



Into the Night

Sarah Bailey

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The Dark Lake is a stunning debut that gripped me from page one and never eased up. Dark, dark, dark--but infused with insight, pathos, a great sense of place, and razor-sharp writing. It's going to be big and Sarah Bailey needs to clear a shelf for awards.' C.J. Box, #1 New York Times bestselling author

Sarah Bailey's acclaimed debut novel *The Dark Lake* was a bestseller around the world and Bailey's taut and suspenseful storytelling earned her fitting comparisons with Gillian Flynn and Paula Hawkins.

Into the Night is her stunning new crime novel featuring the troubled and brilliant Detective Sergeant Gemma Woodstock. This time Gemma finds herself lost and alone in the city, broken-hearted by the decisions she's had to make. Her new workplace is a minefield and the partner she has been assigned is uncommunicative and often hostile. When a homeless man is murdered and Gemma is put on the case, she can't help feeling a connection with the victim and the lonely and isolated life he led despite being in the middle of a bustling city.

Then a movie star is killed in bizarre circumstances on the set of a major film shoot, and Gemma and her partner Detective Sergeant Nick Fleet have to put aside their differences to unravel the mysteries surrounding the actor's life and death. Who could commit such a brazen crime and who stands to profit from it? Far too many people, she soon discovers - and none of them can be trusted. But it's when Gemma realises that she also can't trust the people closest to her that her world starts closing in...

Riveting suspense, razor-sharp writing and a fascinating cast of characters make this an utterly addictive crime thriller and a stunning follow-up to *The Dark Lake*.

Into the Night Details

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From Reader Review Into the Night for online ebook

Andrea says

So strong was Sarah Bailey's first novel, *The Dark Lake*, that I was more than happy to have another outing with DS Gemma Woodstock just a month or so later. And *Into the Night* didn't disappoint.

Where the first book was all small-town heat, this one is big city chill, as Gemma's new home - Melbourne - shivers through winter. Gemma has left her family behind in Smithson and moved to the city for a change; a change in work and a change in life. She's finding her way in a new team, with a new professional partner, and trying not to spend too much time alone in her inner-city shoebox apartment.

When a homeless man is brutally murdered, Gemma is first on the scene and hopes it might be her chance to take the lead on the investigation. But not this time. Then, just days later, a local but well-known actor is killed on the set of a major film being shot around Melbourne, and suddenly Gemma and her partner DS Fleet are in the spotlight, leading the biggest case of their careers.

The investigation and procedural aspects of the story were satisfying and believable. I couldn't pick the killer until their identity was revealed. There were lots of red herrings and connections where I was not expecting them to appear. Gemma has also grown as a character. I still can't relate to her in terms of some of her actions and decisions, but I feel like I understand her a bit better than last time. But the thing I liked the most about this book was the locale. I'm a sucker for a novel set in my own neighbourhood! Bailey doesn't give us broadbrush, generic Melbourne, either. There's so much detail, locals will recognise buildings and perhaps even particular park benches. However, the reader doesn't need to be familiar with Melbourne to appreciate the setting. Bailey shows the way.

This is a very assured follow-up to Bailey's debut. Highly recommended.

With thanks to Allen & Unwin for an uncorrected proof to review.

Amanda - Mrs B's Book Reviews says

*<https://mrsbbookreviews.wordpress.com>

4.5 stars

I noted in October of last year that I was keen to hear from Sarah Bailey, the author of *The Dark Lake*, very soon. It seems my wish has been granted and less than a year later we have a second novel from Bailey. *Into the Night* is the impressive follow up to Bailey's debut novel. If you are a fan of quintessential Australian crime fiction, you must read *Into the Night* and its predecessor, *The Dark Lake*.

Detective Gemma Woodstock returns, following on from the events that occurred in *The Dark Lake*, the first novel penned by Sarah Bailey. We soon learn Gemma has made the move from the regional town of Smithson, to the city of Melbourne. She is damaged and flawed, but is determined to make it in the big smoke. However, not only is her personal life back home in Smithson a mess, her new life in Melbourne isn't faring too much better either. With a difficult partner, a boss who keeps his staff at arm's length and a whole a new team to negotiate, Gemma's new workplace is proving hard to crack. Gemma's workload

changes when she is assigned to a high profile case involving a celebrity who has been killed in an odd set of circumstances. Gemma must put aside her mixed feelings for her partner, Detective Fleet aside, in order to put this actor's case to rest. In the process of solving this baffling case, Gemma faces the realisation that those she thought she could trust may have betrayed her.

