



Night Market

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'The Henning Mankell of Amsterdam' - **Bill Rogers, author of *The Pick, The Spade and The Crow***

When Henk van der Pol is asked by the Justice Minister to infiltrate a team investigating an online child exploitation network, he can hardly say no - he's at the mercy of prominent government figures in The Hague. But he soon realises the case is far more complex than he was led to believe... Picking up from where *The Harbour Master* ended, this new investigation sees Detective Van der Pol once again put his life on the line as he wades the murky waters between right and wrong in his search for justice.

Sometimes, to catch the bad guys, you have to think like one. . .

Night Market Details

Date : Published January 26th 2017 by No Exit

ISBN :

Author : Daniel Pembrey

Format : Kindle Edition 320 pages

Genre : Mystery, Thriller, Crime, Suspense

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Paul Bk says

Night Market - Daniel Pembrey

Night Market is a cracking sequel to 'The Harbour Master' (No Exit Press, 2016). The second detective van der Pol novel. It is pacy with a strong narrative and crisp dialogue that drive the action in this complex and dark tale. Classic Euro-noir.

The Harbour Master, begins with the discovery of a woman's body in the harbour red light district and deals with human trafficking. In three sections the novel unfolds a complex plot that involves van der Pol's family, diplomatic/European affairs, drugs and the murky world of pimps and political corruption. If anything the game is upped in 'Night Market'. At the start of the novel van der Pol wants to put some distance between himself and his boss at the KLPD, national police service agency. The Minister for Security and Justice, Willem van der Steen, offers van der Pol an undercover job. A small child exploitation team working in Driebergen are looking into a paedophile ring. It is a transnational investigation with a team of detectives from Belgium, Holland, Britain, Germany and Luxembourg. Operation 'Guardian Angel' began with a routine investigation and the serendipitous discovery of two four year old boys in the locked hidden cellar of a house in Belgium, (shades of the terrible real murders committed by Marc Dutroux give an idea of the dark territory of this novel). The investigation has suffered a blow recently as raids on suspects uncovered nothing, it is assumed one of the team is undermining the investigation. Van der Pol is tasked with infiltrating the team and uncovering the traitor. His Algemene Inlichtingen en Veiligheidsdienst, (Dutch security services), minder is his link to the Minister but he is pretty much alone and everyone from the team leader down is suspicious of him. Night Market is told in three sections, new story lines brought in but ultimately they all link back and the corruption that pervaded the first novel resurfaces here. Solving the crimes will involve van der Pol in putting his own life on the line to get to the truth.

Daniel Pembrey notes in a postscript at the end of 'The Harbour Master' that he began to write about his character, detective Henk van der Pol when he realised there wasn't a Dutch Rebus or Wallander. So he set out on the ambitious task of creating an Amsterdam counterpart to those heroes of police procedural serialisation. In my experience a lot of modern Dutch thrillers in translation, there are several writers whose work is not rendered into English, seem to be complex literary novels with individual stories. So Pembrey found himself a niche. There is a tradition of detective fiction in/about Holland but there have been long decades of change since Nicholas Freeling's van der Valk and A. C. Baantjer's inspector Detok policed Amsterdam. So we are long overdue a Dutch detective for the modern world and van der Pol may be the one. Night Market is a modern crime story that gets to the soul of Dutch society and it's involvement in the wider European sphere.

Night Market can be read as a stand alone novel but I would add the rider that this book would be more rewarding if read after the first in the series, 'The Harbour Master'. There are specific reasons for this; avoiding plot spoilers, understanding the complex character relationships that run from the start of the first book, and there are running elements of the story from The Harbour Master that are resolved in Night Market.

It is clear that Pembrey intends to create a series of novels with van der Pol as the main protagonist and that there is a connectivity and structure within the stories that intertwines the novels. There are three distinct stories in the first book that you realise have an underlying unity as you progress through the novel. Then this book, Night Market, begins 'Part IV: The Night Market' so it is clear that Pembrey feels this novel is a

sequel, it is the story of the latter career of detective van der Pol, as much as individual cases. Each section naturally flows book to book, a clever and thoughtful structuring make this work. This could become a series to follow, like Rebus, like Harry Bosch, worth looking out for.

In line with a more plausible policing model for the areas of crime van der Pol is involved in he is not a traditional station bound detective. A credible picture of Amsterdam emerges but van der Pol is a rover. Investigations take him out of the city and even out of the country. Van der Pol is a 30 year service veteran and his boss would like to see him retire. He isn't sure about his own future and his wife Petra wants to pack it in and move out of the city. Yet it isn't easy giving up the life and Van der Pol doesn't like being pushed around by criminals or by the Police Commissioner, Joost van Erven.

