

## The Woods Are Waiting

**Katherine Greene**

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In Katherine Greene's novel *The Woods Are Waiting*, cyclical tragedies haunt a small rural town.

Five years ago, three children disappeared in the woods near the isolated town of Blue Cliff. They never came back. Cheyenne, who found one of the bodies, grew sick of the fear and superstition plaguing Blue Cliff—and her mother in particular—and moved away, leaving her best friend, Natalie, and her boyfriend, Jack, behind without saying goodbye. But now, another disappearance compels Cheyenne to return. She finds herself getting closer to a terrible secret that has haunted the town since its beginnings.

Alternating between Cheyenne and Natalie's voices, the story begins as Cheyenne reconnects with her eccentric mother, who believes that it is her duty to protect Blue Cliff from a malignant spirit. The townsfolk are an unforgiving lot who pride themselves on always looking out for each other, yet they turn away from inconvenient, uncomfortable truths—like the fact that the young man convicted of three past killings has been exonerated by new evidence. As an “outta-towner,” Jasper may be a convenient suspect, but targeting him only gives the real killer space to hide...and to take more lives.

Cheyenne's return forces her to confront unpleasant memories and the consequences of her departure. Her efforts to reconcile with Jack and Natalie end up endangering their lives as the mystery builds to a skin-crawling climax in an isolated, run-down cabin where no help is forthcoming. With the truth revealed at last, the people of Blue Cliff have to grapple with their roles in creating an atmosphere where prejudice, violence, and irrationality could thrive—and Cheyenne is forced to decide where she really belongs.

*The Woods Are Waiting* is a mystery novel in which the most dangerous monsters are those that people create for themselves.

EILEEN GONZALEZ (July / August 2023)

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