



Moth Girls

Anne Cassidy

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Helplessly drawn like moths to the light, two girls go missing in an evocative and gripping tale . . .

They called them the Moth Girls because they were attracted to the house. They were drawn to it. Or at least that is what is written in the newspapers that Mandy reads on the anniversary of when her two best friends went missing. Five years have passed since Petra and Tina were determined to explore the dilapidated house on Princess Street. But what started off as a dare ended with the two girls vanishing. As Mandy's memories of the disappearance of her two friends are ignited once again, disturbing details will resurface in her mind.

Moth Girls Details

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From Reader Review Moth Girls for online ebook

Liz Barnsley says

****4.5 stars****

The Moth Girls is a tense and atmospheric character fuelled novel that is beautifully written and very compelling.

Mandy is watching a house being demolished – years earlier that house swallowed up her two best friends. They went in, they never came out. As the memories of that time begin to surface, she realises that she may know more than she thought as seemingly obscure events take on new meaning..

There were a few reasons why I really liked The Moth Girls – firstly the plotting is solid and addictive, the story unfolds in a way that gives you a real insight into the characters and the events – also the mystery element was well imagined and didn't necessarily follow along the standard lines. Often surprising and with an authentic feeling throughout, the ending too matched the rest, not necessarily expected yet realistic.

I liked the dynamic between the three girls as Mandy looks back over their friendship – their mixed and matched personalities – Mandy herself is a mess of contradiction at times, obviously affected deeply she just wants to know the truth and move on.

Another aspect I thought was excellent was the attitudes and actions of the parents of the missing girls – Tina's mother is especially sympathetic, Anne Cassidy makes it easy to relate to her especially if you are a parent yourself, even seen as she is through the eyes of another.

Overall a clever, engaging and intriguing story, one that I would definitely recommend.

Bee (Heart Full of Books) says

I literally could not put this book down, it's probably one of the best told YA Mystery/thrillers that I have ever read. Excellent characters and explanations. Mandy especially was so REAL.

Kim (The Book Sanctuary) says

So..... this book was such a a disappointment. I wouldn't say a major one, but it was so bad, I was frowning throughout wondering what the actual shit was going on.

Review to come.

Jayne Downes says

Quite an interesting story about three girls, two of them had gone missing aged twelve after sneaking into the mysterious home of an old man on the same night he was murdered. Five years later, Mandy who did not go into the house with her friends lives with guilt because of her actions on the night, gradually the mystery of what happened to Tina and Petra is uncovered. Not as good as "Looking for JJ", but I think year 9 and 10 girls may enjoy it if they can cope with the British setting and writing style.

Paula Phillips says

One of my first authors that I started reading when I first found my thriller and crime bug was Anne Cassidy with her book Looking for JJ . Since then, I have tried to read her books when they are released and the latest one to hit our shelves at the library was Moth Girls . Moth Girls is set five years after two of Mandy's friends disappeared and vanished without a trace as no bodies ever turned up , it was like they had vanished into thin air. Five years ago, there were two best friends Petra and Tina and they did everything together and then Mandy came along and Tina enjoyed Mandy's company and despite Petra's objections - Mandy was slowly let into their group of two. Mandy over the next year became more Tina's friend than Petra's. One night when they were twelve years old , Petra and Tina decided to go exploring in an old abandoned house and Mandy stayed home. That night the girls did not return and vanished never to be seen or heard from again. Over the past five years, Mandy swears she has seen Petra around - is she hallucinating or are the girls alive still and where have they been hiding all these years ? As Mandy's memories start to flood back about that night, we learn the truth of what really went down five years ago in that creepy abandoned house which caused two girls to disappear of the face of the earth. The only thing I will warn you about readers is that due to the author being British - often I find British mysteries and fiction in general to be a little more slow-paced and Moth Girls is one of those slower paced books. Reading it however reminded me of the new TV show on Freeform "Guilt".

If you are looking for a new British teen mystery to put your brains to the test and work those Sherlock Holmes crime solving and deduction skills - check out Moth Girls by Anne Cassidy today.

