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When sixteen-year-old Lark Austin is kidnapped from her Virginia hometown and left to die in a snowy forest, she leaves behind two friends who are stunned by the loss. As Lark's former best friend, Eve can't shake the guilt that this tragedy was somehow her fault. Meanwhile, Nyetta is haunted each night by Lark's ghost, who comes through the bedroom window and begs Nyetta to set her soul free. Eve and Nyetta realize that Lark is trapped in limbo, and only by coming together to heal themselves will they discover why.

Tracey Porter's stunning narrative about love and loss demonstrates that forgiveness can never come too late.

Lark Details

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Elizabeth says

It's rare when I actually **hate** a book, but it's safe to say that I actually hate this one. It's so freaking stupid. There is barely any story and no character development whatsoever. And if you actually could somehow say there is a story to this, it's not like the story hasn't been used before. It's just a stupid, short version of a book that could actually be good. There isn't even anything I can say in my review besides that, because there was barely anything to write about. The book is crap. Don't read it.

The only good thing I can say about this book is that the cover is gorgeous, and whenever I was reading it, which I'm pretty sure was only one day, people would tell me how beautiful the cover was. Okay, I'm now done with this review for this horrible book.

Anna says

Lark:

Author: Tracey Porter

My rating: 3 1/2 out of 5 stars.

A girl is taken, stolen. A gymnast, diver, ballerina, best friend and baby sitter is kidnapped from curbside outside her gym. She's tied to a tree and left to die, having already been beaten, stabbed and bruised. Lark never thought she'd be one of THOSE girls from the news. The ones making sadistic headlines, Missing Girl Found Dead; but she did, she made headlines and the entire town skipped a beat, only a beat.

When Lark finds that her soul cannot move on from the tree she'd died tied to, she reaches out to her old best friend Eve and Nyetta a little girl Lark would babysit. She needs only for them to look. If they see what happened and understand her death Lark will be free.

Potentate in its realism, stark in its ferocity, and somehow mangled with rigid lyricism. I absolutely devoured the entire short read. I felt at one point that my heart had frozen, been brittle over with littering cracks running the entire length of it, for surely not more could hurt after this novel. The descriptive nature of which Porter portrays three separate yet interwoven lives is awe-inspiring and at points left me breathless. I was so thoroughly stunned to the point at one interval that I glared down at the book silently cursing its existence then tossed it onto my bed determined to no longer read it anymore.

Porter writing style is something of a unique quality, it is fluid and richly descriptive, while complex and unnerving. At some point I thought it might hold a bit of prose in it for the rhythm of the novel seem to pulse with the beat of a good freelance poem.

Thanh Tho says

I picked up the book because the title was simple and that caught my attention. I also wanted to know how these two girls would overcome their conflicts and be able to help Lark. However, I felt like the book was lacking something, maybe some "real" emotions because I felt like the book wasn't realistic enough to reflect a real situation. The author did not make the story about girls in trees believable enough for me so I felt like I was reading a fantasy novel instead of an emotional story.

Emily Benoit says

Concept/Ideas: 3/5

Characters: 3.5/5

Storyline/Plot: 3/5

Writing Style: 4/5

Overall Rating: 3/5

Mixed feelings about Lark. First of all, let's start off by saying I LOVE THE COVER. So beautiful, and definitely has a lot of significance to the book.

I knew this was going to be a fast read. Which I love. But... I feel like it really lacked a storyline plot. I don't know how to exactly explain it. I feel like the author just kind of threw you from Point A to Point B. Example: "Lark is alive... BOOM. Dead.... Lark is a ghost... BOOM. Her friends save her... BOOM. End of story." I feel like she lacked a really good plot line, and everything was rushed. I think if she would have made this book in a longer one, and had more plot.. it would have been much, much better.

The writing was beautiful though. I can't deny it. The way Tracey Porter wrote this, it really makes you feel. She wrote so deeply and in a moving way. Hence why I say that, once again, she should have made it longer and developed it more.

The characters were alright, but had no real depth to them in my opinion.

Overall, it was a good book and I still recommend it. It's quick and to the point.

