the characters were border-line perverts (this is an exaggeration, but yes, there were just too many scenes focusing on sex - at least to me - plus, these characters are kids, so come on).

Gradually as the novel progressed, it slowly began getting worse and worse - up to the point where I didn't want to pick it up *at all*. That brief moment of a "oh, interesting, it's a fresh perspective" from the beginning, slowly drifted away as I tired of the shallow characters and plot.

Overall, I won't say more because I don't want to ruin anything for those who will read this. Regardless, I'm upset to give this such a low rating - however, because I did not enjoy myself and often found myself cringing as I was reading, I would say the rating is accurate.

\*Thank you to NetGalley, for giving me the opportunity to review this.\*

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## Bam says

\*3.5 stars.

This is the debut work of Danya Kukafka and I hope we will see much more from this young author. While it is a murder mystery, the solving of the crime is almost secondary to the delving into the psyche of the three unique characters from whose point of view the story is told.

The murder victim is Lucinda Hayes, a popular middle school student, whose body is found on the carousel of the local park. One of the first people to be suspected is Cameron, her neighbor and fellow student, a misfit and loner. Some say he stalked Lucy...he was occasionally spotted staring into her bedroom window, standing still as a statue. And later in his own room, he would draw sketch after sketch of her. Was it love or obsession?

Then there is Russ, the police officer investigating the crime, who used to work with Cameron's father, who left town after being accused of beating a woman during a routine stop--the woman with whom he was having an affair. Russ is struggling with his own unresolved feelings.

And the final character is Jade, another creative misfit student who resented Lucy for her perfect life--for stealing her boyfriend and her babysitting job. Jade's story is told in the first person which contrasts her dysfunctional family life with Lucinda's. Jade often mentally rewrites her interactions with other people as a scene from a play in which things turn out as she wishes they would. Jade is my favorite character and is somewhat the hero of the story when the killer is finally revealed.

I found this story to be quite satisfying on many levels and wish to thank the publisher and author for the offer to read an arc of the book through NetGalley.

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## Deanna says

My reviews can also be seen at: [https://deesradreadsandreviews.wordpress...](https://deesradreadsandreviews.wordpress.com)

3.5 Stars

I was quite intrigued after reading the description for, GIRL IN SNOW. The mysterious death of a small town girl and the secret lives of three individuals connected to her. A socially awkward boy who was in love with Lucinda, a teenage girl who despised Lucinda, and the detective investigating her death.

The story is told from the perspectives of Cameron Whitley, Jade Dixon-Burns and Detective Russ Fletcher.

The principal of Jefferson High School has called an assembly to tell the students about Lucinda's death. Cameron has quite a physical reaction to this news. After the announcement speculation starts immediately. Some said she was sexually assaulted, others said she killed herself, the rumors run rampant. A lot of students are genuinely sad, while others like the drama....

Cameron tries to recall where we was when Lucinda died, but he can't remember.

Cameron likes to play "*Statue Nights*". He started playing this at age twelve. He believes that if he stands perfectly still he can't be seen.

***"The game of Statue Nights began with the Hansens, next door. Cameron would stand on the curb outside their house for hours, watching them eat microwaved food, and argue"***

It's wasn't long before he started playing Statue Nights while watching Lucinda. Cameron has a lot of anxiety and often gets "*Tangled*". Tangled is a word he uses to describe when he gets worked up about something.

Jade Dixon-Burns.....straight up hated Lucinda and doesn't even try to hide it. Lucinda stole her babysitting job but most importantly she stole Jade's best friend. Jade is really irritated by the fact that Lucinda didn't seem to notice who she hurts. Jade often says whatever pops into her head. She feels like she can't even fake sadness over Lucinda's death.

***"faking shock is easier than faking sadness"***

Interspersed thought-out the book is a screenplay written by Jade. "***What You Want to Say But Can't Without Being a Dick***", was about what she said to people vs. what she'd wished she said.

Detective Russ Fletcher is an officer with a sketchy past who is investigating the death of Lucinda Hayes. He's been hearing rumors about Cameron Whitley and how he liked to follow and watch Lucinda. He has another connection to Cameron Whitley. The detective made a promise to someone years ago, a promise he

intends on keeping.

