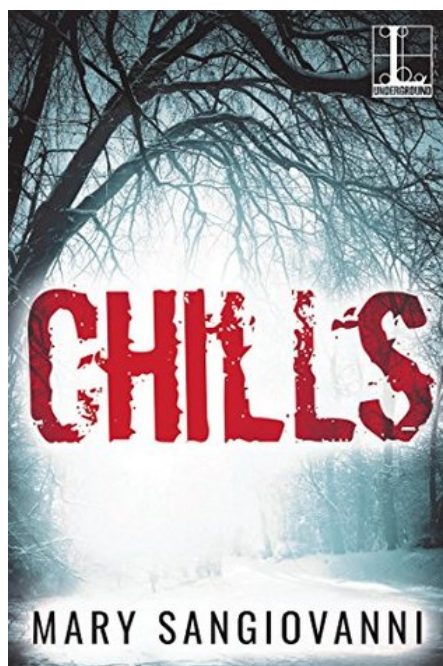




Chills

Mary SanGiovanni

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“True Detective” meets H.P. Lovecraft in this chilling novel of murder, mystery, and slow-mounting dread from acclaimed author Mary SanGiovanni...

It begins with a freak snowstorm in May. Hit hardest is the rural town of Colby, Connecticut. Schools and businesses are closed, powerlines are down, and police detective Jack Glazier has found a body in the snow. It appears to be the victim of a bizarre ritual murder. It won't be the last. As the snow piles up, so do the sacrifices. Cut off from the rest of the world, Glazier teams up with occult crime specialist, Kathy Ryan, to uncover a secret society hiding in their midst.

The gods they worship are unthinkable. The powers they summon are unstoppable. And the things they will do to the good people of Colby are utterly, horribly unspeakable...

Chills Details

Date : Published September 27th 2016 by Lyrical Underground (first published September 21st 2015)

ISBN :

Author : Mary SanGiovanni

Format : Kindle Edition 190 pages

Genre : Horror, Fantasy, Paranormal, Fiction, Lovecraftian, Suspense

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From Reader Review Chills for online ebook

Kaisersoze says

Chills is Mary San Giovanni's mash up of Lovecraftian horrors from beyond this dimension with a police procedural results in something quite new and engaging. Starting out in the fairly standard fashion of a unit of detectives examining the remains of a murder victim, San Giovanni wastes little time in accelerating events so that all manner of deadly creatures are soon running rampant. Four detectives must band together to determine what is happening and why, and put a stop to proceedings before The Old Ones can emerge from their dimension and commence the destruction of everyone and everything ...

Chills excels when it is focusing on the monsters and the death and destruction they wreak on the town of Colby. San Giovanni has an excellent eye for detail, making for creatures that are fleshed out and readily imaginable. Her prose is also usually very good insofar as being lyrical and entertainingly varied as evidenced by the more than one occasion when I paused to appreciate a particular turn of phrase or paragraph construction.

However, the book's characters are not as well drawn or engaging as they might have been. Jack's scenes, in particular, fell largely flat for me with his motivations and personality quirks being extremely cliched. And the sections focusing on the police efforts - other than those involving one of the main characters, Kathy, and her occult investigations - tended to drag.

As such, what starts as a fantastic read, eventually becomes decent, with an ending that wrapped up far too neatly for my tastes.

Nevertheless, I definitely enjoyed enough here to be interested in finding more of San Giovanni's back catalogue, and will focus that search on her more horror-centric titles.

3 Doors Unlocked for **Chills**.

The preceding was made possible by an eARC provided by Netgalley and Kensington Publishing in exchange for an honest review

Karl says

Mary SanGiovanni's "The Blue People" is a beautifully produced book from Thunderstorm Books. The dust jacket is stunning.

"The Blue People" takes place in Colby, Connecticut. The month is late May, almost June, yet the snow continues to inexplicably fall. The town is completely cut off from the outside world. no cell service, no phone service, no communications except within the town limits itself.

Then the killing starts.