Sarah says

This was such a dark, dark book, and I can't say I enjoyed it. But it did have some lovely writing and I loved the way the author framed the events through the eyes of the girls versus the adults - whose point of view we never actually hear, but who go on with life as if the murdering of teenage girls is a sad but fairly normal part of living.

I remember one of the girls saying that after Lark's death, she kept waiting for important adults to get together and form a committee to figure out why this sort of thing keeps happening to girls, and what they will do to stop it. And you know, that committee doesn't form, it never does, and why not? Meanwhile, the girls see right through the victim blaming that arises, as it inevitably really does - and that is something I really appreciated, though it was never fully played out. They bring up the fallacy of saying Lark was dressed inappropriately and thus attracted her murderer, that she did something wrong that resulted in her death, and they question the idea that the onus is on teen girls to protect themselves when the onus should be firmly and entirely placed on the evil people who would commit these crimes. Other issues related to rape culture are briefly raised or touched upon, as well.

While adults fail to ask the right questions, fail to care in the right way, the girls find a way to access their horror and move through it to something resembling peace. Part of this process, for them, involves metaphorically looking the evil in the eye, in a way that the rest of the world doesn't want to do. None of this feels good to read about or think about, but it was sometimes beautifully written and packed a very big punch. I read it in less than two hours.

Rachael Smits says

Imagine you are being held against your will, tied up against a tree, in the freezing blizzard weather. No one's there to hear your cries. What would you do? How would you deal with that? The sadness you would feel. How terrified you would be. It would change a person's life forever. Lark by Tracey Porter is a kind of realistic fiction book that teaches us about true friendship and how these characters deal with the trouble of losing a friend.

Lark, a teenage girl brutally murdered in the woods, her spirit wants someone to find her body but she has lost all of her friends close to her. So, she doesn't have many people to help her out, or listen to her. An excerpt from the book that illustrates friendship, is, "Larks . . . , I realize, and I go back to the day when we were very little and she showed me a picture of a lark in a book of birds. We were in the study, which always felt like a grandfather's room because it was filled with comfy old furniture. A granny-square afghan was spread over the back of the sofa. It felt so safe to be surrounded by oak walls and book, the sound of the dryer in the background, shafts of sunlight falling through the window." Eve still remembers all the feelings from lark's house and when they used to be best friends. Eve misses lark and takes a moment to remember her and a memory they shared.

If you like this book, you may also like Miles from Ordinary written by Carol Lynch Williams because this book is also about putting a spirit at rest. I rate this book 3 out of 5 stars because it was very good with description, but at times went to fast and the book was short. The ending was not that good and left me with questions about the characters' future lives. The author just summed it up real quick and didn't explain it very well.

Adia Hopes says

A hard working gymnast is found in the woods left to die, after being kidnapped after her evening practice. Because she was so distant from her social life, her only two real friends, Eve and Nyetta, are haunted by her pleas to be set free from the forest where she died.

Personally, I think the book could have had more plot development. All the details in the book seemed like they were mashed together. To me, the story line wasn't long or thorough enough to develop a fantastic story, although for 180 pages, it wasn't that bad.

The one thing I did like about this story is that every chapter or so, the perspective of the story changes, because a new person is telling his or her side of the story. I liked this, because it gave me a sense of what was going through everyone's minds, and not just the main character's.

Overall, the book was okay. Nothing too exciting like shocking cliffhangers or dramatic romance, but a decent story that was enjoyable.

Brittany says

Lark came to Nyetta one night, because no one else would listen, no one else would look. Nyetta doesn't want to look either, even if it will set Lark free. Eve used to be friends with Lark, before things happened, and she can't help but feel like if they were still friends Lark would be alive. Nyetta and Eve are the only ones who can help Lark, the only ones who can set her free after her vicious murder.

This was a fast read. A beautifully written story about a girl who was murdered, and needs someone to acknowledge the evil done to her before she may pass on. The book alternates between the three girls. Lark's story starts before she is murdered, Nyetta's tale starts when Lark visits her and Eve's story jumps between memories and the present. Each girl had a haunted presence surrounding their voice. This whole story had a creepy dense air about it, even though the writing itself was free and floating. I appreciated that this tale was about grieving, in different ways, but it wasn't wholly depressing. Each girl reflects on how this could have happened, and why they weren't there for Lark. This was a lyrical and heartbreaking tale, that you would do well do pick up.

