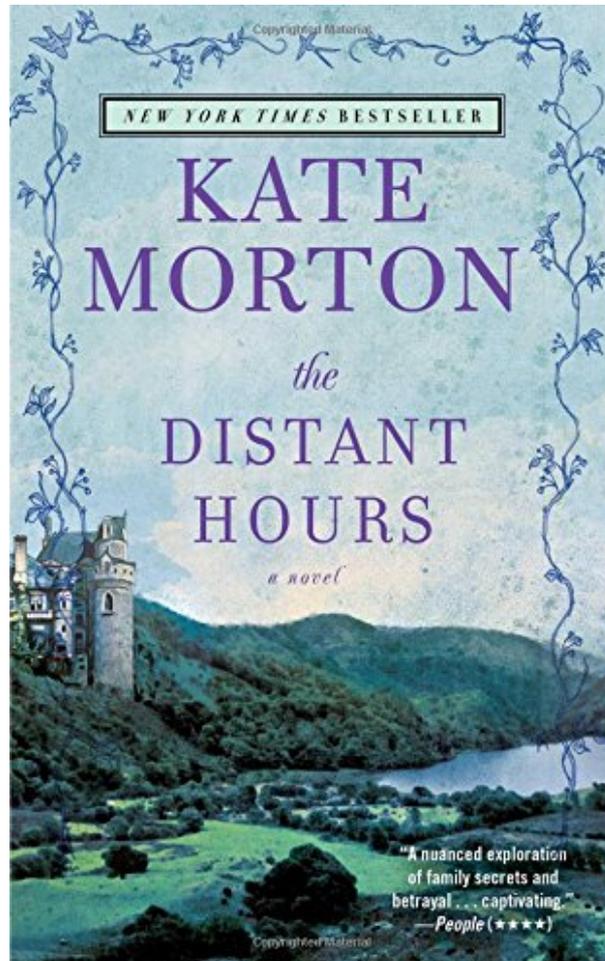
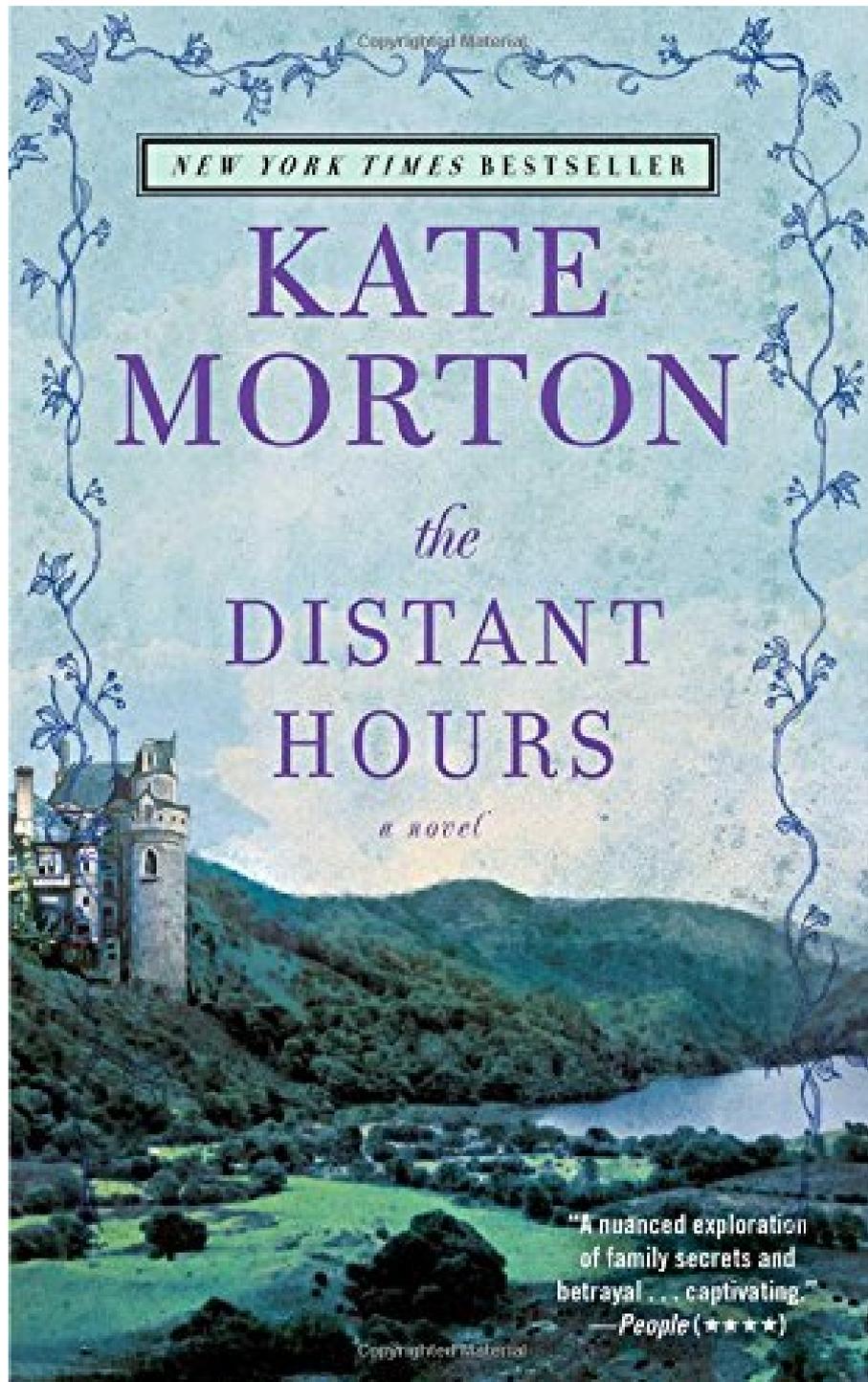


