



Threshold

By Caitlin R. Kiernan

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Chance Matthews has suffered enough tragedies. The latest—her grandfather's death—has left her shaken, convinced that she will always be alone. What she needs now is time—time to recover, time to determine what her future will be.

What she doesn't need is a strange girl with alabaster skin who knows things about Chance she can't possibly know.

This girl speaks of being charged by an angel to battle monsters and claims she cannot do it alone. She says she needs Chance's help.

Chance doesn't believe in angels. Or monsters. But among the artifacts left by her geologist grandparents, there lies a fossil of a creature that couldn't possibly have ever existed.

But it did.

And still does...

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Threshold By Caitlin R. Kiernan Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Silk (2001), Kiernan's first novel, established her as a leading exponent of the generation-X horror story. This ambitious sophomore effort is a bold step backward: a distinctively modern tale that invokes cosmic terrors redolent of past masters H.P. Lovecraft and Algernon Blackwood. Set in present-day Birmingham, Ala., the novel centers on Chance Matthews, a promising young paleontologist left bereft by the recent deaths of friends and family. Chance and ex-boyfriend Deke Silvey, a loser with latent psychic powers, wallow in self-destructive angst until they're sought out by Dancy Flammariion, a strange teenage girl who claims to be pursued by monsters. Details of Dancy's wild story inexplicably jibe with an anomaly Chance finds in the fossil record, and a pattern gradually emerges that points to an inconceivably ancient entity surviving from Earth's prehistory that is consciously shaping their lives and miseries to suit its inscrutable purposes. Kiernan rises to the challenge of evoking incomprehensible horrors by skillfully deploying symbols that suggest much more than they show. Her oblique and dreamy prose style slows the narrative to a torpid crawl in spots, but ultimately contributes to the thick atmosphere of dread that supports the novel's weird events and sustains its mood of inarticulable terror. A finale that veers unexpectedly from a seemingly inevitable display of supernatural fireworks to a subtly disarming denouement only underscores the intelligence behind this carefully crafted tale of awe-inspired nightmare.

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From Library Journal

Still trying to come to grips with the recent deaths of her grandparents and her best friend, paleontologist Chance Matthews encounters Dancy Flammariion, an albino girl who claims to see monsters. As Chance questions the mysteries of her tragic past, she begins to believe Dancy's outlandish stories and realizes that she must face a monster that is all too real and too deadly to defeat alone. The author of Silk creates an eerie and moving tale of ancient terror and modern-day angst that should appeal to mature young adults and adult fans of horror.

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From [Booklist](#)

To begin with, Chance is stoned in the April rain. Then her story jumps forward several months. Her grandfather has died, leaving her the house her great-grandfather built. Now without a family, and not knowing what she is going to do, she meets Dancy, a strange albino girl who claims to have been sent by an angel to battle monsters and who recites from a battered copy of *Beowulf*. Dancy needs Chance's help, because the monsters are somehow connected to a certain trilobite that Chance's grandmother had been studying just before she killed herself. Kiernan's prose is tough and characterized by nightmarish description. Her brand of horror is subtle, the kind that is hidden in the earth's ancient strata and never stays where it can be clearly seen. *Regina Schroeder*

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Kimberly Niemeyer:

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