First Line:

"First he hit her, then he stabbed her with a small knife, but Lark didn't die from this."

Favorite Line:

"heartwood sap beat pulse taproot crown beat pulse leaf bark beat pulse root sapwood beat pulse heartwood sap beat pulse taproot crown beat"

Read more: <http://www.areadingnook.com/#ixzz1Q1Y...>

Danielle says

When sixteen-year-old Lark Austin is kidnapped from her Virginia hometown and left to die in a snowy forest, she leaves behind two friends who are stunned by the loss. As Lark's former best friend, Eve can't shake the guilt that this tragedy was somehow her fault. Meanwhile, Nyetta is haunted each night by Lark's ghost, who comes through the bedroom window and begs Nyetta to set her soul free. Eve and Nyetta realize that Lark is trapped in limbo, and only by coming together to heal themselves will they discover why.

Tracey Porter's stunning narrative about love and loss demonstrates that forgiveness can never come too late.

What can I say about this book? Well for starters, it was very unique. I don't think I've come across a book like it so far. It's a tragic story about a 16 year old girl in Virginia who gets kidnapped and murdered. I won't go too far into **how** she died, but I will say this: It's a horrible way to die. If you think about it, it may sound a bit like the *Lovely Bones*, but it's not. If anything, it's probably a more censored version of the *Lovely Bones*, but still not suitable for younger readers.

What made this book so unique was not the way Lark died, but what happened after she dies. Ever heard of murdered girls turning into trees? Well, that's what her younger friend Nyetta is convinced happened to her. Now, of course, it's hard to determine whether or not this is true, or just coming from the mind of an extremely grief-stricken twelve year old, but thankfully, you find out the truth at the end.

Lark captures your attention from the first page and keeps you reading until you get to the end. It stirs up a bunch of different questions and feeling throughout the novel that you feel you just **HAVE** to have answered. Porter wrote this novel brilliantly and will have you hooked as you switch back and forth between the present and past with Lark and her two friends Nyetta and Eve.

Bunny says

Don't let this book's small size deter you. It packs a pretty mean punch, straight to the heart. I flew through this within two or three hours.

Admittedly, I stayed far away from this until I felt like I had plucked up the courage to finally read it. I needed every ounce of that courage for the story that was waiting for me within these pages. Lark is a very real and heartbreaking account of a young girl who is abducted, raped, and left for dead in the woods of her small hometown in northern Virginia.

Each girl has her own distinct voice. Eve is recovering from sexual harassment, while Nyetta is recovering from her parent's tumultuous divorce coupled with the fact that Lark's ghost is visiting her from the grave. I thought that the alternate narrations between Lark, Eve and Nyetta were handled seamlessly and flowed easily.

Would I recommend this? Absolutely. However, there is some violent and graphic imagery that might not be suitable for more sensitive readers.

Noelle says

that was not an awesome book. im not sure which aspect of this novel i found more uncomfortable; the fact that the dead girls turned into trees or the fact that someone felt the need to write a fictional story about teenage rape.

to be honest, this is just not my kind of book and i would not have ever picked it up on my own. my highschool book club decided they wanted read it. im pretty sure they'll realize their mistake when we are having an awkward group conversation about rape.

yeah.

Sandy says

Thoughtful and short realistic fiction YA novel about three girls, Lark, Nyetta, and Eve. Lark was kidnapped and killed by a psychopath, and the other girls are trying to deal with this in their own way.

Nyetta keeps seeing Lark's ghost, as Lark needs someone to physically see where she was stabbed before she can move on into the next life. Eve and Lark were best friends at one time, so Eve tries to help Nyetta as well with getting Lark to accept her fate and not be trapped in the tree where she was killed.

I enjoyed this quick and easy read about friendship, moving on, and accepting our fate.

Angela Fristoe says

Let me start off by saying I hate sad books, and if I'd read the blurb before reading the book, I probably wouldn't have picked Lark up. As it was, the cover reminded me of Maggie Steifvater's The Wolves of Mercy Falls series. That said I am so glad I did. This was my first read of 2012 and I managed to finish it in under three hours. The chapters are short, and it is an extremely fast read.