" *We've got a body* ", are words that Russ hasn't heard in all his years on the job, most of his career has been spent on things like speeding tickets....small time stuff. He'll soon find out that he's connected to this crime in ways he'd never have expected.

When he asks Cameron Whitley where he was the night of Lucinda's murder...

Cameron can't remember.

We learn more about the inner lives of these three characters. There are quite a few people who may have had reason to kill Lucinda. Was it Cameron, who liked to watch her and can't remember where he was when she was killed? Or Jade who so deeply despised Lucinda? Or could it be someone else? Cameron appeared harmless and I felt sorry for him. But harmless can also be dangerous. There's a fine line between love and obsession.

While the mystery surrounding Lucinda's death was intriguing, I didn't feel connected to Lucinda herself, only as the victim of this horrible crime. It felt like more of a character study than a mystery or thriller. Quite slow at times, I found myself having trouble staying connected to the story. However, there was some really beautiful writing, including quotes that I want to remember forever. But it felt like there was quite a bit of extra writing, as well as a few extra characters, whose purpose I didn't really understand.

All that being said, "Girl in Snow" was thought-provoking and interesting. I appreciated learning about the characters (some more than others). I especially enjoyed Jade's chapters, learning about her life, her mother, and the experiences that helped define her. It was interesting seeing how her character developed over the course of the novel. I loved the addition of her screenplay. I had no idea who killed Lucinda, although I had my suspicions. So how everything played out was quite surprising.

All in all, I thought this was pretty good for a debut novel, though I wished there had been more focus on the plot and less on each individual character. The writing was still very good and I would absolutely read more from this author.

Thank you NetGalley and Simon & Schuster for providing an advanced readers copy of this book for me to read in exchange for my honest review.

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### **Jasmine from How Useful It Is says**

About: *Girl in Snow* is a thriller written by Danya Kukafka. It will be published on 8/22/17 by Simon & Schuster, 368 pages. The genres are mystery, thriller, and fiction. This is the author's debut novel.

My Experience: I started reading *Girl in Snow* on 7/16/17 and finished it on 8/19/17 at 2AM. This book is a depressing read. It is very well written in fact, but none of the characters' lives are interesting. Each of them have some kind of loneliness and isolation. Cameron with his lonely life spending on watching Lucinda, Jade with her alcoholic abusive mom, and Russ with his marriage failure and secrets. One thing I like out of this book is Jade's screenplays. Her plays are titled, "What You Want To Say But Can't Without Being a Dick." I read this book slowly, word by word, trying to understand what's going on and I like that I could not guess what will happen next.

This book started out with the death of Lucinda Hayes, a sophomore, popular girl with beauty and brains, who seems to have it all. Readers will follow Cameron – a freshman with anxiety who is obsess with Lucinda, Jade – a junior who has “violent outburst due to insecurity” and watch Lucinda with “fascination, hatred, and jealousy”, and Russ – a police officer who makes promises and couldn’t live with his secrets. This book is told in the third person point of view where each chapter is focused on Jade Dixon-Burns, Cameron Whitley, and Russ Fletcher’s backstory and what’s going on in their life. Cameron is an oddball. He’s bullied by Beth as the kind of guy who would bring a gun to school. He’s obsess with Lucinda, drawing her portraits in his art class and watching her through her window at night. Jade’s rejection by Zap made her reckless. Jade’s mom is an alcoholic and would become emotionally and physically abusive to Jade and her sister. Russ’ marriage is crumbling. His brother in-law is an ex-con, a janitor that found Lucinda’s body, and a suspect to Lucinda’s death. Cameron couldn’t remember the night Lucinda was killed. Jade worries if her witchcraft practice had killed Lucinda. Russ promised to protect Cameron. The ending you won’t be able to guess!

This book is hard to enjoy when everyone is so broken. The writing is excellent. Each character is well developed. This book is best read slowly because it’s easy to lose interest trying to read fast. I couldn’t guess the bad guy, but it makes sense and it’s common knowledge. The story pin the blame on others so much that I stopped to realize the basic. At the end, I still question why Lee did what he did to Hilary Jameson because she’s no stranger. Why Russ got off the hook for what he did? What is the point with the homeless guy? In the end, I would still recommend everyone to read this book because parents should be active with their kids and everyone should remember to keep the curtains to your windows closed at all times!

Pro: mystery, multiple point of views, third person pov,

Con: sad characters

I rate it 4 stars!

