



Coombe's Wood

Lisa C. Hinsley

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Izzy Santana and her 13-year-old son Connor move into a Reading Council-provided flat in the sleepy village of Cedham. Locals darkly warn her to stay away from nearby Coombe's Wood, hinting first at elves, then at multiple murders... which may or may not have taken place in the woods hundreds of years ago. It's all ludicrously superstitious, and Izzy is so delighted to have found a haven for her son - after being threatened by her sadistic ex-partner George - that she takes little notice.

She meets a neighbour who seems kindly, if a trifle fey, and who takes a great interest in her son. Connor seems instantly comfortable with him. She begins to feel as if she is also falling under his spell. But Connor is bullied at school, and one night she finds herself tracking those bullies in the wood, where she believes they are waiting for him. She doesn't find them, but something closes in on her - something that sounds like a savage animal. As she runs she realises she may have been set up - or Connor was - to be caught by whatever the animal was. She strengthens the barricades in her flat, no longer puts all the local tales about 'danger in them woods' down to superstition, and even begins to wonder about the way she was selected by the Reading Council officer to live in the village in the first place.

Then a slit rabbit turns up on her doorstep, along with a distinctive cigarette butt, and she knows George has found her. Desperately compassionate, her neighbour calls the police, who turn up next day, harumph the ceiling, and take the attitude: You've not been attacked, then, Miss? You haven't actually seen him? Why, if your ex-lover has tracked you down, do you suppose he would he dump a rabbit at your door...? Her own question, more urgent, is: if George can get in the front door of the building, can he get into her flat?

What Izzy needs to do is protect Connor. She has already started to uncover the ancient secrets of the village, and now she works out the perfect way to get rid of George... for good.

Coombe's Wood Details

Date : Published October 19th 2009 by Darkling Press

ISBN :

Author : Lisa C. Hinsley

Format : Kindle Edition 209 pages

Genre : Horror, Suspense, Fantasy, Fiction

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From Reader Review Coombe's Wood for online ebook

Brittany says

I was very interested in this book and actually enjoying the story line, but then it ended so abruptly. I feel like there were so many elements that had just been introduced and the story ended. I wanted there to be more closure on certain things, so I'm only giving it 2 stars.

Rachelle Reese says

Coombe's Woods is a good story with an interesting fantasy twist. However, I felt that some of the issues in the story were not resolved. Perhaps there will be a sequel?

JJ Marsh says

This is a difficult book to categorise; vividly realistic in the depiction of single motherhood, fear of an abusive partner, mistrust of everyone and adjustment to new circumstances seems to indicate a domestic thriller. Yet the elements of unreality; the elves, the monster in the woods, the ability to fast-walk lift this into a different category.

The strange little village of gossip and cats is perfectly drawn so that we, like Izzy, cannot decide if it's charming or sinister. And the wood has a personality, and a history, all its own.

The book unsettled me and gave me goosebumps. I read it in one sitting. Not only did I have to know what happened next, but I also wanted to discover whether the world really was as it seemed to be through our narrator's eyes. I kept wondering, and still am, how reliable a narrator Izzy - a damaged individual - truly is. How much of her story is true and how much her imagination?

My only quibble is that the author could have gone further and deeper with some of the themes. Elements in Izzy's letters to friends and parents and her own irrational decisions show an unstable personality, but that is never fully explored. This is a powerful and exciting book but seemed to end very abruptly with some questions left unanswered.

Perhaps there is a sequel to come.

I hope so. Hinsley can certainly spin a yarn and I'll be watching out for more.

Jacqueline Howett says

still reading

Kitty Igaz says

That is a heck of a long synopsis! Interesting read, but the magic thrown in near the end just seemed so...

