

Book Review: A Killing Cold
By Kate Alice Marshall

There are some pretty messed up families out there. And then there's the Daltons, a wealthy, multi-generational unit that's in a class unto themselves.

Six months after 27-year-old Connor Dalton meets Theodora (Theo) Scott and the pair begin a whirlwind romance that culminates in an engagement, Connor takes Theo to his family's isolated mountain retreat where the Daltons gather every year for two weeks around the Christmas holiday. Theo's challenge is to charm and win over the family, especially Grandma Louise.

Easier said than done with this clearly dysfunctional family.

And there's an added challenge. Theo carries a great deal of baggage with her. She was adopted by Joseph and Beth Scott at age four, never knew her father, and remembers scant few details about her mother. Even her name is a mystery.

Yet as soon as Theo steps foot onto the sprawling retreat known as Idlewood, she feels she's been there before.

But there's more.

Prior to making the trip, Theo began receiving text messages – warnings, actually – from an unknown number.

You're making a mistake.

Stay away from Connor Dalton.

A warning? A threat?

Theo hasn't told Connor about her past, at least the parts she remembers. Nor has she told him about the recurring nightmares, all of which contain snippets of her life prior to living with the Scotts, and too closely resemble the people and elements of the Idlewood retreat. Slowly, all

the pieces come together, as author Kate Alice Marshall weaves a complicated web of mystery and suspense. Perhaps at times *too* complex and multi-layered, but captivating enough to keep readers actively involved.

And there are enough antagonists in the Dalton family to keep the pot stirring for the entire 291 pages.

Four stars for “A Killing Cold.” It will convince you your family is perfectly normal.