# THE DISTANT HOURS BY KATE MORTON



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The #1 internationally bestselling author of *The Forgotten Garden* mesmerizes readers with this haunting tale of long-buried secrets and the twists of fate that can alter lives forever.

It starts with a letter, lost for half a century and unexpectedly delivered to Edie's mother on a Sunday afternoon. The letter leads Edie to Milderhurst Castle, where the eccentric Blythe spinsters live and where, she discovers, her mother was billeted during World War II. The elder Blythe sisters are twins and have spent most of their lives caring for their younger sister, Juniper, who hasn't been the same since her fiancé jilted her in 1941. Inside the decaying castle, Edie searches for her mother's past but soon learns there are other secrets hidden in its walls. The truth of what happened in "the distant hours" has been waiting a long time for someone to find it. In this enthralling romantic thriller, Morton pays homage to the classics of gothic fiction, spinning a rich and intricate web of mystery, suspense, and lost love.

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- Original language: English
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- Dimensions: 8.25" h x 1.60" w x 5.31" l, 1.06 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 576 pages

## Features

- Great product!

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Beautiful ! Kate Morton's Best!

By Misha

Why is it that books that you love the most are the hardest to describe? I sat in front of my laptop for more than a hour , after I had finished reading the book and yet was unable to formulate a word other than "WOW!".

Kate Morton is one of my top 5 favorite authors. I loved her other 2 books and I devoured the 600 plus pages of this book in less than one day.I was incapable of sleeping - the story and the characters pulled me in so deep that sleep was really the last thought I had.

I had been awaiting this book more than any other book this year. The wait has been more than worth it.

There is such a haunting quality to this book which makes it one that you cannot forget easily. There were sentences and whole paragraphs that still resonate in my ears. Kate Morton's beautiful writing is one of the major reasons why I am such a big fan of hers. Her lyrical prose will stay with you. I can actually quote lines from this book (something I thought I was not capable of)- such was the writing.

The setting , a gothic castle, is a character in itself. Such is the author's writing that the castle seems as alive as its occupants. In its veins, runs the secrets from long ago. Kate Morton's breathtaking description of the castle will make you feel as if you are there. Her descriptions are so evocative, so beautiful that it leaves you wanting for more.

Entwined with the suspense element is a heart-wrenching story of three sisters that won't fail to move you. The sisters and their story will break your heart. I felt their pain, their fears . Imagine being a prisoner in

your own home with no dreams or hope for a future. I could feel the castle walls binding them, suffocating them.

Throughout the book, I tried to prepare myself for the final shocking conclusion -as the secrets are revealed.Yet I was completely taken aback by the ending which was a disquieting one.

The story's movement between the past and the present is smooth and beautifully done.As each chapter unfolds, we get to know more about the past. Slowly, we are able to piece together the parts to form a complete picture. As secret after secret unravels, years of secrets,betrayal, heartbreaks, tragedies, will shock you. This dark and haunting story will unnerve you and yet won't fail to touch you.

There are certain chilling moments, I shuddered at some points. Its not something very in your face..its something lying just beneath the surface..something not visible.. that creeps you out.

Even after an astounding ending ,I still felt as if there were still things left to the reader to decipher and interpret - the castle had still not revealed all its secrets.

The castle, the sisters, their tragic story - they will linger with you , long after you have read the last page.

The Distant Hours is a perfect read for a rainy night. It has all the makings of a perfect gothic novel- family secrets, an old castle, mysterious deaths, a letter from long ago and madness running through a family .

Even though this is a huge book , I wanted more pages to miraculously appear. Its one of those books which made me want to read on and on.

I think I am a Kate Morton fanatic for life now. This masterpiece of a book has made me very sure that no matter how much I have to wait for her next book, it will be definitely worth it.Its because of books like these that I love reading.

Favorite Quote: There were so many , but if I have to choose one, it would be-  
"The ancient walls sing the distant hours.."