\*\*\*Disclaimer: Many thanks to Simon & Schuster for the opportunity to read and review. Please be assured that my opinions are honest.

xoxo,

Jasmine at [www.howusefulitis.wordpress.com](http://www.howusefulitis.wordpress.com) for a detailed review

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## **Susanne Strong says**

3.75 Stars\* (rounded up).

"Girl In Snow" is a character study of three individuals whose lives are torn apart by the death of a young girl (Lucinda Hayes) they all knew. A boy named Cameron, because he loved her from afar; a girl named Jade, because Lucinda coveted the boy she loved; and a man named Russ, because he is a police officer investigating Lucinda’s death and because his brother-in-law, Ivan, is suspected of committing the crime.

At the onset of the novel, Lucinda's body is found on the school playground. There are only a few suspects. Cameron - because he is a social outcast - a freak if you will - and because he was in love with her; her art teacher Mr. O - who also happens to date Cameron's mom; her ex-boyfriend Zap - who used to be Jade's closest friend, as well as the boy she loved; and Ivan – (Russ' brother-in-law), who is the school janitor and

who has had some trouble with the law in the past.

Jade, being a misfit herself, befriends Cameron. She has always been invisible. To her parents, to her classmates, and to Zap. No one sees the real Jade. It is because of this that she has pretend conversations with everyone. Things she wishes she said, v. the things she actually says. It's this play that she is writing - for someone her age, it's kind of brilliant. And Cameron? He tries to untangle his thoughts of Lucinda from everything else that has happened in his life. And that is not an easy thing. For his life has not been an easy one. His father took off years ago. His dad was accused of this crime, and well everyone knew he was guilty, but he was acquitted. And then he took off. And now everyone just assumes, that Cameron is guilty of killing Lucinda. Because of his dad, and because Cameron is strange.. and because he used to watch Lucinda. Constantly. As for Russ - he works to find out who is responsible for Lucinda's death and ends up opening up wounds of his own. Wounds he thought he had buried a long time ago.

Dayna Kukafka a does an exceptional job of allowing the characters' to dig deep, and in doing so, gets to the heart of the story, and the heart of the crime.

"Girl in Snow" is an easy to read novel, with strong, well-written characters. Cameron and Jade, made this book. There were however, several extraneous characters that were not needed, and could have been extracted completely. Overall, the novel had more of a YA feel, though it was still quite enjoyable. I will say however, that the ending didn't quite "do it" – everything leading up to that was really quite good and then the ending was just kind of, well, less than stellar. That said, for a debut novel, I think Ms. Kukafka, did an incredible job and I look forward to seeing what she has in store next.

Thank you to NetGalley, Simon & Schuster and Danya Kukafka for an ARC of this novel in exchange for an honest review.

Published on NetGalley and Goodreads on 7.31.17.

\*Will be published on Amazon on 8.1.17.

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## **Sue says**

GIRL IN THE SNOW is the debut novel by Danya Kukafka, while listed as a mystery /thriller I feel is more of a character-driven mystery with YA overtones.

While this is the story of the murder of a small-town Colorado teenage girl, Lucinda Hayes, the novel focuses on three characters; Cameron who was obsessed with Lucinda, and stalked her, Jade who was jealous of Lucinda's good looks and Russ, the officer assigned to investigate her murder.

“In the aftermath of the tragedy, these three indelible characters—Cameron, Jade, and Russ—must each confront their darkest secrets in an effort to find solace, the truth, or both.”

All four characters have deep dark secrets.

I must say that I found this novel slow moving...I was disappointed as I felt that the focus was not on the murder/police investigation, but rather in the heads of three strange characters. I was looking for more action

and suspense to hold my attention. The prose is articulate, the pacing is slow, and the ending is predictable.

My thanks to netgalley and Simon & Schuster for the ARC.

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### **L.P. Logan says**

Disappointment, blasé, and boredom -- that is what I feel after having read this book. It wasn't that it was necessarily a bad story, but it wasn't good either. In fact I'm left wondering why I just wasted as much of my life as I did on it. Those are hours I'll never get back on a weak story line that never really delivered the punch it seemed to be alluding to. I feel cheated. Especially since the publisher put a note at the beginning saying that I simply wouldn't be able to put it down. I'm let down, and I hate that.