Petra says

Moth Girls is the story of three teenage girls; two of them go missing and the third is laden with guilt. The story is mainly told from Mandy's point of view starting five years after the disappearance of Tina and Petra. It goes back and forth in time slowly revealing what happened that one night when Tina and Petra went into a mysterious, old house while Mandy decided to go home. I enjoyed the mystery part of the story, which was quite refreshing. It wasn't your usual whodunit and had some interesting twists as well as a more realistic and believable ending than some others I've read lately. However, I found it difficult to get really absorbed because of the basic style of writing. Considering the setting in present day London, the three girls also didn't feel like very authentic characters. I just couldn't imagine teenagers talking and behaving in this manner. I had a difficult time connecting to them.

So overall, this was neither bad nor really good. Hence, 3 stars. A suitable book for younger young adult readers I guess. No bad language and only mild violence.

I received a copy via NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.

Suze Lavender says

Tina and Petra are Mandy's friends. One evening when they're all together Petra dares them to go into a house that fascinates her. Mandy doesn't want to come along. She watches her friends go inside, but they never come out again. Five years later when the house is being demolished Mandy still hasn't been able to accept what happened in her past...

Mandy has been through a lot. She's feeling guilty that her friends never came home while she's still alive and well. She has no idea what happened to them and the police haven't been able to find out either. Their disappearance might or might not be connected to a murder, but nobody knows the facts. Mandy has difficulties making new friends and she isn't happy. Will coming to terms with the past make the present easier? It's a good question and a great topic for a book. The story started strong and fortunately it stayed that way from beginning to end.

I read this book in one sitting. I couldn't wait to find out the truth about that night. Mandy hasn't been able to move on, she's still the girl she was when her friends disappeared. And it doesn't help that she's that girl, the one who stayed behind, either. I loved how Anne Cassidy plays with emotions. The book has a strong plot and the ending is surprising. *Moth Girls* is a gripping read, a book that will keep you on the edge of your seat from beginning to end.

Michael says

Five years have passed since Mandy's friends Petra and Tina went into a mysterious house of an old accountant and was never seen again. All these years later Mandy looks on as the house is to be demolished. The cases of the girls are still open with the general belief being that they are dead but without bodies, there is a chance that may not be the case.

As Mandy thinks back to that fateful night, her conflicted thoughts start to come together as she realizes that she knows a lot more than what she first thought. What is revealed is one of friendships in the face of great danger, child abuse and having to face a complete change of direction. Things are not what they seem as the truth about what really happened to the "Moth Girls" is brought to light.

This book captured me in so many ways. The writing for one was first class and is easily one of the best mysteries I have read in a long time. Without cliché, Anne Cassidy guides us the readers along a path that will keep you thinking till the very end. Character development is another strong point as we learn about what really happened to the girls and their backgrounds. The best part though for me at least was the intelligence of the writing that makes for a book that whilst labeled as YA, can, in fact, be read by anyone. Tense and intriguing in its delivery, *Moth Girls* is a quality read.

Maddie says

Not what I was expecting but still a quiet, intriguing story. Petra's character is one I'll be thinking about for a while, and her perspective was my very obvious favourite.

Lisa says

I went into this book with an open mind wasn't expecting a lot & boy was i right!! the writing for a start was simplistic very basic for an author who is supposed to know how to write, it reminded me of a very YA this is not for adults think this would suit 13 to 15 year olds.

There was no tension build up at all i knew i was in trouble when you start to skim chapter after chapter the premise sounded good but it just didn't work for me.

READ AT YOUR OWN PERIL

Kirsty says

This was a quick read but felt ultimately pointless. There are no interesting plot twists or reversals, the characters don't really develop or change, and it doesn't seem to be making any point at all. I was really hoping that this would be a book about the hidden darkness of teenage girls, and the twist would be that Mandy had knowingly allowed Petra and Tina to be hurt, or even that she'd killed one or both herself. If that's the book you want to read: sorry, but this isn't it.

rachel says

Review copy provided by the publisher for an honest review.

