



Mortom

Erik Therme

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Andy Crowl barely knew his recently deceased cousin, Craig Moore, so he's especially surprised to be named as the sole beneficiary in Craig's will. Not that there's much to inherit: just an empty bank account and a run-down house.

Once Andy arrives in the town of Mortom, however, he's drawn into his puzzle-obsessed cousin's true legacy: a twisted and ominous treasure hunt. Beckoned by macabre clues of dead rats and cemetery keys, Andy jumps into the game, hoping to discover untold wealth. But unsavory secrets—and unanswered questions about Craig's untimely demise—arise at every turn, leading Andy to wonder if he's playing the game...or if the game is playing him.

Something's rotten in Mortom. And this dead man's game might not be all that Andy is doomed to lose.

Mortom Details

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Author : Erik Therme

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From Reader Review Mortom for online ebook

Irene says

Andy and his sister arrive in Mortom shortly after their cousin Craig's untimely death. For some unknown reason Crag has left everything to Andy even though they were not particularly close. In fact they have not even seen each other in years. The death itself has been ruled accidental, however Craig did seem to have an enemy in town. Most people just thought he was weird, odd voice, odd mannerisms, riding around on his moped. One person in particular really had it out for him though, and may have had reason to do him harm. There is not much in the house worth picking through, but there does seem to be some strange goings on. A dead rat holds the first key to this mystery. Andy becomes more and more obsessed with unraveling these clues, while his sister just wants to pay her respects to their aunt and get back home. Things take a sinister turn as more clues are unraveled.

This was a fast paced and highly suspenseful read.

I received a complimentary copy for review

Aditi says

"Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

----Anonymous

Erik Therme, an American author, has penned his debut novel, *Mortom*, which accounts the story of a brother and a sister who are left a huge estate by one of their distant cousin who committed suicide in a small town, upon reaching they discover a letter with a key that leads to a "treasure" hidden somewhere in that strange town.

Synopsis:

Andy Crowl barely knew his recently deceased cousin, Craig Moore, so he's especially surprised to be named as the sole beneficiary in Craig's will. Not that there's much to inherit: just an empty bank account and a run-down house.

Once Andy arrives in the town of Mortom, however, he's drawn into his puzzle-obsessed cousin's true legacy: a twisted and ominous treasure hunt. Beckoned by macabre clues of dead rats and cemetery keys, Andy jumps into the game, hoping to discover untold wealth. But unsavory secrets—and unanswered questions about Craig's untimely demise—arise at every turn, leading Andy to wonder if he's playing the game...or if the game is playing him.

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Andy and his sister Katie are left as the sole beneficiary in his distant cousin, Craig's will with a huge estate in a small and strange town, Mortom. Upon reaching, Andy found a letter with a key under a refrigerator, which tells about a hunt about the hidden treasure. Being always a fan of puzzles, Andy follows the clues

that reveals darkness and questions on the nature of his cousin's so-told suicide. Hungry for the treasure, Andy's mind began to defer whether he made the right choice in following those twisted clues.

The writing style is fantastic, there's no complaint about it. The narrative is full of suspense thus engaging it's readers completely. The author tells his story in a way it feels like a playing a game of puzzle, we don't know what the end picture looks like, but with the clues we need to keep moving forward. The prose as well as the atmosphere is kept mysterious and scary with lots of unanticipated clues and twists on the way, thus keeping the readers on their edges with the next move of Andy.

The mystery is though not that brilliant but portrayed strikingly and and revealed one layer after another. The twists though some were quite predictable, was revealed at the right moments thus maintaining it's depth of mystery with in the story.

The characters are not brought out with all their aspects be it flaws or stronger factors that define them. Andy is a strong character and the author had a good hold on to his twisting demeanor till the very end. Katie, on the other hand, puzzles me with her over-the-top curiosity about everything that Andy does, although there's a bit of humor in their non-stop bickering about almost everything. There are many shady characters that somehow give shape to the mystery and suspense that are well-developed. In a nutshell, the characters are though all psychologically flawed, still I couldn't much relate to them.