Read some Agatha Christie. You'll be happier with that.

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### **Karen says**

A good debut by first time author Danya Kukafka told from different perspectives. Kukafka has a clear understanding of her distinct characters, people with personal struggles who in some way relate to a murdered teenage girl. I only wish that this slow burner had more action related to the murder and less character study. Thanks to Simon & Schuster for providing an ARC in exchange for an honest review.

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### **Sam says**

*Girl in Snow* is a very nicely told tale of the inhabitants a small town in the wake of death of one of their own, a contemporary drama with a hint of the murder mystery and dark undercurrents of human behavior and thought. It's a not a thriller, despite the use of "girl" in the title, but I enjoyed it the more for not requiring any of the elements of a traditional or psychological thriller. The writing is quiet but powerfully observed, forming a character and community portrait with the murder mystery element a hook to draw in your attention. I'd give this 3.5 stars, and round up to **4 stars** for overall execution.

The three focal points of the novel are Cameron Whitley (the boy, Lucinda's stalker more or less, who is complicated and a bit odd in terms of how he perceives things and expresses himself), Jade Dixon-Burns (a few years older than Lucinda, outcast and different to Lucinda's easy beauty and popularity, and erstwhile rival for the affection and attention of a high school boy), and Russ Fletcher (the police officer whose former partner was Cameron's father, harboring his own secrets and guilt as the investigation proceeds into Lucinda's death). Kukafka switches perspective throughout (third person for Cameron and Russ, first person for Jade) and while this can be difficult, she really pulls it off seamlessly. Cameron is sweet, simple, heartfelt and innocent, but also a bit odd which can veer into creepy, his tendency to be "Tangled" and his shifting, untrustworthy memories early on lead us to suspect he knows or did more than he believes or knows consciously, especially as it's emphasized his long gone father did something criminal and brutal. Cameron's explicit watching of Lucinda mirrors how the other inhabitants of the town watch each other, into and involved in each other's lives. Jade is sharp, sarcastic, standoffish, but also creative and more than a bit brave. She's the perspective that gives us the most on Lucinda's past before her murder, and also what it

means to be a teen girl in suburbia, desperate to break out. She tries to reclaim her life by turning it into scripts, dialogue to achieve either a narrative outcome or emotional thrust she's looking for in her own life, with no friends anymore, a younger sister she dislikes yet protects, and an abusive, unfeeling mother. Jade was probably my favorite of the perspectives because I truly did feel immersed in her thoughts. Russ is the least important to the suburban mystery and town building, yet he is a compelling character on his own, dissatisfied with the state of his life and in denial about deeply hidden parts of himself, and his connection to Cameron and Cameron's absent father (his former partner on the police force) are compelling and mysterious at first, and ultimately poignant as we better understand the nature of their relationship.

It's not just the solving of Lucinda's murder, it is how a small town reels, grieves, casts blame. And of course how life goes on for the living, as bad or as good or as messed up as whatever came before her death. And it can be unsettling for the reader at times, as I certainly could recognize elements of my own past ideas or behavior or judgments in regards to a moment of collective consciousness. Overall I was surprised about how much I liked this read. Kukafka does provide the whodunit answer for the murder mystery framing the tale and wraps the story nicely, but the book (and my emotional involvement) was transcendent of the thriller trappings to be a very solid, well written, character driven novel. I would definitely recommend this.

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### **Kaceey - Traveling Sister says**

What started out as a traveling sister read quickly turned into a solo act...leaving me to finish this one on my own. This was no easy task! On more than one occasion I wanted to step away from it as well!

**Lucinda**, a local teenager is found murdered in a playground, buried under a light dusting of snow. Told from three POV. **Jade** - who blames Lucinda for stealing everything good in her life. **Cameron** - a classmate, and lonely neighbor, he harbored a long-standing and serious crush on Lucinda, bordering on stalking! And **Russ** - a policeman, who may have more than just a passing interest with the suspects, to be impartial.

This book had more of a YA feel to it than an actual thriller. I found it to be extremely slow moving, and seemed to nearly stall out completely about half way through. I just wanted it to come to a quick end, as I had little interest in the characters or the storyline. The only thing that kept me from a DNF was wanting to know who killed Lucinda. Unfortunately even that fell flat.

This book was just not a good fit for me.

