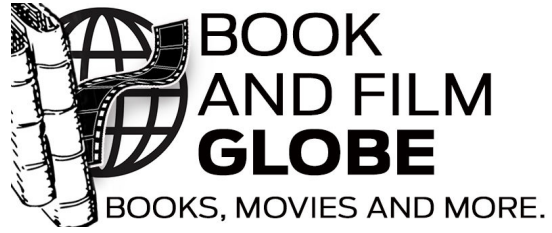
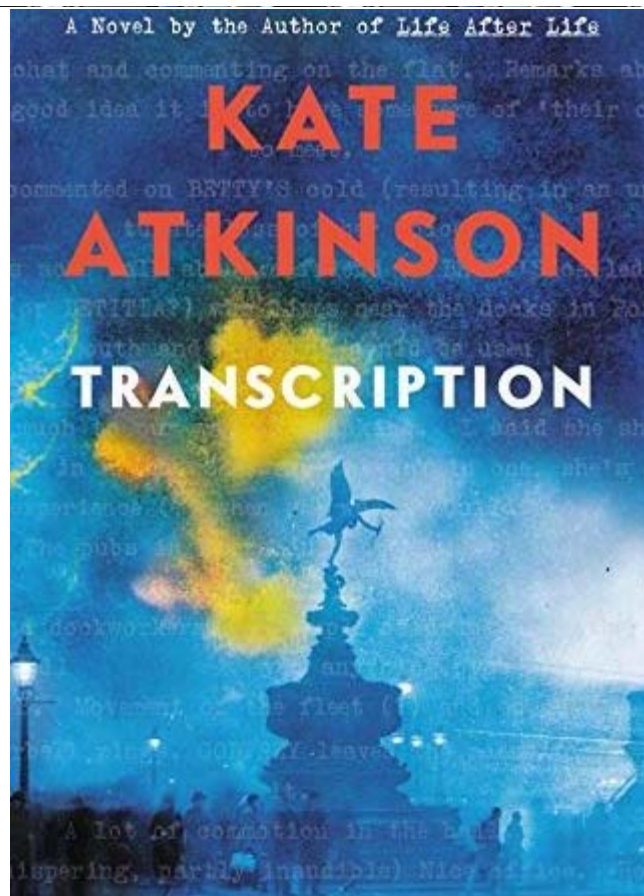


Thursday, October 4, 2018





FICTION

Kate Atkinson's WWII Spy Novel Lies To The Reader

Fool Me Once, Shame On You

October 2, 2018 Michael Giltz 0 Comments

Author Kate Atkinson is on a roll, having reached a new peak of critical and popular success with her “let’s try that again” novel *Life After Life*. Atkinson’s flight of fancy involved a heroine who lived her life over and over again, first dying as a newborn baby, but then being born again and surviving. She later heads down different paths in life after life, revealing destiny, or the lack thereof, for all of us. Now, in the WW II spy novel *Transcription*, Atkinson gives us a heroine who tries on new lives the way others try on a new frock.

She’s Juliet Armstrong, an orphan in her teens chosen to be a typist at MI5 during the war. Juliet first works in a flat next to a meeting place for fascist sympathizers. A double agent is pretending to be a Gestapo contact, thus luring in would-be traitors so Juliet can type up their incriminating conversations. Soon, she’s in the field, cozying up to a wealthy Nazi-lover and discovering a lovely gift for lying.

Juliet is a treat and Atkinson’s novel is at its best when squarely inside her mind. Whether she’s an unwitting

beard to a gay co-worker (wondering plaintively why he doesn't shag her already) or simply commenting on the world around her, Juliet's witty mental asides are hilarious and spot on. They bring to life this seemingly quiet cog in the war machinery.

But just as veterans of war often say life was never that exciting again, Transcription fades quite a bit when the fighting ends. Juliet washes up on the beaches of the BBC, working on dull radio plays intended to educate school children. Office intrigue simply can't compete with foreign intrigue.

When Juliet is asked at times to serve as a safe house for MI5, the pulse does not pound; it feels more like a tiresome burden than a chance to live again the excitement of war. Worse, the novel plays very unfair when we discover—much too late—most everyone in the book has crucial information that we do not. An unreliable narrator is one thing. An unreliable author is quite a different pot of tea.

TRANSCRIPTION, By Kate Atkinson

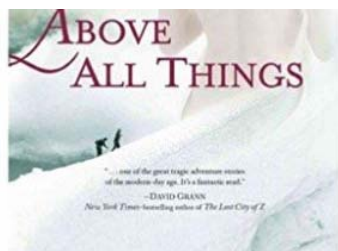
(Little Brown & Co., Sept. 25, 2018)

Tags: Kate Atkinson, Transcription, WWII

← Coyote Awesome

Megan Abbott's Mysterious Disappearance →

You May Also Like



High in the Air (An Everest Novel)