Overall, it's a powerful and challenging book that requires the brain to work hard on it's details and twists and that will keep the readers glued pretty much till the end.

Verdict: *A must read for the psychological thriller fans.*

Courtesy: *Thanks Maxineonce again for this great book.*

Linda Strong says

Andy and his sister Kate are in the small town of Mortom to settle their cousin Craig's estate. It came as a huge surprise that Craig left everything he had to Andy, especially as they had not seen each other in many years.

But 'everything', at first glance, is a falling-down house and an empty bank account.

When taking a walk through the house, Andy finds a dead rat ... under the refrigerator... with a note and a key in its mouth. Thus starts the 'game'. It's up to Andy to interpret the clues as he follows them. When he finds a letter written by his cousin two days before he committed suicide, if that's what really happened, Andy becomes almost crazed to find the 'treasure'.

The plot was extremely interesting and I found myself trying to figure out the mystery right along with Andy.

All but one or two characters are unappealing and insensitive. Andy and Kate come across as definite siblings with all their sniping at each other, and at times they act much more immature than their 30-year-old ages. Sometimes their fighting and sarcastic remarks are quite humorous.

All in all this was a very compelling read. Once started, it was hard to put down. This was quite a different kind of murder mystery. The ending was a bit of a surprise.

Thank so much to the author and Maxine Groves, Publicist for the digital copy in exchange for an honest and unbiased review.

Maxine (Booklover Catlady) says

I love it when I get a book that is just something out of the norm from what I have been reading lately. Something to make me perk up a bit and take notice that something interesting is in my hands. Let the adventure begin.

Do you like games? Puzzles? Brain Teasers? You do? Then hold on, you are in for one hell of a ride. If you are like me and like to guess the ending of a book from it's clues along the way and sit back happy when proven right then this is not the book for me. The book beat me. The game beat me. I didn't guess the outcome. But by golly, did I love it!

Andy Crowl barely knew his recently deceased cousin, Craig Moore, so he's especially surprised to be named as the sole beneficiary in Craig's will. Not that there's much to inherit: just an empty bank account and a run-down house.

Once Andy arrives in the town of Mortom, however, he's drawn into his puzzle-obsessed cousin's true legacy: a twisted and ominous treasure hunt. Beckoned by macabre clues of dead rats and cemetery keys, Andy jumps into the game, hoping to discover untold wealth. But unsavory secrets and unanswered questions about Craig's untimely demise arise at every turn, leading Andy to wonder if he's playing the game...or if the game is playing him.

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So Andy and his sister turn up on Mortom, Somewhere, USA to sort out the estate and things left to him by his cousin. Which in itself is a puzzle as they were not even close. Let the games commence.

Before long we are drawn into Andy's **obsession** with finding a series of clues, and obsessions can take hold deep down in your soul and rot away the very goodness of a man. Andy needs to tread very carefully. His sister is concerned over Andy's obsession with figuring out what the game is, or indeed is there one at all and throughout the book they don't have the best of relationships to say the least, in fact they are constantly at loggerheads.

Secrets and lies, you know they are there, but what ARE they? Before long, you are in the game like Andy, or are you? Maybe you are more the observer type? Whichever you choose the book really takes you on some bizarre pathways and clever twists and turns.

What is the truth? Is he being played or playing the game? Who was his cousin REALLY? Both Andy and his sister hear conflicting stories and information. Poor old Andy really does get his head in a spin right from the start, I mean who starts a treasure hunt with a dead rat?

This one fared better...

I found the book moved at a steady pace, interesting but not blowing my mind up to about the 50% mark, **THEN** things started to get really interesting and I could not put the book down. The pace, events, plot,

characters, everything intensifies and rockets towards a really brilliant ending, I absolutely loved the last page. I felt so much emotion and read it more than once.