In terms of quality Australian crime thrillers and police procedural focussed novels, Sarah Bailey is a commanding force. I witnessed the greatness of Sarah Bailey's writing when I read her debut novel, *The Dark Lake* late last year. It easily earned a place in my top reads of 2017 and I can now confirm that *Into the Night* will be sure to secure a spot in my top reads of 2018. Self doubt and the pressure to follow up on a hugely successful first novel can be to the detriment of writers, however, Sarah Bailey shows us that she is a force to be reckoned with in the Australian crime field. Watch out Jane Harper!

Although I really loved the small town regional setting of *Smithson* in Bailey's first book, I think it was an astute move to transfer the action of this second novel to the city. It shows reader the natural progression, as well as character growth of the main protagonist, Detective Gemma Woodstock. The small town feeling is only mentioned in glimpses, when Gemma makes a return visit home and that's when we see some familiar faces. However, the bulk of the novel is set in the city of Melbourne. This is an Australian city I am yet to visit. Bailey's descriptive prose ensures that my inexperience is brushed aside. The city comes to life before your eyes. It is both murky and mysterious. Bailey draws our attention to the dark undercurrents that lurk beneath the surface of this vibrant city. This area of the novel is incredibly rich in detail, so all you can do is sit back and immerse yourself in Bailey's prose.

What impressed me about this second offering from Bailey was the crime aspect itself. Bailey highlights the common police practices and procedural elements in dealing with an unsolved murder case. It is immersive and enlightening. I really enjoyed the workplace issues that Gemma contends with. Gemma clearly has some difficulties in establishing a solid working partnership with Detective Fleet, along with her need to seek approval from her boss, who is deliberately distancing himself from his team. As the newbie on the block, Gemma must also work hard to establish her position in the team. In terms of the murder mystery itself, it was interesting to see how different cases command polarising resources and priority levels. The intricacies of each of the cases presented in this novel are great to unpack.

Onto Gemma herself, *Into the Night* would not be same if it didn't have Gemma at the helm. Like the first book, Gemma continues to show us her flaws, her inconsistencies, her questionable choices and vulnerabilities. Bailey is so in tune with her lead, that she seems to live and breathe all aspects of her primary protagonist. *Into the Night* takes Gemma to another level, it is a story that pits Gemma against new challenges, fresh experiences and we get to see her in yet another light. I really appreciated this aspect of the novel and it shows us just how devoted Bailey is to her characterisation. On the secondary character front, I thought Bailey did a very good job in her interactions and dialogue between Gemma and her side cast. The periphery characters such as Fleet, Josh, Scott and Ben are all vital to the novel. This also applies to the suspects in the cases Woodstock is working to solve.

Bailey manages to perform that careful balancing act between a fresh new crime case to solve, with enough follow on to satisfy readers keen to learn more about the complicated lead, Gemma Woodstock. *Into the Night* is another stand-out novel from Sarah Bailey, an author who has captivated me yet again. I'm definitely coming back for third helping of anything Bailey chooses to serve up next!

*I wish to thank Allen & Unwin for providing me with a free copy of this book for review purposes.

Into the Night is book #68 of the Australian Women Writers Challenge

Marianne says

Into The Night is the second book in the Gemma Woodstock series by Australian author, Sarah Bailey. Detective Sergeant Gemma Woodstock has been on Melbourne's Homicide squad for about three months when popular soap actor, Sterling Wade is stabbed on the set of a movie being shot in Spring Street. It's a complicated case, but she's pleased, finally to be given the lead, even if she has to share it with DS Nick Fleet. While she doesn't seem to have any rapport with him, maybe this case will allow them to work together better.

