



Northwest Angle

William Kent Krueger

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With his family caught in the crosshairs of a group of brutal killers, detective Cork O'Connor must solve the murder of a young girl in the latest installment of William Kent Krueger's unforgettable *New York Times* bestselling series.

During a houseboat vacation on the remote Lake of the Woods, a violent gale sweeps through unexpectedly, stranding Cork and his daughter, Jenny, on a devastated island where the wind has ushered in a force far darker and more deadly than any storm.

Amid the wreckage, Cork and Jenny discover an old trapper's cabin where they find the body of a teenage girl. She wasn't killed by the storm, however; she'd been bound and tortured before she died. Whimpering sounds coming from outside the cabin lead them to a tangle of branches toppled by the vicious winds. Underneath the debris, they find a baby boy, hungry and dehydrated, but still very much alive. Powerful forces intent on securing the child pursue them to the isolated Northwest Angle, where it's impossible to tell who among the residents is in league with the devil. Cork understands that to save his family he must solve the puzzle of this mysterious child whom death follows like a shadow.

"Part adventure, part mystery, and all knockout thriller" (*Booklist*), *Northwest Angle* is a dynamic addition to William Kent Krueger's critically acclaimed, award-winning series.

Northwest Angle Details

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From Reader Review Northwest Angle for online ebook

Jonetta says

Cork O'Connor rented a houseboat for his entire family, including sister-in-law Rose Thorn and her husband Mal, giving them all a much-needed family outing after a tragedy ridden couple of years. They're on the Lake of the Woods, which occupies parts of Minnesota and the Canadian provinces of Manitoba and Ontario, when they encounter a vicious storm, a derecho*. Cork and Jenny were out on a dingy, on their way to pick up her boyfriend. Stephen and Anne had swum away from the houseboat to go exploring. When the storm struck, each group was separated and fought hard to just survive. However, the nightmare didn't end for Cork and Jenny after they landed in a different storm on an island where they discovered the dead and tortured body of a teenage girl and her newborn baby (still alive) hidden in a bush nearby.

This felt like two separate stories, the first being the fight for survival in the midst of the storm and its immediate aftermath. It was exciting stuff, keeping me on the edge of my seat as each group struggled to survive, recover and reunite. The second half was equally exciting as Jenny and Cork attempt to evade the hunters who appeared to be responsible for the teen mother's death and keep the baby out of harm's way. Krueger was masterful again at creating a strong sense of place as I could visualize the imagery with ease. Figuring out the what and why wasn't all that easy but I thought the who was more obvious until I got it wrong.

Just when I think this series couldn't get any better the author goes and creates a story like this. I couldn't stop listening and wanted even more when I reached the end.

***Derecho** - widespread, long-lived, straight-line wind storm that is associated with a land-based, fast-moving group of severe thunderstorms. They can cause hurricane-force winds, tornadoes, heavy rains, and flash floods. A warm-weather phenomenon, derechos occur mostly in summer, especially during June, July, and August in the Northern Hemisphere, within areas of moderately strong instability and moderately strong vertical wind shear. They may occur at any time of the year and occur as frequently at night as during the daylight hours.

Ruth says

I have loved his Cork O'Connor series but was very disappointed with this one. I am not inspired by all the inspiration in this book. The characters were flat and not the warm-blooded characters I am used to reading in his books. The action was pretty much beyond belief. Not up to his usual greatness

Diane S ? says

The mysteries are very good but I love all the information related about the Ojibwa Indians.

Kris - My Novelesque Life says

RATING: 4 STARS

(Review Not on Blog)

Listened to on audio

We are back to action, this time with Cork and his family. I love when Jo's sister, Rose is in a book. I miss her! I selfishly wanted her to be with the O'Connor family forever. I really enjoyed seeing Cork and Jenny's relationship grow as father and daughter without Jo as a bridge. (and YAY to the ending!)

Phrynne says

This is a really good one! Krueger takes a bit of a different path in that it is very much character driven. There is a mystery and a lot of action and it is very tense at times, but we also get to see all of the family interacting and showing how they care for each other.

As usual there is atmosphere and lots of nature. Henry is old and wise, Cork is alternately angry and sad, Jenny finds herself in a very unusual situation and Stephen seems to have suddenly grown up. I still think I see a new relationship blooming for Cork.

I look forward each month to reading the next episode in this saga and the author has not let me down yet. Five stars for this one.

