

READER'S GUIDE

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Beneath the Trees Where Nobody Sees (IDW Graphics)



Readers who love murder mysteries will love this tongue-in-cheek whodunit featuring fuzzy characters who will make discussions even more interesting.

CREATOR: Patrick Horvath

ABOUT: 2024 ALA Graphic Novel & Comics Round Table “Best Graphic Novels for Adults Top Ten” Live, laugh, shed blood. *Dexter* meets Richard Scarry’s *Busy, Busy Town* in this twisted debut graphic novel! Don’t. Murder. The locals. This is small-town serial killer, upstanding citizen, and adorable brown bear Samantha Strong’s cardinal rule. After all, there’s a sea of perfectly ripe potential victims in the big city just beyond the forest, and when you’ve worked as hard as Sam to build a cozy life and a thriving business in a community surrounded by friendly fellow animal folk, warm decor, and the aroma

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“What could be a simple visual gimmick elevates the story through well-crafted execution and thoughtful moments like Sam’s woodland encounter with a normal, non-talking bear. Fans of deceptively cute horror comics like Mike Birchall’s *Everything Is Fine* and Jay Stephens’s *Dwellings* will delight in this hairy twist on the slasher genre.”

—**Publishers Weekly**, 2024



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. If you had any knowledge of serial killers prior to reading this, does Sam’s behavior remind you of other notorious killers? Besides being a literal fuzzy bear, how is she similar or different from them?
2. Is Sam right to be concerned about a new killer causing both of them to get caught, or deep down is she just being territorial and feeling threatened? Are there specific examples to support your answer?
3. How was this title different from other horror or mystery stories (movies, TV shows, books, games, etc.) you’ve experienced? Were you able to figure out who the other killer was, or did their identity surprise you?
4. Many secrets are revealed throughout the story, including those of Cherry Gherkins and Melody Davis. Which secrets were most interesting? Do you think people in every small town have similar things to hide?
5. What do you think about Horvath’s artwork? Did it enhance the plot, or distract you from it? Did you enjoy it?

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