Thank you to NetGalley, Simon & Schuster and Danya Kukafka for an ARC to review in exchange for an honest review.

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### **Cesar says**

My first disappointing read of 2018. We're off to a great start!

This was another case of "I really should've looked at other reviews first" and here I am facing the

consequences. At least I got it on sale so I didn't have to spend that much money. The silver lining in all of this. Kind of.

Anyways, **Girl in Snow** offered us 3 things.

- \* Small town murder
- \* Misfit characters
- \* Mystery

Instead, we got:

- \* No atmosphere of a small town murder
- \* Characters that need Jesus in their lives
- \* Lack of mystery

If you have read any other book about small-town mysteries, *Girl in Snow* is basically the same thing. Except where other small-town mysteries has characters that are engaging and a plot that can grab your attention, *Girl in Snow* lacks all that and is instead a novel about 3 people who have no idea what to do with their lives.

*Girl in Snow* has the tropes of a small-town mystery. A young high school girl, Lucinda, is found dead and the town is shocked that something bad happened to a young girl.

We then follow the lives of Cameron, a guy who basically stalked Lucinda. Jade, an edgy mid-2000s girl who didn't like Lucinda. And Russ, a police officer who doesn't give two flying fucks about what's going on.

In the 3 days I was reading *Girl in Snow*, I knew I wasn't going to enjoy it after I got a good look at the characters. I kept on going believing maybe the plot would be great because you can have a book with boring characters but have the plot be amazing. Sadly, that wasn't the case. By the time I finished it, I was glad to be done with it.

The biggest, major flaw with the story is the characters. Cameron, Jade, and Russ are cardboard. Plain, boring, cardboard.

If you're going to include characters that play a significant role in the story revolving around a dead girl, at least make them a bit interesting. I wasn't joking around when I described the characters earlier because that is their only character trait. Cameron is a stalker, Jade is angry, and Russ doesn't give a crap.

When Cameron was described as a boy who loved Lucinda, I figured it was something akin to a crush and he would be devastated by her death and would want to find answers. Except he loved her too much to the point where he would stalk her. Cameron is a stalker and that's all we get from him.

Jade is some pissed off girl who is pissed off all the time and didn't like Lucinda. You do know why she is like that and while I do sympathize with her, she didn't help with plot progression up until the end.

Russ, as I said, is just aloof and doesn't even seem to care about what goes on in the town and even in his personal life.

These characters could've helped with plot progression and made the mystery great if they showed any hint of personality. In books like *When We Were Worthy*, the characters do play an important role in what is

happening around them and can reveal secrets that could help with the plot. Cameron, Jade, and Russ didn't do anything whatsoever up until the end.

They didn't help plot-wise and didn't help present the story in a cohesive way.

The other main issue is the plot.

The plot of Lucida's death took a backseat to the characters and didn't have a huge significance to the story. The story primarily focuses on Cameron, Jade, and Russ while Lucida's death is only mentioned here and there when the plot develops. There can be a thing where the story and character development can be split 50/50 and you not only get a good plot but great characters. But it was like 80/20 with the characters taking up the spotlight while Lucida's death doesn't even see the day of light for most of the time.

Not to mention how it talks about one thing and suddenly goes on to a completely different subject. Like there would be talk about Lucinda's death and the next it's talking about Russ and his problems.

\*characters talking about Lucinda\*

Yes! Some progression!

\*next page, Russ talking about his past\*

Wait, what????

\*back to Lucinda's murder\*

Finally.

\*next page, Jade being pissed\*

Really?

The last flaw is the lack of atmosphere. For a book that is pegged as a mystery in a small town, it was lacking. Yes, I can visualize the setting but it didn't leave a lasting impression like most small towns.

The one good thing I will give to *Girl in Snow* would be the writing. There's no denying the writing style is written fantastically. And that's about it for the positives.

### **Verdict**

I wanted to give the books with mixed reviews a shot because I figured there would be something great about it I would like even if I felt mixed about it too. But with a lackluster plot and boring characters, *Girl in Snow* ended up being a disappointing read.

Thanks for reading my review!

-Cesar

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### **Diane S ? says**

2.5 There is no question that this author can write, her prose was outstanding. My problem was that this book was so incredibly slow moving, and too much time was spent on character development. The characters were not very likable, imho, and it wasn't until the end was near that I felt anything for them. The plot and the dead girl seemed to get lost in the effort to describe what seemed like every nuance of the three characters,

who are our narrators. More time spent on plot would have helped the pacing and my interest.