At times I found some of the dialogue a little clunky and cliché, especially between Adam and his sister, but by no means did it detract from the plot and the overall enjoyment of Mortom. Once I was hooked in **I HAD TO KNOW** the truth. Did I find it? Will you? Did Andy? Only one way to find out dear reader...

Let the games begin!

I fluctuate between 3.5 and 4.0 stars on this one, but after reflection on my overall enjoyment, the plot itself and the last half of the book I am sitting nicely at a 4.0 star rating. A really different read I liked.

For more of my reviews, book talk and more come and visit me at:

<https://www.facebook.com/BookloverCat...>

Susan says

Andy Crowl arrives in the small town of Mortom with his sister, Kate. His cousin, Craig Moore, has, unexpectedly left him his house in his will. Despite the fact the two were childhood friends, Andy was not close to him in adulthood and so the bequest was a surprise – not only to Andy but to Craig’s resentful mother, Mary. When they arrive at the house, Andy and Kate find a terrible smell – there is a dead rat in the kitchen. When Andy finally manages to drag it out from where it is wedged, he finds a piece of paper in the rat’s mouth - the note is wrapped around a key and the words, “follow me” are written on the paper...

Both Craig and Andy are lovers of puzzles and so the initial discovery leads Andy on a hunt around Mortom, following a trail of clues for an unknown reason. Is it a treasure hunt, or something altogether darker? I have to say that I really enjoyed the start of this novel, which drew me in immediately. Once the game has begun, there are all kinds of possibilities as to who is behind the clues and where they are leading. The characters in the novel are a little more problematic. Andy is recently divorced and, having quit his job, is obviously willing to play along both out of curiosity and for any possible monetary gain. Kate, however, is a more difficult person to fathom. From the very start she seems edgy, impatient and totally against anything that Andy does; while the brother and sister relationship does not allow for much development between them.

There are a good cast of peripheral characters which help flesh out the storyline and the novel did become more exciting towards the end, but I still preferred the somewhat unfulfilled promise of the start. It was an excellent idea, but somehow I failed to become completely engaged. Kate seemed a little too perfect and caring, with her vain attempts not to upset anyone and befriend those they came across; while Andy became single minded and obsessed. It was unclear why Kate was so against Andy following the clues that Craig has left and why she was constantly so angry at him. Still, this was an interesting idea and the author obviously has a lot to offer. With thanks to Booklover Catlady Publicity and the author for a copy of this book to review. Rated 3.5.

Elisa says

I received a free copy of this book in exchange for an honest review. Thank you, Amazon Publishing! I really enjoyed Mortom, a twisted, very dark and geographically-challenged version of the Amazing Race. When Craig Moore dies, he leaves his house to his cousin Andy, setting in motion a depraved treasure hunt that may lead to a prize (or not). The red herrings are well played so that, when the endgame comes, it's hard to see it coming. Even after I thought all the twists were done, there came a final - if obvious - one that closed the book nicely. Fast-paced and full of complicated - if unlikeable - characters, Mortom is engrossing. The only reason that I don't give it 5 stars is that killing your pet rat as part of a game is never OK - poor Annabelle!

Erin says

Won through the FirstReads program and looking forward to reading it! Thanks to Goodreads and the publisher for making it available.

Disappointment abounds.

When reading the description of this book, I thought, "A PUZZLE MYSTERY!?!?!!" (yes, I think in all caps when I'm really excited. It's a failing, but really doesn't bother anyone but me.) One of my all time favorite books is THE perfect example of a puzzle mystery done right (The Westing Game by Ellen Raskin) and I've always searched for another one done with even half the skill.

This one isn't it. Not even close.