Somehow this one sentence affected me a lot. It made me think of the past memories. It was so suited for this story. Every old house has its memories-painful and happy.Maybe when you are quiet, you can hear the voices of the people from the past-people who have lived and loved and died. This quote also made me think of something menacing lurking beneath the memories - I guess this was what the author wanted.When the author described the castle, I almost felt all the grief, the happiness, hidden in the castle walls and yet found it so hard to completely penetrate the secrets of the hours gone by.

Overall: Haunting, engrossing and shocking! I wish there was a stronger word to describe how much I love this book. After almost a year, this is a new addition to my list of favorite books.

Recommended? YES ! A thousand times yes! No matter what genre you read, do give Kate Morton's books a try. Though there are many talented young authors today, Kate Morton is still my favorite.

Similar Books:

The House at Riverton-Kate Morton

The Forgotten Garden-Kate Morton

Arcadia Falls - Carol Goodman

140 of 149 people found the following review helpful.

The perfect book to read by the fire on a stormy night

By Julia Flyte

A rundown castle, tightly held family secrets and a literary mystery lie at the center of this novel. Throw in a long lost letter, forbidden romance, family madness and ghostly whispers in the dark and you get a gothic style mystery which would be the perfect book to read by the fire on a stormy night.

The book kicks off in 1992 when a letter posted during the war arrives for Meredith Burchill. For the first time, her daughter Edie learns that her mother was evacuated from London for 18 months during World War 2. Meredith spent that time living in Milderhurst Castle in Kent, home to the famous writer Raymond Blythe and his three daughters. Blythe's claim to fame is that he penned a book which became a children's classic: *The True History of the Mud Man*. This also happens to be Edie's favorite book. Edie visits the castle and meets with the three daughters, now elderly ladies. She has an unnerving encounter with the youngest daughter, Juniper, which makes her realize that there are some dark family secrets which her mother may be a part of. Why have the sisters never left the castle? What had tormented Raymond Blythe in his final years? Is Juniper's madness purely because her fiance jilted her 40 years previously? Why was Raymond Blythe so secretive about the origins of his book?

The story then jumps back to 1941, and from there it moves between the past and the present day. Kate Morton does a skillful job of gradually peeling back layers of the onion, so that the true story is gradually pieced together over the course of the book. What this does mean however it that it takes quite a while to get going. The early chapters have a lot of background information which takes a while to become relevant. There are several mysteries to be revealed, and while I was able to guess at some of them, I was completely wrong about others. Morton also does a terrific job of bringing the forbidding castle to life. There are a few genuinely creepy moments, although for the most part it's intriguing rather than chilling.

I tossed up between 3 and 4 stars. At times I felt that the book was overlong, too contrived and reliant on coincidences. However the way it comes together is ultimately very satisfying. A good story, cleverly told.

77 of 85 people found the following review helpful.

It was a dark and stormy night...

By Susan Tunis

Okay, that infamous line is never used, but it might as well have been. There WERE plenty of dark and stormy nights in this deliciously atmospheric novel of suspense. Like Ms. Morton's previous novels, this is a tale told in two times. The "contemporary" story is set in 1992, and events are set in motion by the delivery of a letter 51 years late. Protagonist Edie Burchill is visiting her parents when the letter arrives, and she witnesses her mother's unexpected and unexplained emotional response to the missive.

Questioning her mother, Meredith, Edie learns for the first time that her mother was evacuated from London during WWII. For over a year, she lived in the country with the sisters Blythe and their elderly father at gothic Castle Middlehurst. Meredith is inexplicably reticent to discuss her past. This is merely one more example of the distance that Edie has always felt with her mother. Edie finds the incident odd, but it fades quickly into the past--until months later, lost on a road trip, she stumbles upon Castle Middlehurst and her curiosity is fiercely awakened. On a whim, Edie arranges a tour of the castle and discovers, among other things, that all three sisters are alive and in residence. After several introductory chapters setting up the story, the book moves back and forth between Edie's answer-seeking in 1992, and chapters set during the actual events that occurred between 1939 and 1941, seen from the POV of several of the story's participants.

There is SO much more to the story told in this epic novel. The Blythes are a literary family, and patriarch

Raymond is the author of the children's classic *The True History of the Mud Man* that inspired Edie's love of literature and eventual career in publishing. Ms. Morton is a brilliant story-teller and knows exactly how to torture her readers with questions. What was in the letter Meredith received half a century late? What was the true inspiration of the *Mud Man*? Why is the parlor door kept locked? What was in Raymond's will? What really happened that night in 1941?

So many questions. And Morton teases us along for hundreds of pages, stringing along answers like breadcrumbs for readers to follow. Kate Morton is very, very good at what she does. Though, after three novels, the similarities in the types of stories she tells and the themes therein have become quite evident. She's going to need to shake things up before she starts to recycle too much. But for now, *The Distant Hours* is hard to beat for good old-fashioned entertainment value. It literally brought chills and goose bumps to my skin time and time again. Savor it on a dark and stormy night!

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