ARC from publisher.

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## **Noriko says**

I received this book via NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.

When I requested this book from NetGalley, I was expecting a full-on whodunit or mystery; the book descriptions did say so and it sounded quite promising and intriguing. Needless to say, I went into it expecting a 'propulsive' mystery that would keep me on the edge of my seat, a twisty plot that would have me guessing who the killer is throughout the book.

However, it took me nearly half of the book to realize this book probably isn't what I was expecting and that I probably should have started this book with a different mindset.

For me, this book is neither 'mystery' nor 'pulsating thriller'; it's more like accounts of introspective exploration of the three main characters – Cameron, Jade, and Russ. The mystery element is there, of course, and the investigation progress is touched on here and there throughout the book, but it seemed that it merely goes through the motions, I felt the focus of this book is to delineate the darkness in each characters' mind, a fine line between sanity and insanity, and the reflections of their past and wounds they were inflicted upon.

It is undeniably an understatement to say I was disappointed when the realization dawned on me, I even felt frustrated and wanted to scream – I almost did not finish this book.

That said, however, as soon as the realization clicked in, and as soon as I realized that I needed to change my mindset and look at this book from a different angle, this book started to grow on me. I finally came to appreciate what it is; this book started taking on a new meaning to me.

This book is incredibly slow-pacing; there's hardly any plot movement until we are well into the story – somewhere around 70% of the book. The clues and foreshadowing are scattered around, yet we only get a tiny droplet of information in each chapter, and that they are not at all explicit enough; it's got an ambiguous, hazy undertone to it. The story is mainly woven by those three characters' introspective reflections of their respective past, their relationships either with Lucinda or their loved ones. Some of them are totally inconsequential to the investigation nor the truth that leads to the killer, I sometimes wondered why I had to keep reading such accounts.

The writing is absolutely beautiful. It's lyrical, hypnotic and very descriptive. Her writing style fits really well with this plot, it consistently made me feel like I was in a thick fog, groping for the exit that leads to the killer.

One thing that had me wondering is the style of narration; Only Jade's chapters are narrated in the first person and Cameron and Russ's chapters are told in the third person omniscient. It's unique, but I didn't get to figure out why the author chose this writing style when telling a story from three characters' POVs. In addition to that, I didn't find their voices (not technically their 'voices,' given the other two characters' chapters are not in the third person) very distinct. They sounded quite similar, and I didn't get fully invested in any of the characters.

That said, though, I was really impressed with how strong the writing was when delineating the escalation of Cameron's voyeurism, Jade's near-desperate yearning for Zap, how slowly but steadily they get swallowed up in the darkness in their own mind and tormented by it.

Her writing described really well how flawed each character is, and how their thoughts wander around, flashing back and forth between the present and the past. It was really well done, I appreciate that.

The last 20% is such a page-turner. As the revelation of the true killer kicked in, it got really gripping and had me on pins and needles. The intense writing aided the suspense building up, I was totally hooked at this point.

I also liked this book ended on a positive note. The last 20% of the book is totally a redeeming factor for me. Although I initially disliked this book, feeling betrayed and misled, and I had some issues with this book for some things not being completely wrapped up at the end of the book, leaving some intrigues unanswered and hanging in the air, I am glad that I persevered and powered through the book.

It didn't blow my mind – certainly not – but I ended up liking this book – to some extent – and I am glad about that.

If you are a fan of such introspective writing style and like books that explore inner turmoil or struggles of the characters, this book is for you.

But if you are expecting mystery or thrillers that make your skin crawl, you might be hugely disappointed as I was.

Readers should bear in mind this is not your typical whodunit and I think the blurb is misleading and this should be promptly addressed.

I gave this book 3 out of 5 stars.

Thank you, Simon & Schuster and Net Galley for granting me an opportunity to read this book in exchange for my unbiased, honest review.