Andy Crowl and sister Kate travel to Mortom after the death of their cousin Craig - Andy and Craig were always in some weird competition thing so Andy didn't bother to attend the funeral (Kate was sick and you'll know what immediately, zero mystery there) and was only interested in Mortom when Craig left his entire estate to Andy instead of Craig's mother Mary who is still living, right there in Mortom. Andy has recently gone through some major personal problems and he decides that an inheritance from an unmourned, unloved cousin will be perfect for solving them. So, yeah, he's kind of an ass.

Once Andy and Kate (who really just seems to be along for the ride) in Mortom it becomes clear that what Craig has actually left Andy is a scavenger hunt. But to what? And why? And for two puzzle fiends, why are the clues generally so very easy?

The plot twists fizzle and the book reads as if it was written for young adults, but it clearly was not. Such promise in the premise and such a let down in the execution....and Therme even leaves the door open for a sequel that I doubt anyone is anxiously awaiting except for maybe his mom (or a cousin who hates him). Skip this and go read (or re-read The Westing Game instead). Or if you are an author, please go write a worthy adult puzzle mystery - your audience is out there and we are a desperate lot.

❁Aimee❁ Just one more page... says

This story was dark overall. The story and mystery is written with chilling undertones. You always feel like the other shoe is going to drop. You constantly wonder who is in the shadows and what is going to happen

next. This portion was a plus for me - it was well written suspense with a lot of clues along the way.

The author *writes* well and often the writing felt very Hitchcockian to me.

The part I didn't like was that the all characters were so unlikable, intensely flawed, broken....and stay this way. No one was changed for the better - they just sank deep into their flaws and set up roots.

Some people may not mind this sort of book. Heck, how many books did we read in English Lit that were this way? However, in order for me to feel like the darkness and "muck" are worth it, there needs to be some sort of redemption in the story. I need to feel like there was an epiphany or some spark that initiates change in the characters. There needs to be a *reason* for it all. Otherwise, it's just damn depressing to me.

Thank you Netgalley for a free digital copy in exchange for an honest review.

Diane Lynch says

Page turner. I didn't want to put this down. Suspenseful. Suicide or murder? Dysfunctional family. Odd neighbors. A life depends on solving an involved puzzle that the deceased designed specifically for his cousin. Are they cousins? What is the reason for this involved puzzle? You will not believe the twists and turns. Original plot. Characters are so well developed you feel you know them personally.

Sue says

“Mortom” by Erik Therme, an American author is a debut novel about a treasure hunt set by a dead man for his cousin to follow. Andy knows is he has four days to solve Craig's clues. So what does he win? Andy is hoping to inherit a great fortune.

“Andy Crawl barely knew his recently deceased cousin, Craig Moore, so he’s especially surprised to be named as the sole beneficiary in Craig’s will. But much to his surprise, Andy sees there is not much to inherit- just an empty bank account and a run-down house.

Once Andy arrives in the town of Mortom, however, he’s drawn into his puzzle-obsessed cousin’s true legacy: a twisted and ominous treasure hunt. Beckoned by macabre clues of dead rats and cemetery keys, Andy jumps into the game, hoping to discover untold wealth. But unsavory secrets—and unanswered questions about Craig’s untimely demise—arise at every turn, leading Andy to wonder if he’s playing the game...or if the game is playing him.

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When Andy and his sister Katie show up in the small town of Mortom to collect their “prize”, and meet with the executor of the will at the house, to discuss their options, an initial walk through reveals some strange things. First of all the house stinks, and Andy traces the foul odour to behind the refrigerator. There he finds a dead rat with a numbered locker key “23” and a message, “Follow Me” on a piece of paper stuffed in the

rats mouth! Wow...A treasure hunt! It was meant for him to find it. And then a letter taped to the bottom of the rat cage. Andy starts to follow the twisted clues...and see where it will lead him...and hopefully to a pot of gold.

This book really appealed to me, as I have always enjoyed doing crosswords and a fan of puzzles. The author tells his story, so that the reader is in the "game" and moves forward with the clues and characters, while stumbling in the dark, unsure of the ending. A super way of involving the reader.