A poorly defined cult of six or eight acolytes has found the key to open a doorway to the abyss that will allow the old ones to return, make them powerful and consume the remainder of mankind.

Kathy Ryan a freelance occult investigator joins forces with the Colby police department to determine the

cause of the problem. Kathy's insane brother currently in an asylum just happens to be familure with the cult.

Mary SanGiovanni has the ability to be an exceptional writer. There are portions of this novel that let her ability shine through. This was not one of her best offerings.

This is copy 14 of 66 signed numbered copies signed by Mary SanGiovanni.

Magdalena aka A Bookaholic Swede says

It was the hope of reading something really chilling was what drove me to read this book. And, at first, I thought that it would turn out to be pleasant reading. I liked the feeling of a doomed city that is taken over by snow monsters and a little group of people trying to save the town, and the world. However, somewhere along the way the story just lost the appeal for me. I think one of the main reason was that the characters were not very memorable. In the end, I think Morris was the only one that was interesting reading about, the rest just lacked anything substantial. I had high hope for Kathy making the book interesting with her dark background, but in the end, she turned out to be spending most of the time trying to find a spell to reverse the opening of the door to the other world. And, thus the one character in the book that really appealed to me when I started to read the book faded into the background. Yes, I did find Kathy and Teagan in the beginning an interesting "couple", But, then I lost interesting in them both when they started to get cozy in the middle of danger.

Also, I think the story should have been built up a bit better, with a slower start, then there would have been more anticipations for larger and frightening things to happened. Now it was just killing from the beginning to the end, and because of that, there was no thrill in reading the book because you hardly got to know any characters, more than the cops. The rest was just people waiting to be killed. No point in getting attached because most people they were killed as soon as they were introduced. Sure, one or two survived, but they were in the story for a page or two never to be heard of again.

And, another problem was that it was not frightening to read, not even a bit chilling. Hell, I was mostly bored towards the end of the book and just wanted the book to end so that I could read something else.

So, the book started promising, then the story started to get more and more uninteresting and the ending was quite dull. Not, a book for me.

I want to thank Kensington Books for providing me with a free copy for an honest review!

Bill says

Fattails and Spider hands and Anglerfish, oh my!

Not to mention occult detectives, the Blue Man group and a gaggle of crazy cultists bent on trying to bring about a true New World Order.

Or bring back the Old World Order is more like it.

This was good. I enjoyed it. The storyline flowed and I really liked the writing style, which felt effortless and easy. My only peeve is that there were too many "nasties" running around to really focus on one or two.

They were excellent “nasties”... just too many of them and I got confused with who was who doing what. There were at least two or three stories worth of beasts here that I would have liked to read more about.

And now a meaningless rant about nothing pertinent to the story...

For whatever reason, I feel that I have been giving way too many 4-star ratings lately and there is no reason for that other than my brain thinking “Dude, wtf, can’t you rate anything else but a 4? Are you in love with the 4 star button? It’s too vague. Too easy. Too many 4’s in your life. Nobody is going to take your ratings seriously!”

Oh yeah...my ratings aren’t for other people. They’re for me. I just share them and put them out there for my friends and other readers. I am not a huge fan of the Goodreads 5 Star rating system and would like to see half stars available at some point (Hear me Goodreads?). I like the Amazon 5 Star rating system even less, so I shouldn’t complain.

Sorry for getting off track there, Mary...

So here’s my 4 Star rating ;)

A solid 3 Star story with 5 Star creatures and 4 Star writing. Wait for it...this is me doing math... = 4 Stars! Can’t f*ck with the math.

Me no mathing good aside, I will be reading more of Mary’s work for sure.

Jon Recluse says

When a rogue late season snow storm cuts off the town of Colby, Connecticut, the weather proves to be the least of problems for the stranded locals. Bodies are turning up in the snow, victims of ritual murder and something far worse. Joining forces with an enigmatic occult crime expert, police detective Jack Glazier finds himself in a race against time, for as the snow rises, so does the body count....and the bizarre goes off the charts. A cult has come to Colby, one with the keys needed to unleash an unspeakable horror upon the small town...and the world.