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## **Paromjit says**

This is a dense character driven mystery set in Broomsville, a small town on the outskirts of Denver, Colorado. A 15 year old popular student at Jefferson High School, Lucinda Hayes is discovered murdered, coated in snow. This is less crime fiction, more an insightful look at the repercussions of the death on the people of a small town. We never really get to know Lucinda herself, only how she is perceived through the eyes of others, and opinions of her differ substantially. There are a number of suspects with a motive to kill her from school janitor, Ivan and Cameron. There are short chapters that switch from the perspectives of outsiders Cameron, Jade and Detective Russ Fletcher, all interested in finding out what happened to Lucinda.

Cameron Whitely is a confused, lonely, anxious, odd and troubled student, he is fixated on Lucinda, believing himself to be in love with her with countless sketches of her. Others see him as obsessive and observe what they believe is stalking behaviour. His father, Lee, ran out years ago, and used to be a former police partner of Russ. Cameron's memory is hazy about where he was when Lucinda died, he worries that he could have carried out the killing. Russ ruminates about the nature of his long ago relationship with Lee. Russ's marriage is disintegrating, and he thinks Ivan, his brother-in-law, an ex-con, is responsible for the murder. Friendless, fat, but courageous Jade Dixon-Burns loathed Lucinda, she had everything Jade wanted,

including the boy she is interested in. Her homelife leaves a lot to be desired, and Jade wonders if the spell she had cast to rid herself of Lucinda is the reason for the murder. In the story, Jade expresses how she feels things should work out in the form of a script.

The revelation of Lucinda's killer takes second place to the lives affected by her death. This is not a book for those looking for a fast paced crime thriller, it is far too slow paced. This is for those who like a look at the layers of darkness that underly small town living and the unsettled and disturbed characters facing disillusion, disappointment and broken lives. Kukafta has a gift in exposing the rich interior lives of the characters, offering an in depth look at the misfits at the centre of the novel, who find Broomsville reluctant to accommodate them. This is a well written story with beautiful descriptions, that is not really interested in being plot driven. If you are interested in complexity in your reading, with a focus on relationships, then you are likely to enjoy this. Many thanks to Pan Macmillan for an ARC.

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## **Carrie says**

One snowy morning in a suburb in Colorado the body of a young high school student is found shaking up the small community. After the news is given to the other students Cameron finds himself sick to his stomach and mourning the loss of Lucinda Hayes, the girl he'd been watching and dreaming of forever. Jade finds herself wondering if the wish she made for the perfect Lucinda to disappear had been granted.

Russ finds himself working the case looking for whoever is responsible for the girl's death. It becomes known that Cameron was watching Lucinda and he's called in for questioning with the police wondering if he had taken things too far. However Cameron's memories of that night are a bit fuzzy and even he would like to know what happened to the girl of his dreams.

As much as I wanted to like *Girl in Snow* I came away with the thought that I just really didn't get this one at all. Being that it's supposed to be a mystery/thriller read it really didn't hold any of the aspects that attract me to that type of story. Basically a dead girl is found and at the end you find out the who/why but between those events the police are a joke and there really isn't much investigating but more digging into the characters lives.

Now as far as the characters in this story Cameron and Jade are both teens so it gives the book a bit of young adult feel with a big portion being told from their POV. But I can't see this one marketed towards that age with the sexual content involved either so that was also where I was left scratching my head. But on top of that I didn't really care for any of the characters or their actions. I supposed they are meant to be flawed in their own ways but to me their issues were just plain unlikable.

I'm leaving this read with the thought that I suppose there is an audience out there for any book or writing style but in regards to this one I just wasn't the audience it's meant for. But I'm not really sure what audience to recommend picking this one up as I felt the thriller side felt flat and the drama and character development fell flat to me also.

I received an advance copy from the publisher via NetGalley.

For more reviews please visit <https://carriesbookreviews.wordpress....>

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## **James says**

3.5 out of 5 stars to *Girl in Snow*, a new mystery and suspense novel written by Danya Kukafka and set to be released on August 1st, 2017. Many thanks to Simon & Schuster, NetGalley and the author for the opportunity to review an Advanced Reader Copy (ARC) of this novel. I enjoyed it and would be interested in reading more by this author.

### ***Why This Book***

This is slightly embarrassing, but I'm not one hundred percent certain how I came to read this book. I was awarded the novel on NetGalley in May, but I believe someone recommended it to me, or maybe the publisher reached out to me to take a look at it. I can't find any emails, which I normally save, or any comments that might refresh my memory... so bottom-line, it was part of a NetGalley list of books I wanted to read.