City policing is quite different from what she's used to in her country NSW hometown of Smithson: better resources and more cops to do the work. They are going to be stretched on this one, though: in excess of four hundred people on the scene, made up or wearing masks to look like zombies. They may have it on film, but just what will that show them? And they need to ensure they don't neglect their other open murder cases: the escort who fell to her death from retired justice, Frank Jacoby's apartment balcony; and the homeless man stabbed in a tunnel.

While a witness had seen a person in a hoodie stabbing the old man, no one had yet been arrested. And unfortunately, the witness who implicated Jacoby himself in the escort's death has had her reliability questioned. But the Wade case had the opposite problem: too many witnesses who saw very little; and an ever-expanding list of suspects with credible motives.

Once again, Bailey offers fast-paced crime fiction with a realistic plot that twists and turns to keep the reader guessing and the pages turning. While one case is solved almost accidentally, some good detective work in their most challenging case uncovers both clues and red herrings that eventually lead to a heart-stopping climax. Suspects in the entertainment industry will guarantee that vanity, obsession with fame, jealousy, lies and secrets all feature. There's also plenty of grief but how much of it is genuine, and how much faked? Bailey also demonstrates how greed and fear can trump justice in a case of sexual harassment.

Gemma can be a bit prickly and doesn't necessarily endear herself to those important to her (or to readers, for that matter): she's left behind her son Ben with his father in Smithson when it became apparent that her relationship with Scott was irreparable; she's drinking way too much, and has started smoking again (but at least she's not doing drugs); she holds a devoted admirer at arms-length while she feeds an apparent addiction to having sex with strangers. This darkness has deep roots but a hopeful ending predicts a positive resolution. This is an excellent follow-up to *The Dark Lake* and fans will be eager to see what Bailey does next.

This unbiased review from an uncorrected proof copy provided by Allen&Unwin.

KC says

Troubled DS Gemma Woodstock recently relocates to Melbourne reluctantly leaving behind her young son Ben in the care of his father. She and partner DS Nick Fleet soon find themselves embroiled in a highly publicized new case. A much beloved actor and superstar is murdered on the set of his latest film. Having to face the challenges of the entire cast creating a large suspect list, Gemma struggles to find balance at work

and at home. This new series will appeal to anyone who enjoys Tana French.

Jack Heath says

A moody, atmospheric tome with a twisted case to solve and an even more twisted detective to solve it. A must-read for fans of *The Dark Lake*, and those who like their police procedurals VERY authentic.

Tony Nielsen says

On the back of her brilliant debut "*The Dark Lake*", Sarah Bailey returns with the follow up as we delve into the life again of Detective Sergeant Gemma Woodstock.

Woodstock has foregone her small-town placement to join the Melbourne detective ranks and is struggling with the change of pace, and especially the separation from her son Ben and former partner and Ben's Dad, Scott. Plus, the local team isn't exactly making her feel welcome.

"*Into the Night*" is a seriously good crime novel and Gemma Woodstock has developed into a meaningful character, a very talented detective, but troubled by her circumstances and feeling very alone in the big city.

A homeless man is murdered and Gemma is given the case but aside from the fact that it seems like a random killing another murder takes place which becomes the centre of attention for the Detective team, the media and the city itself. A popular movie star is murdered in the middle of a film shoot and because of the manner of his death and in spite of some filmed evidence its a very difficult case.

This is where Bailey's writing and characterisation really comes into its own. A whodunnit that's very well crafted and leads us to a stunning conclusion.

Ashleigh says

Writing a longer review on my blog. I read this not realising it was part of a series - so haven't read its predecessor, *The Dark Lake*. I hate starred reviews because I feel they never do a book justice - I feel they never give a full idea of what a book actually is like.

Anyway, I did enjoy this book, and am currently posting a longer review on my blog, where I usually go a little more in-depth with what I say. At times, I quite enjoyed the characters and at times they could be frustrating - but this showed who they really were and what they'd been through well.

The mystery was intriguing, holding back and delivering the clues in all the right places.

Mandy White says

Wow!! I love this series and Gemma Woodstock is such a great character. This one had me thinking

everyone was the killer.

marlin1 says

An excellent followup to The Dark Lake which takes place a few years after the first novel. Gemma's marriage has not survived and she has moved to Melbourne to take up a Detective Sergeants position on the Homicide squad.