This was quite a different kind of murder mystery, than I am used to reading, but a refreshing one! This novel will appeal to a wide range of readers, who enjoy a challenge.

Let the Games begin, and turn your brain power on!

Thank you Erik Therme, VIP reviews, and Maxine Groves, Publicist for the digital copy in exchange for an honest review.

Victoria says

I enjoyed this book! The characters are very accessible, the tone is engaging, the plot quickly draws the reader in, the story is plainly ridiculous but great fun and I looked forward to continuing with it. Lots of puzzles on the way that I found myself trying to figure out, trying to be clever and work out where it was going but I didn't have a clue and the end took me by surprise. Recommended if you want a light read with a bit of a punch so long as you are able to suspend belief and just go with it...

I received a foc review copy of this book from the author/narrator/publisher via Audiobook Boom, don't know anyone related to the book and have given an honest, unbiased review.

Lynn Mccarthy says

Andy inherited a house from his cousin Craig who had just died.

Andy and his sister Katie go to Mortom to sort out the details instead they ind a dead Rat under the fridge with a piece of paper and a Key in his mouth the paper reading follow me, this begins a mysterious game with clues he has to find and work out but along the way the clues lead to unanswered questions about who was craigs dad and questions about craigs untimely death.

I thought this book was great had to keep reading to find out the next clue and where they was going to lead. It is a very compelling book quite a different kind of Murder mystery.

I just loved it more please.

Thank you to the Author and Booklover Catlady Publicity for a copy of this book to review

J. Kahele says

This book started slow for me, it took me awhile to really get into it. From the blurb I expected the story to jump right into something mysterious, action-filled, but it didn't. I at one point, was considering not reading on, but some books have a slow start and sometimes it takes awhile for the action to begin.

After the death of their cousin Craig, Andy and his sister Kate travel to Mortom. I found it strange that Andy never attended Craig's funeral, even though they tended to be competitive, it was still family after all. Kate and Andy were very selfish characters, the only reason they went to Mortom was so that Andy could inherit what his cousin had left him, his entire estate.

But was that all he left him? No. What Craig had left him was clues. Puzzles for him to solve, starting with a note left in a dead rats mouth. This is where the story picked up and I really began to get into it.

My final note. The story was well written, although, at times it was very drawn out and in the end I didn't regret reading the book as much as I started, but it wasn't a book that entranced me. The only reason I gave it a rating of four is because of the writing.

Todd Simpson says

Brilliant. There are some books that just can't pull yourself away from with the need to find out what's going to happen, and this is definitely one of those stories. I knew I already liked Erik Therme's writing style after I read another one of his books 'Rest Haven', which is another fantastic and unique story. Mortom is an edgy thriller that keeps the reader guessing. Along with some great characters it has a very interesting plot. Andy is quite surprised when he hears his cousin has died and left his house to him in his will, as they weren't that close. Craig was only 33 years old, when he died after falling from a cliff and ended up drowning. Craig's only stipulation in the will is for Andy to turn up to his house in the first week after his death, which really is a pretty unusual request. However not so unusual when Andy and his sister Kate enter the house with a dead smell coming from it, and what they find because of it. The smell is a dead rat with a note and a key shoved into its mouth. When Andy first heard news of the house being left to him, his main concern at the time was whether he would keep the house or sell it, not that he would find a note and key from Craig. Or is it from Craig? Andy searched Craig's house and found a letter addressed to him, in which provided him with clues that something was waiting for him, if he could work out the clues by Friday the 13th. Andy isn't quite sure why Craig would leave the house to him, or why he would leave this bizarre game for him to play, but if Craig died after all this, he thought it must be important enough to follow up on. However Kate and Andy are wondering if it was even Craig that did all this. After they visit his mum, their Aunt Mary, they get a better idea of why Craig might have died, and possibly taken his own life. Then there's his neighbor and boss that may have also have reason to kill him. Without doubt this is an enjoyable book that I would certainly recommend.