### ***Plot, Characters & Setting***

Lucinda is a teenager in a small Colorado town who is found dead in the snow on a school playground by a custodian. She was hit in the head with a blunt object and left to die. The story follows several people in the town who either knew the girl or knew of her, each having different opinions about whether Lucinda was a good person or a bad girl.

Cameron is the boy who loved her from afar, except someone knows he was stalking the girl and watching through her windows. He's had mini-breakdowns after his father left town years ago under very bad circumstances. He doesn't remember doing anything, but people close to him know he was missing, saw him talking to her and believe he's guilty.

Jade is a fellow schoolmate who did not like Lucinda. Lucinda stole the boy Jade loved, but the boy never really loved Jade. Jade is not upset that Lucinda is dead, but her younger sister is angry. Jade's mother treats her daughter poorly and seems to be hiding some sort of a secret.

Russ is the cop assigned to investigate Lucinda's death. He's harboring a secret about his friendship with Cameron's father, as well as the reasons Cameron's father disappeared. He's also certain the school custodian, who happens to be Russ's wife's brother, is guilty. He tries to navigate the situation, but finds himself stuck on the past.

A few other characters intersect, e.g. a couple with a young child that both Lucinda and Jade babysat for. A young school teacher accused of flirting inappropriately with his female students. And the friends and family members of all 3 main characters.

One of these people is guilty. But the question is who... and you'll need to read the book to find out.

### ***Approach & Style***

I read the novel on my iPad through Kindle Reader. It was about 4500 lines, which is about a 300 page hardcover -- not that long. Chapters are relatively short and alternate perspective from the 3 main characters: Cameron, Jade and Russ. The language and writing are absolutely beautiful. So much background and description are revealed in the narration and prose. There are limited amounts of dialogue.

Jade tells 2 sides of every conversation -- what she wishes she said (through a play she is writing) and what she actually said. For a young and new writer, the author has a firm grip on flourishing language. On occasion, it felt a little too simple, but it balanced out from the lengthy details of everything else going on in the background.

### **Strengths**

The best part of the story is the absolutely beautiful descriptions of the characters and the scenery. Everything feels authentic. The plot is complex in that there are different levels of relationships happening behind the scenes, which readers only see when certain characters happen to stumble on the supporting cast. It's a good approach to hold interest in the story. The plot has many interesting sub-components, which help reveal who people really are on the inside versus who they appear to be on the outside.

### **Concerns**

I didn't know enough about nor care much for Lucinda. A lot of details were revealed about her, but she's dead when the story starts. As a result, I felt like she could have been anyone as opposed to having a real strong desire inside me to want to know who killed her. I felt less of an attachment to her, but if it were written a little differently, I think it would have been an easy 4 rating for me. Also, once the killer is revealed, there is no scene explaining how/why it happened. You have a hint at the reason for the murder, but you never actually watch or hear the scene played out from either the narrator or a confession from the killer. It felt like a bit of a letdown.

### **Author & Other Similar Books**

This is a very typical story about 3 seemingly disconnected characters where you have to figure out how everyone knew each other. There are a lot of similar type stories on the market right now, as it's a popular genre and sub-genre. In a way, it was similar to "Beartown" in the structure, focus on teenagers and the mystery portion. But it was also like "I Found You" where the 3 stories will intersect somehow, but you just don't know until the end, but also that this this was about teenagers and "I Found You" was not only about teenagers.

This is the author's first book. She definitely has writing talent and storytelling abilities. I think with more experience, she'll flush out some of the areas that felt a bit weak to me and become a fantastic and creative author in this genre. I'm glad I read it and will chance her next book.

### **About Me**

For those new to me or my reviews... here's the scoop: I read A LOT. I write A LOT. And now I blog A LOT. First the book review goes on Goodreads, and then I send it on over to my WordPress blog at <https://thisismytruthnow.com>, where you'll also find TV & Film reviews, the revealing and introspective 365 Daily Challenge and lots of blogging about places I've visited all over the world. And you can find all my social media profiles to get the details on the who/what/when/where and my pictures. Leave a comment and let me know what you think. Vote in the poll and ratings. Thanks for stopping by. *Note:* All written content is my original creation and copyrighted to me, but the graphics and images were linked from other sites and belong to them. Many thanks to their original creators.

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