Charly says

I've mostly enjoyed the previous Cork O'Conner mysteries, some more than others, but this was a new low point for the series. The first half, with the devastating storm was solid and suspenseful, but the second half fell apart with forced plotting, cardboard villains and extraneous characters. One thing that really bothered me was the overt religiosity of the book. Krueger has always include some thoughts on faith and the intersections of good and evil, but this book felt particularly unsubtle about it. Rose, Mal and Anne were basically a useless Greek chorus of yay, faith and if Krueger had written them out of the book, nothing would have suffered from their removal.

I was also bothered by the mother-figure Jenny was portrayed as. Not that motherhood is bad, but Jenny became this mindless mother/sheep and frankly reading about her warming up formula for the 800th time was 799 times too many, that whole subplot was just cloying and annoying. Aaron, her boyfriend who didn't want children was basically shown to be the this terrible, close-minded person who the author no doubt took great delight in writing him to his just desserts.

It occurred to be that Krueger simply doesn't write women very well. I was trying to think back through the books, and really, it's Cork whose the focus and the main character. In this book he tried to bring the other family members to the fore, especially the many women, but they were basically placeholders, baby care-takers, cooks and comforters. I never sensed that before so overtly and it really bothered me in this book. Hopefully Krueger can do better next time around.

Liz says

Admittedly, this book started off on the wrong foot with me – an unusual experience with this author. I felt like I was being fed the notion that simply because one is female, one automatically has the motherly instinct, and automatically craves a baby. I don't believe those things as a rule (living proof, right here!). However, Kreuger has a way of sharing his ideas and reasoning that really resonates with me, and he brought me around to appreciate this story despite my initial misgivings.

At its heart, this is a story about love. In particular it's about the love between parents and their children; Cork and his children. His sister in law Rose and those same children whom she helped raise. Jenny and the child that she rescues, who has lost his own mother. There were some very emotionally charged moments between the various members of the O'Connor clan and I truly enjoyed seeing their dynamic from this new perspective.

That's all I will say on this one, but let me add this once again: Try the Cork O'Connor series for well-paced thrillers, intricate characterizations, and above all, the writing. Deep, moving, lovely.

Angela says

11 books down and this series, for me, just keeps going from strength to strength. After events in previous books I was doubtful how invested I would still feel in this series. I shouldn't have worried, these books are written by a very, talented author.

One of my favourite aspects of Northwest Angle was that we had so many different points of view. Krueger, has mastered that art of changing the point of view structure through his series and I see this as a real strength. I enjoyed that the O'Connor children (young adults now) had points of view in Northwest Angle. We've watched them grow up over the course of the series and they are really starting to come into their own. This book, even though grim as all of the books are murder mysteries, felt like a new beginning for Cork.

Recommended for people who love a good mystery series.

Carmen says

Cork O'Connor and his daughter are on a dinghy on the remote Lake of the Woods when a violent storm hits. They make it to a deserted island where they discover a murdered teenager and her still alive infant son. Somebody wants this baby and will kill to get it. I don't know if its because I like any story about Native Americans, or because I just love the main character, Cork O'Connor, or that I just love the way Krueger writes, his books are always so smooth and flowing, even when dealing with dark topics. Just a great read. Got this in the giveaways, but if I hadn't I would definitely have bought it.

Surreysmum says

I've liked all of the Cork O'Connor mysteries, and I liked this one - but I wasn't thrilled by the increased religiosity of the book (it's always been present, but it went a bit beyond my low tolerance level in this one, despite the fact that it was balanced out by the scathing depiction of religious fanatics). I probably would have handled that better if it hadn't been accompanied by the transformation of daughter Jenny from a reasonably sensible girl into a maternal-hormone-addled critter, and the cheerful killing off of her child-wary fiancée (not good enough, obviously, if he didn't desperately want kids). There were a few heartfelt sighs of "oh puhleeze" as I read this one. Nonetheless, the plot held my interest, and the minor characters, as usual, were interesting and well depicted. I wish "the Canadians" had been allowed a bigger role in the story rather than being just an occasional plot point that had to be dealt with because Lake of the Woods *is* international waters. No doubt they would have disapproved of O'Connor's complete inability to keep to his determination not to carry firearms. Well, I suppose that would get in the way of his ability, as a private citizen, to get muddled up in major crime investigations - and there would go the series!

Anyway, enjoyed it, and will recommend it (with reservations) - but if WKK gets any more preachy, or treats his women any more sentimentally, he will lose me, I'm afraid.

