FOREWORD REVIEWS THE INDIE WE LOVE.

Blood Country
Mary Logue
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Small town America has a reputation for peace, quiet and simplicity. Yet beneath the deceptive calm of a small town seethes all kinds of emotions, ranging from passion to envy to bitterness. Grace Metalious? classic potboiler Peyton Place was perhaps the first novel to explore the secrets and depths of a small town; yet small towns were frequently the settings for Agatha Christie's classic mysteries.

Former Minneapolis homicide detective Claire Watkins left the big city with her young daughter Meg after the hit and run murder of her husband. Claire was happy with her new life in the small Wisconsin town, "…where the most violent act she would do in a day was to bend and pull a weed from the ground. She hoped it would stay that way." It was, however, to prove merely the calm before the storm. On her way home from school, Meg cut through her next-door neighbor's garden, and she found the eighty-one-year-old Landers Anderson lying on the ground.

The cause of death was a blow to the head with his own shovel. Glad to be out of her normal routine of jail room duty and catching speeders and drunk drivers, Claire sets out to solve Pepin County's first murder in more than twenty years. During the course of her current investigation, Claire discovers disturbing information regarding the death of her husband—Meg had seen the driver.

As any good mystery writer should do, Logue draws the reader in from the very first page. What makes her great is her skillful use of characterization and her proficiency for storytelling. Her writing style is clean and concise. With twists and turns and "unusual suspects" involved with both murders, Logue exhibits why she is considered one of the best new mystery writers. Logue is an award-winning poet and author of numerous books including two previous mysteries—Red Lake of the Heart and Still Explosion.

Blood Country introduces her new sleuth, police officer Claire Watkins. Watkins and her supporting players are richly drawn and complex; a feat that many mystery writers fail to achieve. Her talent should soon place her among the other masters of the form such as Sara Paretsky and Sue Grafton.

Paul J. Willis