Moth Girls sounded a little bit like a young adult version of *Where the Memories Lie* since they're both stories about women whose best friend/s disappeared without a trace when they were in high school. But while Sibel Hodge crafted a gritty, edgy story about grief, reputation and the lengths one will go to to protect their loved ones, *Moth Girls* barely managed to create a suspenseful atmosphere successfully. The story follows Mandy whose two best friends, Petra & Tina, disappeared five years ago, but despite what the synopsis leads you to believe, this isn't about Mandy trying to find out what happened to the girls. No, not at all. This is a contemporary story through and through. It's split into parts and for the first 150 or so pages all we get is a detailed account of what Mandy's life is like now – it's mainly her pining over her very hot best friend, occasionally broken up with some wondering about how much she is to blame for her friends' disappearances. Maybe this would have been interesting if Mandy wasn't so annoying, but I couldn't get into her voice at all. She was a little too flat and dull for me to really care about... which is not taking her sexist slut-shaming of her best friend's girlfriend into consideration. I'm sick of that trope. Oh, and I hated how she changed her style and even her personality, to a certain extent, for her best friend – he liked vintage clothes so she scuffed her brand new heels to make them look like op shop bargains. I wanted to yell at Mandy that if this guy doesn't like her because she wears brand new shoes then he isn't for you. You run girl, you run far away from that.

But getting back to the story, we did get parts from Petra's POV later which was *so* much better. Petra had

substance as a character. She was realistic and lovable (she had a *Friends* addiction!) and since we knew that something awful was going to happen to her, there was a little tension in waiting to see what that was. My mind was busy trying to tie all the threads together. But we didn't really get any of the thrilling stuff until the last thirty or so pages... and it was too little, too late by then. The reveal didn't make sense if I'm being honest. It wasn't explained well at all. It was just there, and somehow meant to satisfy our curiosity. As if spending over 250 pages with these characters, we wouldn't have wanted to know why they disappeared! News flash – we do. Very much so.

Overall, this wasn't a poorly written story, it just was more of a contemporary than a thriller and that made me pretty sad. I did enjoy Petra's perspective much more than Mandy's and if the story had been written completely from her POV, maybe I would have enjoyed it more? The non-existent ending was just icing on the cake. Not okay. If you are looking for a well-written and engaging emotional thriller then I definitely recommend picking up *Where the Memories Lie* instead.

Dorian says

This is doing my damn head in

DNF @ 10%

This is written really badly. The sentence structure is ridiculously simple, so basic that I thought the main character was twelve in the first chapter and it was deliberately narrated to sound like a kid. But nope, she's meant to be seventeen.

"He was humming under his breath. He'd moved on from the comment he'd just made. It was another reason why she liked him. He didn't dwell on bad experiences. He was upbeat, ready to change the subject. She appreciated that."

I can't deal with any more of this. Every fuckin' paragraph looks and sounds exactly the same. At this point, I'd drop dead of shock if I found a sentence that contained more than one comma.

Aimee says

I received a copy of *Moth Girls* to review from Allen and Unwin New Zealand. I don't remember what drew me to this book but I'm glad I found it.

This book is told in two different perspectives, Many and Petra's. One in the present and the other five years ago. I like how this story was told, first in the present and then a flashback to five years ago.

It took me a while to figure out what happened to Petra and Tina but I eventually did. It wasn't what I was expecting to happen but that's one of the reasons I liked this book.

I felt really sorry for Mandy. The way Petra treated her clearly affected her friendships as she grew up. I'm glad she figured it out and made some friends.

What happened to Petra and Tina is such a horrible thing for parents to go through. Especially all the unanswered questions about where their child has gone. There was such a great twist to this story.

I wish Mandy's last chapter was a little longer but it was a good place to end her story. She had done a lot of growing throughout the book and I think she made the right decision, it would ruin too many lives if she had done things differently. Now Mandy can let go of all her guilt and move on.

I really enjoyed *Moth Girls*. It was beautifully written and had some great twists to the story.

Renny Barcelos says

Again, more like a 2.5 stars, but according to Goodreads rating 3 is for "I like it" and I can't honestly say that about this book. This novel had promise, specially being a British mystery about missing girls, a kind that normally is in my top rating shelf. Unfortunately, this one felt flat for me.

One thing that bothered me was how Mandy and the other youngsters talked; as far as I know, no one that young (either in the 12 or the 17 year old part) speaks like that. It was too formal, too proper to sound genuine and that probably made me not to engage with the characters. Also, some parts dragged way longer than needed.

The only one I cared about in this book a bit was Tina; she seemed real and sweet. Petra and Mandy are not likeable people; they have their reasons but still, they didn't seem believable to me so it was hard to keep interested in their lives.

The mystery itself was at the same time too simplistic and too far-fetched. I didn't know this was possible, but indeed it was.

I'd like to thank NetGalley and the publisher for providing me with an ARC of this novel in exchange of my honest review. This fact did not affect my opinion in any way.
