



Murder In The Dark

Betsy Reavley

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Without a motive, how do you identify the killer?

Imagine a quaint little bookshop. Outside the snow is falling. Inside the shelves are stacked with books by authors waiting to be discovered. What could be better?

When Tilly Edgely lands a position working at Ashton's bookshop in Cambridge she thinks she's found her perfect job. But one winter's morning, when she arrives to open up, she discovers the body of her boss suspended from the ceiling, hanging by a rope around his neck.

DCI Barrett and DI Palmer are called to the scene and quickly find themselves searching for a twisted killer whose identity and motive are nearly impossible to trace.

But just when they think they have the murderer in their sights, another body shows up throwing the case wide open...

Who is behind the killings and why?

The police have their work cut out and key to unlocking the gruesome mystery might be found right under their nose.

But one thing is for certain, this killer will leave you hanging...

Murder In The Dark Details

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Author : Betsy Reavley

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From Reader Review Murder In The Dark for online ebook

Patricia Dixon says

My perfect read.

Murder In The Dark - My perfect kind of read.

The story is set Cambridge just before Christmas where the author evoked picturesque images of snowy streets in a beautiful city - and then came the murders.

The police team were interesting, a younger officer juggling work and family while his senior was facing the prospect of being alone for Christmas. What also appealed was that within the investigation I didn't get too bogged down with police procedure, the author gets on with telling the story which is very well paced.

The other characters were a mixed bunch and I was able to build up a very clear picture of them all. The author has a knack of getting under the skin of relationships and how we interact with one another - I have always enjoyed this aspect of her other books. I found myself empathising with the sisters in the story while at the same time disliked those that were purposely written in a bad light.

The book was very absorbing and in some parts poignant. The conclusion was well executed and explained - I hate loose ends and the final chapter was fitting with the tone of the book. I was left hoping for more stories featuring the police team and especially set in and around Cambridge.

Misfits farm says

MURDER IN THE DARK by Betsy Reavley.

Tilly is a veterinary student in Cambridge and works in a bookshop in order to fund herself. Her parents live in a small village outside of Ilfracombe so home is a distance away. One morning she arrives at the shop to find the door open. She steps inside, calling out as she goes and is horrified to find the owner of the shop hanging from a rope. She calls the police who very soon discover that this was not suicide. DCI Barrett and his team are on the case which has somewhat of an oddity to it.. When another body in similar circumstances is found the pressure heightens. There appears to be no link between the victims so the why's are piled high. Whatever is going on? I enjoyed this book, it was almost like an old fashioned murder case. Nothing too technological (OK there are references to forensics etc) but in its own way it was good solid detective work and curiosity that brought the case together. The characters came across well and I took to Tilly and Barrett., both solid people who weren't going to let circumstances get the better of them. A highly enjoyable read.

For more reviews please see my blog <http://nickibookblog.blogspot.co.uk/>

or follow me on Twitter @nickijmurphy1

Amazon Top 1000 reviewer.

Nessa says

I liked the storyline, it kept me engaged and entertained throughout, but at the same time I felt that some parts of the storyplot were a little weak in places. Some of the events that took place seemed to fall into place a little bit too easily, there was no suspense or anticipated lead up to them.

Having said that, I do read a lot crime thrillers which is what I was expecting when I read this and so what I've said above is probably me being overly critical and I should probably make it very clear that this is the first time I've ever read a cozy mystery which I believe is the genre this book falls into.

So with that said, if you are looking for a lightweight easy read or a cozy mystery read, then this is definitely one to read.

Final words, I loved that the book was based in Cambridge which is a place I visit from time to time, and even better is that Peterborough gets a mention a few times which is where I live. I do love it when my home town gets a mention or is featured within the story.

Linda Strong says

One of my favorite settings a quaint little bookshop. My favorite season ... winter.

Tilly loves her job working at a small bookshop .. it seems perfect for her. It allows her to save money so she can go to school .. her co-workers are pleasant ... her boss is a nice man to work for.

But this morning when Tilly goes to work, she finds her boss hanging from the ceiling with a rope around his neck.