Part of the fast read is that the characters are engaging. The three points of view made everything even sadder by how close they were to what was happening. There is very little in the way of extras. We learn about Lark's relationships with Eve and Nyetta, what they were like together, what drove them apart and ultimately how they really felt about each other. Nyetta's perspective was especially moving because she is younger and struggling with something that the adults in her life can't even begin to comprehend.

Listening to Lark relive her death and her relentless efforts to get Nyetta to help her move on was heartbreaking. The idea Porter builds around what happens to girls who die in the woods was really interesting. I don't want to say more for fear of giving away too much, but this is definitely worth a read.

You can check out more of my reviews on my blog [Turning the Pages](#)

Sesana says

This is a small book, and I read it very quickly, but I think it's going to stay with me for awhile. It's risky, especially in such a short book, to use three POVs. Porter was able to juggle them quite well, enough to make each of the three voices distinct. The fantasy elements are quietly integrated into the book, without entirely taking over until the end.

But what made this book most effective for me was the way that Porter confronts rape culture, using thoughts that make sense for a teen girl to have, especially when using Eve's POV. When she wonders why nobody seems to be trying to keep girls from getting murdered, when she gets angry that all she and her friends are being told is what *they* should do to avoid being victims, when she notes (sadly? bitterly? both) that girls getting raped and murdered is normal... They're honest, painful reactions to the reality that Eve is being confronted with. I wouldn't call this a Message book, but it definitely has something to say.

But there is a certain flatness to the book, mostly in the peripheral characters. This is probably a side effect of how short the book is, and how internal all three POVs are. I got absorbed enough in the three girls' interlocking stories that I hardly noticed until I was thinking about the book later. But I did read this very quickly, in one sitting without major interruption, which probably helped the flow.

Lark is beautifully written, which makes it bearable to read. Because otherwise it's painful, without solutions or answers to the larger issues. Which is, I'm sorry to say, terribly realistic. Maybe what Porter is saying is that, unless evil is confronted, nothing can be done to stop it. The answer isn't telling girls to wear modest clothing and take self defense, it's creating a world where wearing a leotard after gymnastics class isn't a justification.

Hylary Locsin says

Originally posted on my blog: <http://libraryladyhylary.blogspot.com> ! Check it out for more reviews!

haunted by the ghost of Lark who believes she will turn into a tree, the fate of other girls who were murdered in the woods. Eve is also haunted, but only with memories of Lark and the experiences they had growing up as best friends. Nyetta becomes more and more upset when it seems that she will not be able to help Lark escape her fate of being trapped in the forest for eternity. Will the two friends be able to cope with Lark's murder and help her soul rest peacefully?

Told in alternating voices between Nyetta, Lark and Eve, this short but powerful tale manages to accomplish quite a bit for its length. The gamut of emotions are present in this story: horror at the rape, brutal beating and murder of Lark, despair in the mind of her friend Eve who must cope with the death, mystery at what exactly is happening with Nyetta and Lark's ghost, and hope that the friends, and town, will eventually be able to move on following the tragedy. Porter also includes some very tough issues in Lark besides the murder, including divorce, sexual assault and molestation. These themes, however, are not over-the-top and serve to help the reader understand how an entire community can be impacted from the loss of a promising and vivacious girl. Overall, Lark is a very moving and, at times, difficult read that is original in its telling and memorable.

Wow, this was definitely not a fluffy YA book by any stretch of the imagination. I was very impressed by how Porter managed to include so much in such a short novel, and think that it shows something about her literary prowess. I had difficulty reading portions of the novel, especially those describing Lark's murder, but think that this book is a very important read, especially for teen girls and anyone who has been affected by the loss of a friend.

Sue says

This is a beautifully written story of three girls.

Lark is a gymnastics obsessed teen who disappears and is found murdered. Nyetta is a young girl who looked up to Lark and was often babysat by her. Eve used to be a good friend of Lark until they had a falling out.

Each chapter in this book alternates between each of the girls' points of view. We see Lark as a ghost, annoyed and upset at what happened to her, and trying to find someone who will "see" her so she can move on. We see Nyetta, who is forced into therapy and who is frightened because she knows Lark visits her but she is too scared to "see" her and save her from something worse than death. And we see Eve, trying to cope with her own issues as well as working out how she feels about Lark's tragic death. The story follows all three girls in how they each deal with Lark's death and how they try to heal and move on.