Lashaan Balasingam (Bookidote) says

You can find my review on our blog by clicking [here](#).

We've all dreamed of receiving an outrageous amount of money deposited into our accounts or an empire being dropped on you, leaving you the sole beneficiary. Wouldn't that put a smile on absolutely anyone? Well Craig Moore, who has recently committed suicide, leaves behind "an empty bank account and a run-down house" for Andy Crawl, his cousin. Not exactly the greatest parting gift, but things get quite fishy when your dear cousin wasn't exactly... close to you. Upon arriving in the small town where Craig lived,

Mortom, Andy and his sister are catapulted into a suspicious and thrilling adventure. The discovery of a clue that might untangle the very mysteries that embellish the house brings relationships to the very brink of extinction, minds on the verge of eruption and chaos in the immediate proximity. Seeking answers to questions, Andy and his sister Kate explore well-kept secrets and Craig's history until this very dead man's game delivers the unexpected.

It's been a while since I've delved into a quick and thrilling novel. The pace was perfect and every chapter was a teaser. Erik Therme successfully immersed me into the novel and kept it even more alive with an engaging addition of puzzles to solve. A lot of psychological thrillers based on puzzles prefer to incorporate puzzles that are nearly impossible for readers to solve, even a little. However, Mortom does an amazing job in making the puzzles fun and interesting. This debut novel keeps everything in motion and never seems to go off track. To make this adventure even more worthwhile, one could simply look at the writing. If I were to pronounce myself on the presence or absence of a talent with words, my decision would be immediate and positive. The writing is perfect for this novel. There's no doubt that the writing managed to complement the story that was being told. Being straight to the point, precise and adaptive to each character was brilliantly done. The general structure of this novel can unquestionably be praised.

The setting and world in Mortom is quite simple, but very effective. Having such a small universe with near none irrelevant characters helped enormously in making everyone a potential character with key information. This helped make this adventure very entertaining, and sometimes a little too predictable. Having such a small cast of characters also helped give more opportunity to delve into relationships and character thoughts. If anything Andy's evolution was predictable, easy to see unfold and well executed. On the other hand, his sister's behavior had its ups and downs. Sometimes repetitive and constantly vomiting the same “stop-what-you're-doing” and “there's-nothing-there”, she could easily get on the nerves of some readers. She however still brings an interesting side to the story by gaining clues and plot elements that could later be helpful. Nonetheless, every character had their own flaws and personalities. This helped in making this a thrilling adventure and quick adventure.

Erik Therme's debut novel is an implacable reason to pursue a career of storytelling. Fun, thrilling and filled with puzzles, Andy Crowl's hunt for answers and potential wealth is an immersive and delightful story. Easy to read, interesting till the end, there's no reason to drop this book and stray away from it. The ending didn't hit me as hard as I wish it had though. It felt like jumping off a cliff and falling into an ocean, unharmed and in doubt of the purpose of such a jump. In fact, you might have been expecting something quite opposite of a safe landing because of an ocean; more like a rocky ground and a lot of red. Mortom is still a rapid page-turner filled with secrecy and obsession. It's not without reason for a person to think that a puzzle is left behind in the will of a dead cousin and believe that an elaborated plan such as this would lead to a pot of gold in the end. Growing on these fantasies and searching for clues will push a person to their limits and Erik Therme does an excellent job in exploring the various facets of such “compulsive” behaviors.

Yours truly,

Lashaan

Lashaan & Trang | Bloggers and Book Reviewers
Official blog: <http://bookidote.wordpress.com>

Thrilling novel. Puzzles were fun and engaging. The book is built within a small world and gave room to a quick and mysterious adventure. A lot was predictable, but that didn't take away from the entertainment. But Erik Therme definitely has a talent in story-telling.

P.S. Full review to come.

Yours truly,

Lashaan

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