A fast paced horror/police procedural, populated with well rounded characters, an intriguing new spin on Lovecraftian style Mythos building, and enough chills to cut your air conditioning bills, SanGiovanni's latest delivers.

Highly recommended.

This was an eARC from Netgalley.

Lisa says

What can I say will keep this a short review the plot was intriguing but this was way out of my comfort zone occult killings a snow storm as the snow fell more bodies show up with the same occult markings but WHO DID IT AN ANIMAL OR SOMETHING OR SOMEONE MORE SINISTER!! this book was not for me but the intensity was high.

Bark says

This review and the rest of the crap I write can be seen @ my blog Bark's Book Nonsense . Stop by and say hey.

*I received an ARC from Netgalley with an unspoken promise to pen a review. Here it is.

Investigators are attempting to figure out who left a dead body with a strange occult marking lying around just as an unseasonable snow storm starts moving in. This isn't just any old winter storm either. This storm brings with it man-eating monsters!

The writer had me at flesh eating monsters but I have to admit that she lost me a bit somewhere along the way and this book started to drag. It could simply be me and my aversion to books that feature all action at the expense of character building. In my opinion, only Kathy, the occult specialist, was fleshed out well in this story. Her back story and her brother's past were interesting but the rest of the people were nothing more than fodder for the monsters or an interchangeable mix of men trying to figure out the cultish case. That made sticking to this material a very hard thing for me to do.

I'm not going to lie though. The whole scenario she sets up here is quite terrifying. The monsters don't pick and choose their prey. They eat every living human in their path and some of the scenes are riveting early on. You've been warned!

(view spoiler)

This is a well written action-packed, gory monster tale and now that I've finished, I completely understand the mixed reviews. It's going to come down to a matter of what you like and what you don't. If action is your thing you are going to love this a lot more than I did.

Bob Milne says

"True Detective" meets H.P. Lovecraft in this chilling novel of murder, mystery, and slow-mounting dread."

If that tagline hits all your buttons, then Chills promises to be a damned fine read. Personally, I would have liked a bit more Lovecraft and a little less True Detective, but I cannot complain about the murder or the dread. This is a monstrous tale with a serious body count in the opening chapters, and I loved that Mary SanGiovanni didn't tease the reader with her monsters - they're right there, on the page, and dripping with blood.

The concept here is fantastic, with a small town in Connecticut experiencing a freak, end-of-May snowstorm. We're not just talking cold and flurries here, we're talking state-of-emergency blizzard. What's more, there are monsters in the snow, tentacled, fanged, skittering creatures that stalk their prey and paint the cold,

snowy landscape with their blood. As we soon discover, it's all the work of the Hand of the Black Stars, a cult intent on opening the doors to other realms, and inviting the old gods in.

There was a lot here to like. The atmosphere was perfect, the monsters were suitably grotesque, and the supernatural threat was legitimately fearsome. I liked the mystery behind it all too, along with the occult mythology. On the downside, the pacing was rather uneven, with too long of a lull in the center, and the characters were a challenge for me. They were serviceable, but it felt like the only ones with whom I formed any sort of emotional attachment were those about to die. An interesting book, full of more Chills than thrills, and a refreshingly original entry in the horror genre.

Originally reviewed at Beauty in Ruins

Disclaimer: I received a complimentary ARC of this title from the publisher in exchange for review consideration. This does not in any way affect the honesty or sincerity of my review.

Luvtoread says

So far so good!

Andi says

Originally titled as The Blue People from Thunderstorm Books (as a gorgeous signed/limited edition), this was the first book that I read by Mary SanGiovanni and was enough to make me want to read everything I could find by her. Which prompted my requesting the next new book I saw from her without actually realizing I'd already read it - oops. :)

There's a freak snowstorm in Colby, Connecticut. Even freakier are the bodies showing up that appear to be occult killings. When the gods that this dark cult summons are even more cruel and brutal than they are, do the people of Colby stand a chance? A simplistic summary for a book that goes beyond that. This is a rather short novel so I'm not going to give you more than that but I will tell you that it's well worth the read. I've always hated winter, but Chills makes the snowstorms seem that much more ominous... and colder.