February 13, 2013 0



A Good Book by a Good Guy

January 6, 2015 1



The Apex of My Audiobook Addiction

December 4, 2013 0

Leave a Reply

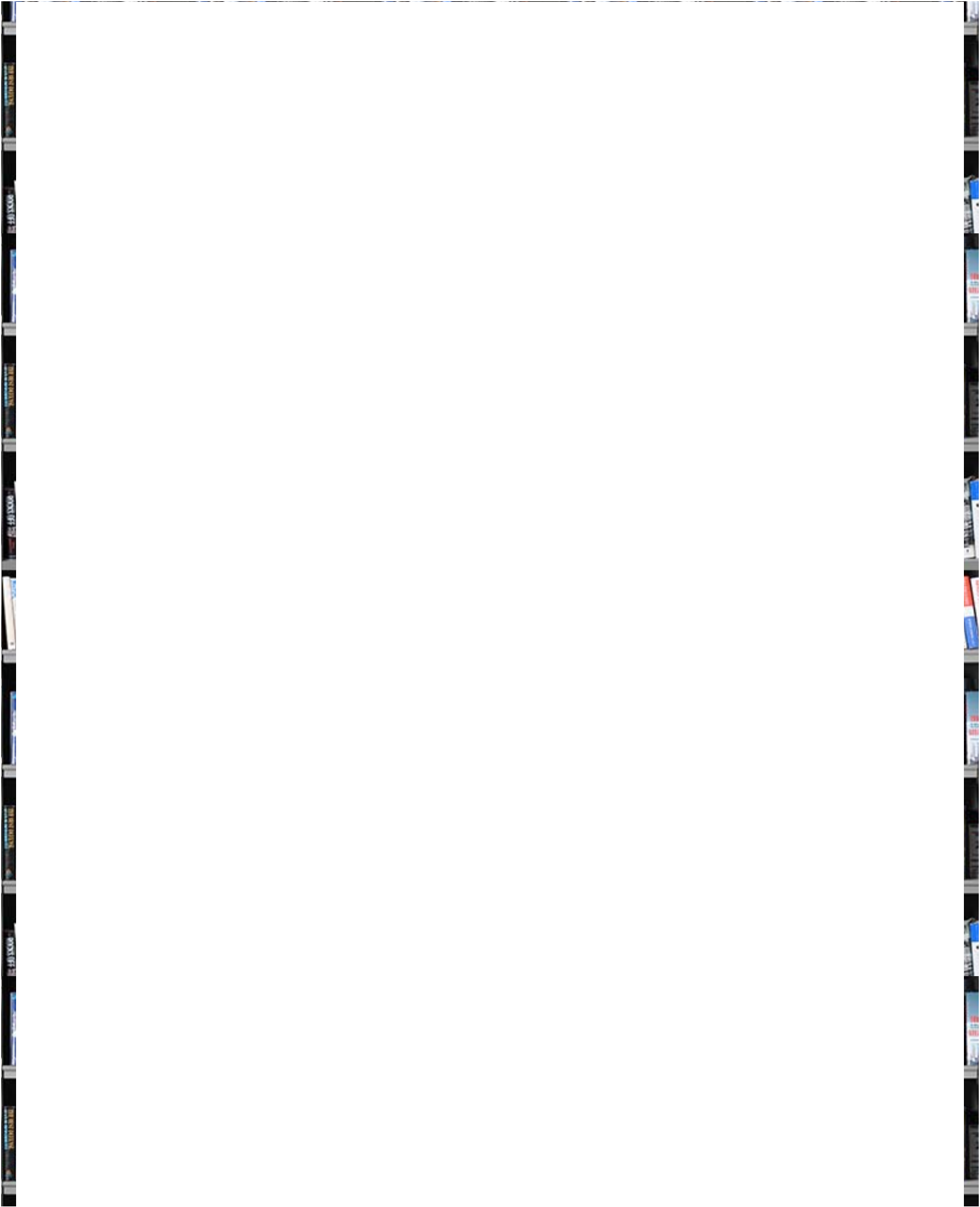
Your email address will not be published. Required fields are marked *

Comment

Name *

Email *

Website



Social

[Twitter](#)

[Facebook](#)

Recent Posts

[‘A Star Is Born’ Sounds Like A Modern Classic](#)

[‘A Star Is Born’: The 19th Century Edition](#)

[Megan Abbott’s Mysterious Disappearance](#)

[Kate Atkinson’s WWII Spy Novel Lies To The Reader](#)

[Coyote Awesome](#)

Recent Comments

[Ken Kurson](#) on [Who Is M.I.A.?](#)

[Cate Plys](#) on [Reading ‘The Goldfinch’ on My Late Mother’s Kindle](#)

Ken Kurson on Reading 'The Goldfinch' on My Late Mother's Kindle

P Kellach WADDLE on Reading 'The Goldfinch' on My Late Mother's Kindle

Alli on Will National Treasure Be On The Quiz?

Archives

October 2018

September 2018

August 2018

July 2018

May 2017

February 2016

May 2015

February 2015

January 2015

December 2014

November 2014

March 2014

December 2013

September 2013

April 2013

February 2013

January 2013

December 2012

July 2012

November 2011

September 2011

June 2011

May 2011

March 2011

May 2001
March 2001
October 2000
August 2000
July 2000
June 2000
February 2000
January 2000
December 1999
November 1999
October 1999
September 1999
August 1999
July 1999
June 1999
May 1999
April 1999
March 1999
February 1999
June 1998
May 1998
April 1998
February 1998
October 1997
August 1997
June 1997
May 1997
April 1997
March 1997
February 1997
January 1997

November 1996

September 1996

August 1996

June 1996

April 1996

February 1996

January 1996

October 1995

August 1995

February 1995

January 1995

CONTACT INFO

GENERAL MANAGER/ADVERTISING – Kevin Sanders – ksanders@seaofreedslc.com – 201-724-0340

VISIT OUR SUITE OF SITES

SEA OF REEDS MEDIA

[MODERN CONSENSUS.](#) [CALIFORNIA **GLOBE**](#) [NEW JERSEY **GLOBE**](#) [ROCK AND ROLL **GLOBE**](#) [BOOK AND FILM **GLOBE**](#)

[About Us](#) | [Terms & Conditions](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Advertise with us](#) |

Copyright © 2018, Book and Film
Globe