There are a number of threads running through this novel, at the fore Gemma and her work partner Fleet are the lead detectives in a stabbing murder of a high profile young actor, with a couple of recent unsolved murders circling around and then there's Gemma's personal life, what can I say, I believe she is quite a complex character and very insecure (for all her bravado)

I really enjoyed the direction this novel took, with the mix of work and personal life and it had a dark and gritty feel and was happy to see at the end a hint of another book....I hope.

I actually won a copy of this book from the publisher but I happened to chance upon the audio version from the local library and it kept me enthralled while I walked the dog and cleaned the house.

Evelyn Veitch says

I really enjoyed this. It reminds me of a Peter Temple novel, something so indefinably Australian about it that I can't put my finger on. Definitely worth the read!

Elaine Tomasso says

I would like to thank Netgalley and Atlantic Books for an advance copy of Into the Night, the second novel to feature Detective Gemma Woodstock.

Gemma has transferred to Melbourne and after three months is champing at the bit to be given the lead in a case. She is, therefore, disappointed not to be put in charge when a homeless man is stabbed to death, despite being first at the scene. Her wish becomes a bit of a poisoned chalice when she and colleague, Nick Fleet, are put in charge of investigating the high profile murder of film star, Sterling Wade, on the set of his latest zombie movie because nothing is obvious, including footage of the murder and the stories they are being told.

Wow, what a read. I haven't yet read the first novel in the series, The Dark Lake, so I wasn't sure what to expect but Into the Night has far exceeded any expectations I may have had. Told in the first person from Gemma Woodstock's point of view it is detailed, realistic and gripping with more immediacy and impact than a third person narrative could offer. I love the procedural detail and the sheer scope of the investigation, something that I've never thought of before, is conveyed very convincingly. I know, this makes the novel sound boring but, while it's striking it's just background noise to the meat of the investigation which is Gemma and Fleet picking their way through the lies they are being told, rumours, innuendo and massive press interest. I found Ms Bailey's plotting and attention to detail spellbinding and couldn't get enough.

Not content, however, with an excellent plot Ms Bailey has created a memorable protagonist in Gemma Woodcock. She is a smart, intuitive detective but her personal life is an unmitigated disaster and she seems to have a death wish. She has no interests outside of work, doesn't eat properly, drinks too much, has started smoking again and has a one night stand addiction. Her head is such a mess that she has left her young son with her former partner to take a job in another state. I love that Ms Bailey has transposed the typical gender stereotypes. All this should make the prickly loner a very unlikeable character but her searing honesty and self knowledge draw the reader into rooting for her and living every minute with her.

No novel set within the acting community would be complete nowadays without reference to sexual assault and/or exploitation so peripherally Ms Bailey tackles this as well. She makes some interesting points and successfully muddies the waters around the issue. I'm not sure I agree with all her thoughts but she certainly clarifies modern thinking on the subject.

Into the Night is a great read which I have no hesitation in recommending.

Jay Dwight says

An excellent follow up to last years The Dark Lake. That book put Sarah Bailey on my must read author list, and this book confirms her place on it.

I love a flawed, tortured protagonist and we have that in Gemma Woodstock. We delve deeper into her psyche, as she re-starts her life in Melbourne. I was a little concerned as to whether this would be as good as The Dark Lake, given the small town backdrop was part of what I loved and thus wondered whether the move to the city would lose something. But good writing, a clever plot and an excellent lead character meant I was not disappointed in the slightest.

A high profile case, with an actor murdered on set.

Addictive police procedural.

Roy says

This was a really good follow up to the debut. Gemma has moved to the city, and so we get a different faster pace feel as compared to book one. There are some different plotlines occurring at the same time, with twists and turns. I don't think the writing is as good as book one though, and I still find Gemma a little frustrating at times. The twists are well timed and pulled off, but it's one of those books where you know it's one of the 4/5 characters constantly involved, and I could predict it pretty early on. Really easy flowing writing, that will be a good read for anyone wanting an accessible crime thriller.