This story is written with depth and feeling, and is almost lyrical in its writing. A very poignant story that is quite compelling. It's sad at times, but there is also hope. The ending was beautiful. It's a quick, easy read, only taking a few hours. This is the second time I have read this book, and I loved it just as much as the first time, maybe even more. Highly recommended.

Mery says

Lark, namanya diambil dari nama burung mungil lark. Gadis 16 tahun yang cantik ini senang sekali dengan olahraga senam. Suatu hari Lark menghilang. Terakhir kali dia terlihat keluar dari Virginia Gymnastic Academy menunggu ayahnya.

Nyette sangat mengagumi Lark. Dulu Lark mengasuh Nyette saat orangtuanya tidak di rumah. Mereka berbagi masa-masa yang menyenangkan. Dan Nyette ingin jadi seperti Lark.

Terakhir kali Eve melihat Lark adalah seminggu sebelum Lark menghilang. Dulu mereka teman dekat. Sama-sama berlatih di Virginia Gymnastic Academy. Namun satu kejadian membuat mereka tak lagi saling bicara.

Dua hari kemudian, Lark ditemukan tak bernyawa. Tubuhnya diikat di sebuah pohon di hutan, dalam keadaan tanpa pakaian dan berlumuran darah. Menurut tim penyidik, yang membuat Lark meninggal adalah udara dingin yang menyengat.

Cerita ini dibuat dari tiga sudut pandang: Lark, Nyette, Eve.

Lark menceritakan tentang bagaimana dia diculik. Nyette bercerita bagaimana dia melihat hantu Lark mendatangnya dan memohon pertolongannya agar dia tak menjadi satu dengan pohon. Eve bercerita tentang pertemanannya dengan Lark dan bagaimana semuanya berubah setelah mereka tak saling bicara, serta masa-masa setelah Lark ditemukan meninggal.

Buku ini mengingatkanku dengan *Lovely Bones*, di mana sang tokoh adalah arwah yang gentayangan. Bedanya dari *Suze Salmon*, Lark tidak meminta orang menemukan jasad/pelakunya. Lark hanya ingin orang-orang tahu bagaimana dia meninggal hingga arwahnya bisa tenang dan tak terikat dengan batang pohon.

Setiap bab buku ini dituturkan dengan bab pendek. Makanya agak kurang emosi yang didapat. Hanya sepenggal-sepenggal cerita dari tiap-tiap tokoh.

Tapi apa yang membuatku memberinya 4 bintang adalah konseling yang diadakan sekolah Eve untuk menghindari kejadian serupa dialami gadis lainnya. Seperti contohnya: berpakaian yang sopan. Kasus Lark hanyalah satu dari jutaan kasus yang dialami gadis-gadis belia di seluruh dunia.

Masih ingat *Ma di Room* yang juga mengalami hal yang sama, bedanya Lark memberontak hingga sang penculik terpaksa membunuhnya, lalu memerkosanya.

Michelle says

"I was dead when I was alive, and I didn't even know it."

After 16-year-old Lark is murdered, she, her childhood best friend Eva, and Nyetta, a girl Lark used to babysit, find themselves facing hard truths about their lives and seeking a way to move on.

I saw some reviews on here where people said that this book was scary or creepy. I didn't really feel like it was either of those. :b I wasn't like freaked out or scared, but it was more of a mysterious curiosity for me.

Lark Austin is lured in by a man and is raped and stabbed and then left to die in the area's worst snowstorm of the year. But, she isn't really gone. I think that the author tried to depict her as a ghost, without really directly stating it. The logic here is that when girls are raped and left to die, like Lark was, they become trees unless someone is willing to see what happened to them. It doesn't make much sense, and most of the time I was like, "Huh?", but this book is very thought-provoking in a lot of ways.

The poetic prose featured in this book is outstanding. It almost sounds like it's a poem in some parts, which made the story all the more fascinating. The tone of the book is a little bit distant, since it's written in 3rd person. Most of the chapters are very short, some only 2-3 pages long, and each chapter alternates between the POV's of Lark (which could be said as in the past, before she was raped), and Eve and Nyetta (whose POV's are written after Lark is killed).