DCI Barrett and DI Palmer are called to investigate. The first assumption was suicide, but the detectives and medical examiner put paid to that idea. This was a murder, plain and simple. Well .. maybe not so simple.

When other murders occur in the same fashion, Barrett and Palmer look diligently for some kind of connection among the victims.

Who would want these people dead ... and why?

This is a police procedural wrapped in a cozy mystery with likeable characters and a story premise that keeps the reader turning pages leading to an unexpected ending.

Murder in the Dark is the follow-up to Murder at the Book Club, though can equally be read as a stand-alone.

Many thanks to the author / Bloodhound Books / Netgalley for the advanced digital copy of MURDER IN THE DARK. Opinions expressed here are unbiased and entirely my own.

Janet Newport says

Thank you NetGalley and Bloodhound Books for this arc.

This one looked to be right up my alley. Maybe it's me... but it just didn't work. For a short book these days

(less than 250 pages), it took me forever to get through it. Like eight never unending hours... Could be I had been out way past my bedtime the previous night (another interminable holiday party in yet another unheated venue.... always a challenge to coordinate a party dress with long underwear). I just didn't hold my attention. I just couldn't like or engage with any of the characters nor did I find the story compelling enough to stay awake.

Maybe under different circumstances, this would have been a more enjoyable read for me... but given the overall limpness of the characters in this book, I doubt it.

Yvonne says

Tilly didn't expect to find her boss hanging when she arrived to work. The police detectives soon realise that the position of the body meant this wasn't a suicide. The murderer taunts the police with another body and a mysterious trail begins as they piece information together.

This is my first time reading a book by this author and I spent a cold wintery afternoon reading this one, and it was in one sitting, so that kind of gives you an idea of how much I liked it. I really enjoyed this style of murder/mystery, yes it has police procedural aspects, but also a lot more other things. I think what I am trying to say is that it was more a sense of seeing the bigger picture from various perspectives. Yes, there is a body, but also the person the found it, the police investigating, the family connected to the body and also any other people who might be directly involved with all the previously mentioned people. Each person was introduced at the right time and in the right order for me to be able to remember them. No needless bystanders, each person there for a reason.

The plot itself I thoroughly enjoyed as it took me on a murder/mystery tour and I enjoyed getting to know more about the characters. I will say that there was no way of me guessing the killers' identity until the author started to give me the pieces and put them together. This was something that Agatha Christie used to do with her books and is something that I personally like. The other great thing was that the author didn't just stop the story at the arrest stage, instead adding a further step that for me left the story with a definite feeling of being finished in a very satisfactory way.

This is a story of murder, mystery and suspense that I really did enjoy. This is one that I think would appeal to many readers and is one I would recommend.

A great introduction for me to this author and an added bonus is that there are a few books already published for me to buy and read.

CD {Boulder Blvd} says

The writing never pulled me in, it just plodded along. The characters weren't really interesting, got annoyed by the going nowhere interest one officer had for another(why even go there?), and the murderer was easily identified way way early.

J.A. Baker says

Murder in the Dark is a really good cozy mystery set in wintertime, a perfect read for those cold evenings ahead. I didn't guess the identity of the murderer until the final few pages. There were lots of twists and turns I didn't see coming! Would recommend this to fans of cozy crime thrillers.

LJ (On The Shelf Reviews) says

This is the second in series to feature DCI Barrett and DI Palmer but can be read as a stand alone something I can say without a doubt as I've yet to read the first!

It's the run up to Christmas and the body of Dennis Wade, owner of Ashton's Bookshop, is found hanging from the rafter inside his shop by young employee Tilly Edgely. It's quickly discovered that it's not suicide but murder but why would anyone want to kill a respectable bookshop owner?

Barrett and Palmer are tasked to investigate but another body shows up bearing the same hallmarks as the first but with no apparent tie to the first victim.

The killer starts to show off leaving packages, taunting the police, can Barrett and Palmer stop this maniac before they strike again?