Brenda says

I enjoyed this book! A natural disaster brings a new character to the O'Connors, with perhaps an inkling of a second one. Good and evil meet, and life goes on. There is still a feeling in me of something more disastrous, though, in the future.

Carl Brookins says

Befitting its location, this novel is a dark, brooding, exploration of family values and relationships. It also carries a healthy dose of religiosity, on both the dark and the lighter side. These are themes Krueger injects in greater and greater amounts as the Cork O'Connor series proceeds. Whether his fans will follow him here, remains to be seen. As always, the language is beautiful, the setting is fascinating and the carefully crafted characters true to form and to the story.

The Northwest Angle of Minnesota is a geographical oddity, brought about by surveying errors in 1793. It's a piece of the United States which cannot be reached by land without traveling through Canada. By water, it's another story. The Angle has a long shoreline on one of the large lakes that form a surprising amount of the border between the U.S. and Canada, in this case, Lake of the Woods. Travel on the water between the two countries, without benefit of Customs oversight on either side of the border is easy, if you are so inclined, and used to functioning in the out-of-doors.

Once again Cork O'Connor tries to bring calm and understanding to his life by collecting his immediate family together for a houseboating trip on Lake of the Woods. Part of his motivation for this trip is to give him an opportunity to meddle, in his ham-handed way, with his eldest daughter and her personal plans. Nature, in the form of a vast and terrible storm, forces a significant alteration in Cork's plan. He and Jenny are storm-bound on a devastated island where they stumble across a horrible murder and a live infant. These discoveries put them in the sights of an assortment of people with evil intentions.

While the grim tone persists through much of the novel, it's overall message is one of hope and uplift, of the triumph of essential good. The author's writing remains masterful and readers will take away some thought-provoking questions.

Jeanette says

For me this was a 2.5 star rounded up for the natural world Angle descriptions and rugged water boundary territory. Cork was Cork and the plot was the weakest of the bunch I've read.

The problem was the other characterizations and especially the women. The women have become increasingly flat as the series progresses, IMHO. And Rose increasingly annoying, off-putting. Far too much a stereotype. Mide or not, Krueger never seems to grasp the component of her personality, fire, motivations. Religious aspects more over the top facade without knowing the underpinning to her individual past beyond the tribal tradition. Anne too. But at least I can approach the real woman there at times. And Cork's daughter in this one and her Aaron? On different wave lengths and not just about Little Rabbit either. And double that down by the repetition of paragraphs over and over throughout a full 2/3rds of the book re Jenny's motherly instincts and urges come alive and throbbing. Krueger was verbose. Not saying that it doesn't occur to have a strong connection, but she sure doesn't seem that connected to anything or anyone else??

The entire was overlong and took me far more start and stop reading than usual. In fact, I had to force myself to finish. The first sections with the chase around those islands was the best written of the whole, IMHO. After that, for me, it was all cartoon level super bad guys, who are "the other" as opposed to the goody two shoes of spiritual tradition. Accompanied by far more "he said, she said" around the origins and ultimate options for the infant that dragged. And dragged.

The women in these last few Cork's have turned me off from the series. Too preachy and not just on the religious comparisons, because all of that is way too unattached to joy.

That's the crux. These are nearly fatalistic now. Stolid, joylessness but resilience the best outcomes? Krueger stand alone novels would be fine- but I think he has lost me for the Cork series. And not because they are too dire, but to me- because they have just become too uninteresting. Especially when religiosity is over the top and scathing stereotype groups of "the other" become description highlighted.

Mike Kennedy says

Really good installment in the Cork O'Connor series. Cork and his family are in Lake of the Woods area when a huge storm comes through. It strands Cork and his oldest daughter Jenny in the wilderness where they come across a murder and a baby. Some good twist and turns through out. Some of them I saw coming, but some of them took me by surprise. Krueger does such a great job in his novels using the landscape and beauty of Northern Minnesota. It feels like you are there with Cork. I like the way he used the storm in the book, but didn't try to drag it out an longer than necessary. After reading this installment, I think I will jump straight to the next one in the series, even though that was not my original plan. If you like mysteries or just great story telling, then this is the book for you.

Liz says

This is just a great series. This book is different as the whole family is in danger from both Mother Nature and human evil. Yes, you can often see where the plot is going. But the point of WKK books is really more

about the characters than the mystery.

I'm guessing that WKK is a devout Catholic as his religious views tend to come out stronger in this book than previous ones. Or maybe I'm just projecting his characters' beliefs onto him.