I received a copy of this book from NetGalley/Kensington books in exchange for an honest review.

Sheila says

3 stars: I liked the book.

This book is a combination police procedural and HP Lovecraft monster story, and the mixture makes for a fast-paced, high-body-count, quick-reading horror novel. There's a bit of an info dump at the beginning, and a slightly abrupt ending, but neither of these things decreased my enjoyment of this book. The inter-dimensional monsters were properly creepy (and ravenous!), and SanGiovanni's writing was stripped-down

and frenetic--perfect for the subject matter. I especially loved the crazed cult and the awful spider-monsters. Recommended for horror fans.

I received this review copy from the publisher on NetGalley. Thanks for the opportunity to read and review; I appreciate it!

Char says

"Evil in a small town" is a trope that appeals to me very much, especially when it's well done. Combine it with a smidge of cosmic horror and a heaping helping of police procedural and voila! You have the recipe for Chills.

You might actually GET the chills while reading this book. Atmosphere is a favorite facet of dark storytelling for me and this book has it in spades. The snow is constantly falling over the small town of Colby, Connecticut. It's created drifts, because the wind is howling and sometimes you catch glimpses of things in the snow. Are they real, or is it just your eyes playing tricks? You'll have to read Chills to find out.

Another aspect of this story that I enjoyed was the tightness of the prose. It's clean and precise. Not a lot of time is spent going on and on with descriptions of the town or the snow drifts. I thought just enough time was spent getting to know the characters and I developed a real feeling for the character of Kathy, due to her horror-show of a brother, Toby. I would have liked a bit more information on Toby's cult, the Hand of the Black Stars, though; mostly because I find that kind of thing fascinating. I also wouldn't have minded a little more of the cosmic horror aspect over the police procedural one and for these reasons, I've deducted 1 star.

Chills was a lot of fun, especially if you consider shivering while you're reading to be fun. I know I do. Recommended to fans of: atmospheric dark fiction, evil in a small town stories, and the always fascinating Old Gods and the people who serve them. (Just make sure you wear a warm sweater!)

Thanks to the author, NetGalley, and Kensington/Lyrical Underground for the e-ARC of this book in exchange for my honest review. This is it.

The Behrg says

Whenever you hear great things about a book or movie, it tends to set you up for disappointment. Either you raise the bar of your expectations too high or you find yourself comparing what's presented before you with what you imagined in your mind.

New to SanGiovanni's work, after reading quite a few rave reviews, I decided to test the waters. All I can say is, "Come on in. The water's fine."

Chills is a superbly crafted gem of a novel, taking the "small-town up against unspeakable evil" approach and delivering in spades. The horror elements here, from the creatures found in the snow to the Lovecraftian-like cult inviting the winter in, are remarkably unique and truly frightening. It's nice to read a horror novel that's actually scary every once in awhile. SanGiovanni excels in delivering the scares, and this honestly reminded me of early Stephen King, in a good way.

But unlike many creature feature stories which focus only on the blood and gore, there's a lot of depth and

heart to this tale. SanGiovanni's prose is poetic, elevating the novel from a "horror" book to something much more.

"Maybe we're just here to listen to a babe giggle, or feel a woman's kiss, or understand in an exchanged look everything words never could express. And so I figure that we aren't here to conquer the universe, but to experience all the facets of it, one moment at a time -- good, bad, indifferent, amazing."

The ending, to me, felt a little rushed, but overall this was a novel I thoroughly enjoyed, one I looked forward to diving back into. If you're looking for that wintery scare this time of year, this is one I'd highly recommend. 4.5 / 5 stars.