This is what I like to call a cosy mystery with a little more bite as the death's are a little more gruesome than in this type of book. There's plenty of twists and turns which kept me guessing until the end.

It's a real character driven novel, we hear from several perspectives throughout the book each one with their own unique voice so I never once got them confused.

DCI Barrett seems on the surface like an irascible, fussy and rude man but dig a bit deeper you find out he lost his wife to cancer and what with the stresses and strains of his job it does make his moods a little more understandable. Palmer seems like his polar opposite happily married with a son, he's solid and dependable but there's a little frisson sexual tension between him another a member of the team, Elly Hale, just to make things juicy.

Overall Murder In The Dark is fast paced mystery perfect for those who like their crime novels character driven and a little less graphic.

Sarah says

Murder In The Dark is a stand alone story and very much a detective/crime novel.

Whilst not a festive read, it is set in the run up to Christmas. You can feel the frustration by the police in having such a high profile case to be working on, especially at a busy time of year as well as the weather being a hindrance. I didn't envy them one bit!

In the style of most books in this sort of genre, we are taken on a journey on how the police investigate and

zone in on a killer. The author does well in keeping the identity of the killer from me until she is ready to reveal all. Not only did she keep the killer's identity from me, I also hadn't guessed the reasoning behind the murders. When all is revealed, it actually made for quite a surprising but sad revelation.

Murder In The Dark was an engrossing, page turner of a read. It isn't a fast paced read but more of a steady one that will keep you hooked through out. Not sure if there will be more featuring Barrett and Palmer, but there is definitely scope for more and where better than Cambridge to have a murder/mystery series set?

My thanks to Bloodhound Books for an advanced readers copy of this book. All opinions are my own and not biased in anyway.

Amanda says

I have read one of Betsy's previous books and I really enjoyed it. I also have a few of her books on my ever increasing 'to be read' mountain but I just haven't got round to it yet. 'Murder In The Dark' is the second in the series featuring DCI Barrett and DI Palmer. The first book was called 'Murder At The Book Club' and it was released earlier this year.

I loved the wide range of characters in this story. Each was different from the other. It soon becomes clear that most of them are keeping secrets and will do almost anything to ensure that the secrets remain just that-secret. I enjoyed finding out their secrets but then I am a nebbly Nora (nosy parker), who loves to find out the gossip. I can't say that I especially warmed to any one character but the flip side of that is that I didn't immediately dislike certain characters either. Some of the characters irritated me at times and I could have quite cheerfully slapped a couple of them with a wet fish.

First off, I loved the sound of the synopsis for this book. I got to the word 'bookshop' and I was sold on the book as it were. I began to read and it's no word of a lie to say that I was hooked on reading this book by the time I got to the bottom of the first page. From then on, reading 'Murder In The Dark' became an addiction and I became an addict in desperate need of my next fix. If I had to put the book down, then I would count down the time until I could pick the book back up again. This is one of those books that certainly kept me guessing and it kept me on my toes as it were. On more than one occasion I smugly thought out that I had fathomed out who the murderer was and what their motivation was, only to discover that I had the wrong end of the stick and the perpetrator was somebody else entirely.

'Murder In The Dark' is well written and the author certainly knows how to entice people into the book. She grabs your attention and she reels you in just as a fisherman reels in a catch.

Reading 'Murder In The Dark' is much like being on an occasionally scary and unpredictable rollercoaster ride with several twists and turns along the way. Some of the twists I saw coming but there were some twists that were a total surprise.

In short I thoroughly enjoyed reading 'Murder In The Dark' and I would definitely recommend this book to other readers. It can be read perfectly well as a standalone but because I am a bit OCD and like reading series in order, I fully intend to read 'Murder At The Book Club' before reading this book again. I can't wait to read what this author comes up with next. The score on the Ginger Book Geek board is a very well deserved 4* out of 5*.

Audrey Gibson says

Another brilliant read by this author, it certainly kept me on my toes throughout. I loved the characters, very likeable and hope there is more to come from Barrett, Palmer and the team. I highly recommend this book, huge 5 stars.

Hobart says

This originally appeared at The Irresponsible Reader.