Eve is Lark's former best friend, who takes an interest in drawing and used to be on the swim team with Lark. They always went exploring together. Eve describes herself as being on "auto-pilot" after Lark's death. She shows no signs of grieving or mourning. Nyetta is a girl who Lark used to babysit, and Lark always taught Nyetta how to do gymnastic skills. Nyetta was so shocked and upset about Lark's death that she had to start regularly going to see a therapist.

One thing I didn't like about the book was that there are characters that are introduced but aren't really emphasized, but then they are brought up later in the book and I don't remember who they are. The characters aren't very round and their problems aren't emphasized, so they seem like trivial problems even if they were meant to be serious. I couldn't really relate to the characters and I didn't feel like I knew them.

This book has a very dark mood. Like I said, it's not really scary, but it's just depressing. If you think about it, why wouldn't it be depressing? A girl gets raped and killed. Of course it's going to be depressing! Anyhoo, despite it's short length, this book is very emotional and some people may even relate to it. It is a book that is not to be looked over or taken lightly. This is serious stuff here, and I thought it was wonderfully written.

Oksana *Bookaholic* says

What? I did not get the point of this book. It was very scattered, and I found myself wondering why I was reading it. Oh ya! Because it somehow ended up on my to-read list! I REALLY need to clean that shelf... Anyway, this story was about three girls. Oh yes, no matter that the story was super-short and I finished it in like thirty minutes, the author decided to use THREE main characters that I had to CARE about enough to go on with the story.

Epic. FAIL.

Okay, I DID go on with the story. Doesn't mean I wasn't begging for the book to be over. This book failed at failing. (Cool expression, btw, right?). So, this girl named Lark was kidnapped, then hurt with a knife, sexually abused, then tied to a tree naked, which led to her death by exposure. This is all literally written in one sentence. Well, DUH. The book was so short.

I would usually never write a bad review about something like this. I mean, this is a serious subject. This actually happens to girls. Well, I don't know what the author was thinking. This book was also about Nyetta, a girl who used to be a friend of Lark's. Wait - or was she the girl Lark babysat? I don't know - I honestly don't remember. What I DO remember is that this book was very focused upon the fact that Lark was getting stuck in a tree, (excuse me, not HER, per se, but her ghost, which is veeeeery real and only certain people she chooses to come to can see), because that's what happens to girls like her. If no one can find out who murdered her or something, or see WHERE she was hurt, she basically turns into a tree.

And I thought this book would be serious.

This book was also about Eva. And I think THIS was the girl that Lark babysat. Just don't take my word for it. Anyway, this book just goes on to tell how Eva was pissed at Lark for choosing everything they did, being better than her. Also, we follow her love life. Wait! What love life? You mean that guy Ian who used to like Lark and then when she died started hanging out with Eva? And then he told her he didn't REALLY like Lark, so it's ok? Yep, that love life!

My point. I didn't know anything about these people, and I didn't care. The author didn't bother getting us acquainted, but instead jumped right into a mess and expected us to care. No. I WILL NOT! I thought this book. Would be serious for a change. It wasn't. It was about ghosts and three random girls.

Nicole says

More of a novella than a book, this story was...sweet. Well, as sweet as a story about the brutal murder of a 16-year-old girl can be. Peppered with descriptive narratives and sprinklings of magical realism, I never quite bought into the premise but it was fast and fairly enjoyable read nonetheless.

The treatment of the female body was fascinating to me. The curvy girl hates her body and is molested because of it while the stick-straight gymnast is stalked and murdered for her body. Girls are trapped in trees when they die and mothers who blindly (as in can't see what they are doing) abuse their daughter's physical and emotional bodies. It didn't read like Porter had a "project" so much as she had some issues of her own. (I have no evidence to support this claim, please don't send me angry emails)

I'm glad there was one redeeming male character and I'm glad that was at least one set of nurturing parents. The ending didn't exactly make sense, but then I suppose this is the kind of book that is not meant to make total sense. It's kind of like the YA literary version of an impressionist painting; all sense, little apparent cohesion, but a pleasant overall effect.