“Whoops, forgot to add that in earlier haha”. The characters were well fleshed out, I felt but Izzy was annoying beyond belief. She tries to be a good, responsible mother, then gets drunk or high or wanders out into woods that she is told repeatedly are dangerous... If the entire bloody town says to stay out of the woods, I’m probably going to listen, just saying. Izzy however, ignores and/or lies to everyone because she knows best after moving to a microscopic town that she has never even heard of! This entire book could have been avoided if she had just used an ounce of intelligence!! And the elves with their fast walking... Why? What was the point of this? She could have just run around in the woods on her own and gotten her ex killed that way too... Also our Bear/Dog hybrid thingy was pretty useless; Izzy offers up long pig on a platter and our creature takes his own sweet time meandering over to all the noise, but if she just looks out her window BAM! he is there watching her from the woods. And isn’t the evil thing not suppose to come out if more than one person is present? Just so much why! Overall it was interesting and I might try another book by the author, Bubonic Plague for the Win!, but... Only time will tell...

Ann237 says

This was a book you will find difficult to put down once started. It is a story of a woman who escapes a abusive relationship, with her son. They end up finding an apartment near woods with a dark history. A neighbor who believes in elves and fairies...the type you look at wondering how many folks does he have locked in a basement. But yet proves that it takes all kinds, and it does not mean the worst. It is a journey you will find yourself taking and you will be pleased you did.

Michele Brenton says

I downloaded this as a freebie the other night and read it in one sitting. I have to admit I skim-read some of it and skipped parts because I wanted to get to the end and find out the answers to various questions.

It is the first book the author published and there are a few creaky bits which hint at a first book - but I have read first books by other super-famous and lauded authors such as Strata by Terry Pratchett and some last books by bestselling genre icons such as Ash by James Herbert which are real stinkers and Coombe's Wood is head and shoulders a better read than those books.

I found the story kept me interested and it was an easy enjoyable read. It was interesting enough that I forgot my editor's hat and became a reader again - this is something I have been struggling with for a year or so - and Coombe's Wood managed it for me.

I read it on my Kindle Fire and it is the first book I've read on it since having it for Xmas as usually when I start reading I get distracted and head off to watch a tv program or listen to the radio on the gadget. So again plus points to Coombe's Wood for holding my attention right up to the end. I always skim read a book the first pass through so that isn't a mark against it either.

I'm looking forward to reading it at a more leisurely pace next time. I will save it for the summer - I can imagine this will be a good beach read.

Candice says

I really enjoyed this ebook... Well written and the story also kept me interested.

Tanya says

I liked the story, but the writing bugged me. Things jumped around, reactions didn't fit.

Danielle The Book Huntress (Back to the Books) says

For a full review, check the Bitten by Books website: <http://www.bittenbybooks.com/>

Melanti says

Read about a third of it before I lost interest.

Alison says

Stilted dialogue, crazy plot that started out as a mystery tale but unfortunately swerved into thenrealms of elves and inconsistencies that a good editor should have spotted. However, I read it all and broadly enjoyed it - not bad for a 70p ebook. Not sure if this is supposed to have a sequel but it ended very abruptly.

Yassemin says

Ugh, I must be having a "I can't find anything but crap to read" kinda day.

This, what little I read of it, just under 10% was utterly appalling. This is an example of an indie author that wouldn't have had a snowball in hell's chance of getting published the traditional way. Just utterly appalling. Can't review properly as never read most of it but what I read was extremely juvenile and childish. The author basically as S king once said about Ms Meyer "can't write worth a darn"...

Also, the formatting was totally off which just annoyed me terribly. For some random reason, random sections would start half the way across the page and then remains indented for a paragraph or two before reverting back to the normal way. Very stupid. If an author can't even be bothered to get the formatting right...!!!!

Anyway much as Im trying to support indie authors, and some which are awesome (Ali Cooper), this is one I won't be. She totally sucks!!!

Jack says

A woman and her 13 year old son move somewhere new to escape an abusive relationship - but there's something nasty in the woods....

delane says

I really wanted to love this book! It just fell kind of flat for me though.

It was slow beginning...then seemed to pick up a bit then slowed down again.

The way the MC reacted to things put me off also. Something terrible is happening to her and she sits in a chair (with her 13 year old son sitting close by watching...) and spins around and around in circles acting like a child herself.

I don't know. I definately did not hate it, but the love was nowhere to be found.