One fateful day, Tilly, a veterinary student in Cambridge goes to the bookshop she works at to open for the day. Inside, she finds the owner of the shop, her boss, hanging and clearly dead. She calls the police, who (unlike Tilly) realize that this was not suicide and begin their investigation right away.

While the investigation goes on, we spend a lot more time with Tilly and her coworkers as well as the family of Dennis Wade than you do in most Crime Fiction. Tilly is haunted (practically literally) by what she found. Her other coworkers are focused on trying to act appropriately in this situation, or worried about their jobs. Wade's widow, her sister, and the Wade's son all react in very different ways. His poor widow's life is shattered, her pain and lost-ness is palpable -- just great work on Beavley's part, although watching what Tilly goes through may be more devastating.

Meanwhile, DCI Barrett, DI Palmer and their team start their procedure -- knowing full well they need to close the case early for the good of the city, the Wade family -- and because no one wants to spend Christmas (which is just around the corner) finding out why a body was left hanging. When other bodies start to be discovered, the pressure builds (internally and externally) and yet the procedure has to continue. Even when the procedure involves things like thoroughly vetting Wade's son (with a criminal record) and spending a good deal of time pursuing other dead ends.

Beavley's work showing the way the police have to tick off every box, have to turn over stone -- even when they are virtually certain that no answers will be found by doing so -- just to move on to another stone. There's no maverick cop saving the day here. No detective relying on instinct. Just dedicated professionals doing their jobs the way they're supposed to do them to get the result they need. It's really kind of striking that in the ocean of "police procedurals" out there, just how few actually rely on the procedure.

When the answers come -- they come from going through all the steps and no one is more surprised than the detectives who uncover it. It feels as authentic as you could want. The depravity uncovered by these detectives is the kind that makes you glad this is fiction, so you can pretend that such things only happen in books. And you will keep turning the pages until you get to the bottom of everything.

You get a much better sense of Tilly, a couple of coworkers, and the Wade family than you do the detectives investigating the case -- which isn't to say they're strangers to the reader. But by and large, these are primarily people doing a job - with the emphases on the job, not the person.

I'd have appreciated more time with the family and friends of some of the later victims -- just to see Reavley get to show off a little. We get a little taste with the second victim's family -- just not as much. But their reactions are so different from Wade's family and friends, it'd be great to get more time seeing that.

One tangent -- I'm counting on readers to comment on this -- there's a golf club mentioned a couple of times in the book, "The Gog Magog Golf Club" to be specific. Now, when I read that name I think of the figures

and places mentioned in Ezekiel and Revelation. Neither of which is suggestive of a stroll along the greenways or putting around. Is this the kind of names used in England? In the US, courses are named after hills, valleys -- that kind of thing. Not names steeped in apocalyptic visions. It's a minor point, but it really threw me.

This is (I believe) the second book to feature DCI Barrett and DI Palmer and their team -- I'm curious about how they work together both before this case (also book related) and in the future. But this works well as a stand-alone, too. You don't have to sign up for the long haul to get anything from this. A solid mystery, one of the best procedurals I've read in ages, and a depiction of the aftermath of violent crime that you won't easily forget. **A Murder in the Dark** will stick with you.

My thanks to Bloodhound Books for the invitation to participate in this tour and the materials (including the book) they provided. The opinions expressed are all mine, however.

Morgan Schulman says

I received an advance readers copy in exchange for an honest review. So this author is doing police procedurals now, instead of her weird, twisted thrillers . This one is perfectly good, but I miss the weirdness of some of her earlier work. Solid police mystery – nothing really out of the ordinary – fine if that's your thing but nothing to necessarily recommend it

Beth says

i wish they still had little bookshop ...Virginia doesn't have them where i live??! what fun they use to be. very engaging read. well written, great characters, curious where it would head??! mystery. i am kind of shocked at how little reviews are on this read? such a great read. i am new to this author, Betsy will be one i check out more from soon enough! right now is a perfect time to check it out ... set in the wintertime. cozy crime thriller. twists and turns ... if that floats your boat?