Carolyn says

"Into the Night" is an excellent follow up to Sarah Bailey's wonderful debut, "The Dark Lake". Her protagonist, DS Gemma Woodstock has moved from small town Victoria to Melbourne to make a fresh start.

However, she is finding it difficult to fit in with her new partner and boss and badly misses her son Ben who she left with his father. When a homeless man is stabbed to death for no apparent reason, she feels she must find his killer. Before she can do that, another man is stabbed to death, Sterling Wade, the leading actor in a Zombie movie, stabbed by one of the Zombie mob that surrounds him in a live action scene. No one is able to identify the extra who killed him; everyone was wearing make up and swarming around the actor. Gemma and her new partner DS Nick Fleet, find themselves looking into the lives of those involved in the movie and Sterling's family and history in their hunt for a motive and a killer.

This is a well crafted murder mystery and police procedural. The investigation is slow to ramp up, with too many suspects and a few wrong turns and Gemma and Nick become frustrated at trying to figure out why Wade was killed. Bailey shows us all the flaws in her characters persona - Gemma lonely in the city, drinking too much and indulging in risky one night stands with men picked up in bars and Nick prickly and distant at first, but coming to appreciating Gemma's insight and toughness. The ending tied up the case in an unexpected but satisfying way and there are signs that Gemma is in a better place and more comfortable with her current life.

With thanks to Allen and Unwin for an uncorrected ARC to read

Theresa Smith Writes says

I was a big fan of The Dark Lake, it was a top read for me last year and I am thrilled to discover that Into the Night more than lives up to its predecessor. Dark, gritty, teeming with atmosphere, Into the Night is police procedural crime fiction at its very best.

Gemma has moved on from her hometown and we now follow her around the streets of Melbourne as she works on a massively high profile case alongside a new partner in a new squad. She's just as damaged as before and I loved her just as much as I did the first time around. Gemma is filled with opposing forces: tough, yet vulnerable; craving connection, yet rejecting it at every opportunity. She wants a normal life yet can't ever fully picture herself inhabiting it. Yet, I feel these complexities within her character hone her focus as a detective. They make her sharper, more instinctive, and more inclined to understand the depths and range of human emotions that come into play when picking apart a crime. I really enjoyed the growing dynamic between Gemma and her new partner Fleet. He's another complex character and I liked that Gemma couldn't quite figure him out. He's a bit of a contradiction himself, easy to love and easy to hate, he walks that line with a definite air of not giving a shit about what anyone thinks, and I took to him immediately. I enjoyed this working partnership immensely, but Gemma and Fleet share many of the same bad habits, so I'm not sure if we're going to see more of them together, or less.

Sarah Bailey has a real knack at bring her settings to life. This novel just oozed with atmosphere, particularly Melbourne at night. I had such a strong sense of place while reading, and even though I'm familiar with Melbourne, I expect that someone who isn't would get a good grasp on the city and its vibe from the pages of this novel. I loved that whole anonymity that Sarah brought to the fore, not only with Gemma, but with other characters as well. A city teeming with people that never sleeps affording the perfect cover for those who want to disappear and be alone, be unnoticed, who they are stripped away and reinvented into whoever

and whatever they want to be for the duration. This concept merged with the setting in a powerfully heady way creating a most immersive experience.

There's an undercurrent of sadness bleeding into tragedy that runs through this novel, much in the way it did with *The Dark Lake*. It mirrors real life and adds a layer of authenticity to the story. What police face, on a daily basis, is front and centre in this novel, and reading it will make you appreciate their bravery in doing a job that has very real dangers at any given time. This is smart crime fiction, sophisticated in its imagining and its delivery. I've always enjoyed police procedurals more than thrillers within the crime genre and Gemma Woodstock is the type of detective an author – and a reader – can go the distance with (that's a heavy hint Sarah!). The follow up to an outstanding first novel is always tricky, the anticipation of it living up to the bar of expectation, but we're over that now. We have two terrific novels, the start of a cracking good crime series, and I'm excited to see what more there is to come.

Thanks is extended to Allen and Unwin for providing me with a copy of *Into the Night* for review.
