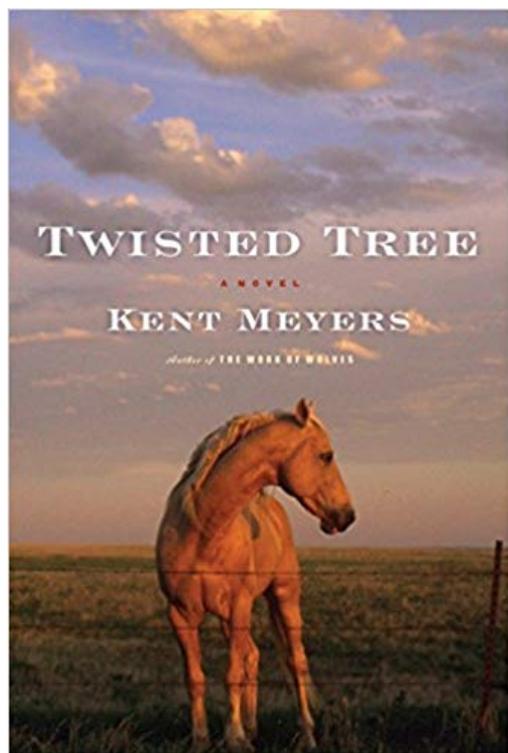


Twisted Tree *by* Kent Meyers



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Author: Kent Meyers

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Hayley Jo Zimmerman is gone. Taken. And the people of small-town Twisted Tree must come to terms with this terrible event—their loss, their place in it, and the secrets they all carry. In this brilliantly written novel, one girl's story unfolds through the stories of those who knew her. Among them, a supermarket clerk recalls an encounter with a disturbingly thin Hayley Jo. An ex-priest remembers baptizing Hayley Jo and seeing her with her best friend, Laura, whose mother the priest once loved. And Laura berates herself for all the running they did, how it fed her friend's addiction, and how there were so many secrets she didn't see. And so, Hayley Jo's absence recasts the lives of others and connects them, her death rooting itself into the community in astonishingly violent and tender ways. Solidly in the company of Aryn Kyle, Kent Haruf, and Peter Matthiessen, Kent Meyers is one of the best contemporary writers on the American West. Here he also takes us into the complexity of community regardless of landscape, and offers a tribute to the powerful effect one person's life can have on everyone she knew.



Reviews of the *Twisted Tree* by Kent Meyers

Mohn

Don't let the creepy story of the I-90 killer luring a victim into his car put you off - the novel really isn't about the I-90 killer, rather it is a collection of vignettes about the people in the town of Twisted Tree, where the victim is from. The writing is powerful, the drama intense, and the characters authentic. Each character's story stands on its own, and they can be both heartbreaking and joyful. Kent Meyers is a master of tension and the slow reveal, as nuanced and detailed as Conrad and as invigorating as Melville. The audiobook is outstanding.

Siratius

No spoilers in this review.

This story is told from the POV of different characters, from chapter to chapter. The story starts out from the POV of a serial killer who kidnaps and kills a young anorexic girl named Hayley Jo Zimmerman. It is a gripping chapter, and we feel both horror at the young victim's fate, and a feeling of disconcertion at being inside the mind of a disturbed sociopath.

From that chapter on, we go on to see how this murder has affected other people from this small Texas town. We hear from her father, from a (former missionary) store clerk, and from the victim's former best friend among several others. We even go back and hear again from the killer.

First, let me say that this was a very different read for me. I am a big fan of suspense novels and mystery books, and this sounded like something I would like. But it wasn't what I expected. After the first chapter I found this book a slow-go. Because we keep switching characters and POV, it takes a while to adjust to each new chapter. This had an effect on the flow of the narrative for me, and it took me several sittings to get through this book.

I think that if you are looking for the usual quick, suspenseful mystery novel, this is not your book. It is not a linear trip from crime to denouement and it isn't meant to be. Instead, it is an ambitious and different story that looks at the serial killer genre in a new way - and the focus is on the lives of different characters. I'm just sorry that for me this wasn't as compelling as I would've liked it to be.

Samardenob

Faulknerian, but too many characters

Tori Texer

yes

Molotok

This book was extremely difficult for me to read. The whole thing seemed very disjointed. Each chapter would finally reveal a connection to the characters in the first chapter, however it was a brief and tenuous connection. I was hoping the last chapter would bring everything back around and it really didn't. I don't think I'll be reading any more books by Mr. Meyers.

Negal

I read "The Work of Wolves" several years ago when I still lived in South Dakota. I shared it with my son Bill who said it might be the best book he'd ever read (all of my kids and I read quite a bit.) I have not yet finished "The Twisted Tree," but I just finished the chapter about the rattlesnakes which moved me more than I can say. I have to say that I believe Kent Myers will be considered one of the best writers of the 21st century. I've read James Joyce, Thomas Wolfe, Steinbeck, all of William Faulkner, Harper Lee, and a number of other fiction writers my professors at Emory assigned quite a few years ago.

Kent Myers' work is sensitive, non-trite, sincere, and insightful into people and their complex motivations. When I re-read his work, it is like meeting a dear friend once more.

His work is not a smooth read, but rather like a weekend spent with a good friend who's funny,

smart, and stretches your thinking processes.

I hope Kent will share many more of his works with us when the muse visits him. I have a real reason to live to be 100 years old now that I can look forward to more work from this special person.

Ballagar

I loved his book-The Work of Wolves-but this one has no story line and was a horrible read. Don't bother buying this one..

Within the first two pages I loved the style of writing; this was not at all what I expected but it held my attention throughout and has given me a lot to think about. Wonderfully written; I have since read everything I can get from Kent Meyers.

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