Michael Hicks says

I feel like I've been in a bit of a slump with my horror reads of late, with the last few titles being more misses than hits, the bad outweighing the good. Chills is a title that I've been looking forward to, ever since it was previously released as a signed, limited edition hardcover from Thunderstorm under the title The Blue People. I secured a copy of that edition earlier this year, but opted to keep it pristine and instead read an advanced copy of the Kensington Books edition on Kindle.

I've openly admitted in the past to being a sucker for winter-based horror thrills, and am always on the lookout for titles in this niche. Many thanks to John Carpenter and The Thing for this particular affectation. There's something about blood-stained snow and monsters running wild that just really does it for me.

All of this is to say that I had certain hopes and expectations for Chills – it needed to satisfy some particular sweet spots I have for this corner of the horror genre, but it also needed to get me over that hump of disappointment I've been feeling lately after a couple less-than-stellar readings.

Well, Mary SanGiovanni delivered in spades. I flat-out loved Chills, and it grabbed me in a way that the last few horror books I've read failed to do. I did not want to put this book down, and I looked forward to my time with Colby, CT police detectives Jack Glazier, Reece Teagan, and occultist Kathy Ryan. Ryan in particular was an easy favorite in SanGiovanni's cast of characters, and I'm hoping we get more of her in the future.

Set in a small, isolated town blanketed in a furious storm of snow and ice, unearthly monsters lurk and strike out with surprising viciousness, and a handful of dead bodies turning up around town are branded with strange, occult markings. Suffice to say, there's a lot of bad stuff going on in Colby, and SanGiovanni not only crafts a wicked little creature feature, but one heck of a sharp cosmic horror thriller to boot. The Lovecraftian elements in Chills are very well rendered and help give a nice epic feel to this story of small-town terror. This is the type of stuff I good and truly dig.

Chills was my first title from SanGiovanni, and it most definitely will not be the last. I caught reference throughout the work to some of her other titles, most notably The Hollower, which has made its way onto my must-purchase list come payday.

[Note: I received an advanced copy of this title for review from the publisher via NetGalley.]

Dan Schwent says

A blizzard in late May is the least of the town of Colby's problems. A string of cult murders points to a cult bent on opening a gate to another world and it's up to a group of homicide detectives to stop them...

Yeah, it may have been a case of wrong book, wrong time, or the fact that I just finished *After the End of the World*, a book with some similarities to this one, but I never really grabbed on to *Chills*.

The blurb describes this as "True Detective meets HP Lovecraft," which really sparked my interest. However, the only resemblance to *True Detective* is that the book features detectives investigating some cult murders and there's nothing particularly Lovecraftian about it other than talk of creatures from the void.

The setup is pretty interesting. An east coast town is gripped in an unusually long winter and the cops are called in to investigate a cult murder. You've got Jack Glazier, a down and out divorced cop, Teagan, an Irish lady's man, and Kathy, an occult expert with a tortured past. The winning ingredients are all there. It was pretty much paint by numbers after that.

Maybe I've read too many detective and horror novels but there weren't a lot of surprises. After the novelty of monsters made of snow and ice wore off, it was all pretty standard. Not only that, some parts got on my nerves. The romance subplot was annoying and unnecessary and the characters did some illogical things to add some jeopardy to the end.

One thing that annoyed me more than it should have was that everyone casually knew what an anglerfish was. People kept describing one of the creatures as resembling an anglerfish and no one had to ask what an anglerfish was. I knew what one was but I hardly think what an anglerfish looks like is common knowledge. For the record, it looks like this:

I realize that's a lot of bitching so I have to note that I didn't actually hate the book. Some parts were scary and I liked the concept of the Hand of Black Stars cult. Jack and Kathy had interesting backgrounds and I wouldn't mind reading more about them. I did also like the creatures SanGiovanni introduced, like The Blue People and the various ice creatures. Mary SanGiovanni's writing was pretty sharp and I'm open to reading more from her. I just didn't particularly care for this book. Two out of five stars.