The novel is narrated in the first person by Van der Pol, likeable but also with his own dark corners, his complex relationship with his wife and daughter are established in the first novel and brilliantly exposed here. His family problems are acutely observed and feel very true to life. As soon as his wife, Petra, hears that the case Henk is considering taking involves child abuse she is against it because 'that kind of thing in your head and it will change you', (paraphrasing). Still, he accepts the Minsters offer of the job and it is an instant wedge in his relationship with Petra and his daughter. At heart van der Pol is a policeman who wants answers, he is determined to get at the truth and is courageous in pursuing the bad guys. He is an easy to like narrator and his world view, not complete, often mistaken drives the plot forward.

The setting of Amsterdam was vividly brought to life in the first novel and 'Night Market' rings with the same authenticity, both in the city and further afield. Pembrey is a keen observer and this gives a colour and texture to the Night Market. The Harbour Master was an assured debut and 'Night Market' is a fine sequel; intelligent, exciting and original. Pembrey is sensitive but honest on a difficult but very relevant topic and the character of van der Pol is now well established. If you are a fan of Rebus or Wallander check out van der Pol.

Hugh Michael Herholdt says

I bought this book as I so enjoyed his first one, The Harbourmaster. Was not disappointed. The story line, a subject open to controversy, was delicately dealt with. A good read for those wanting something good and atmospheric between more intense novels.

Looking forward to the next book.

Noelle says

Once again, we are taken back to the beautifully atmospheric Amsterdam – the stomping ground for Detective Henk van der Pol. As a reader, we are thrown into a world of exploitation, corruption, drugs, abuse, violence, a search for truth – where you don't know who to trust but you're determined to back Henk as he seeks justice for those who need it.

What I LOVE about this book is that the author takes on a challenging and controversial story-line. OMFG- What a brilliant start for the second book in this series....a #killerhook that had me instantly intrigued!!

Unlike The Harbour Master, which had an awesome but slower build up, the pace of this book is fast, action-packed with a few strands to keep the reader on their toes!

Fan-Bloody-Tastic!!

Night Market is rich with interesting and complex characters. I'll just touch upon a few as I don't want spoil your enjoyment when you discover them all for yourself!! Of course, I am going to start with Henk van der Pol and mention his wife, Petra and their daughter- Nadia. I really enjoyed that Henk's family featured more in this book than they did in the first. The relationships that Henk has with his wife and daughter is really put to the test with Henk being dedicated to his job so much so that he jeopardises his personal life. Henk is likeable because he is believable. Inner struggle on an almost daily basis, the reader is drawn to his wit, courage and sheer risk taking behaviour.

Joost van Erven rears his ugly head again. Henk's nemesis is seemingly above the law but once again, Henk is determined that the truth will out and bringing this character to justice almost becomes a Holy Grail for Henk. Will he achieve his aim? Demons from his past, linked to the corruption that Henk wants to destroy, return to build up the suspense and tension as the story unfolds.

Tommy Franks – WHO IS THIS GUY!? Well..... He is a GREAT character that causes the reader to wonder whether Henk should trust him or steer clear! I could just keep rambling on and on about the ever so awesome narrative, tight plot and vivid characterisations, but what is the fun in that?

In my opinion, Daniel Pembrey is an exciting albeit relatively newish author that is firmly on my radar! I am MORE than excited to see what will be happening next in this series and look forward to when I can close my eyes and return to Amsterdam again! With some heart-racing moments and jaw-dropping twists....this is one action-packed police procedural with a difference!

Would I recommend you read this book? Hell Yeah!! Mr Pembrey, you have set the bar high, but I have no doubt that I will be just as excited when I next meet Mr van der Pol....I just hope it is soon!! Click the book, bump it up your TBR and enjoy the beauty that is Night Market!

David Keay says

This is an enthralling sequel to the Harbour Master; the first in the series of Henk van der Pol detective series. I enjoyed the Harbour Master immensely and was delighted to be offered the opportunity to review the follow tale. Once I started reading I found it impossible to put the book down until I had finished. Furthermore it left me eager to get my hands on the next adventure in van der Pol's life – a heartfelt plea to the author to write more.

Henk van der Pol is a member of the Dutch police who is a bit of a loose end following his previous escapades. The Minister for Security and Justice asks him to join a select team of international policemen investigating child abuse cases. There is a suspicion of corruption within the team following the collapse of a high profile investigation and it is Henk's job to infiltrate and try to identify the source of the suspected leak.

Hank's wife is less than pleased at the thought of her husband viewing pornographic images as part of his job

and this creates tension in a marriage that was already under strain from Henk's previous work. The centre for the operations is far from his normal Amsterdam base; a location where his wife refuses to join him.

Daniel Pembrey has thereby racked up the emotional environment that is compounded by the overt suspicions from the existing team members. Pembrey builds on this when Henk's covert investigations reveal that several of the team have a dark shared past.

I liked the way in which Pembrey develops the tale to move it from a good crime story to one in the genre of spy thrillers with the involvement of the Security services together with suspected corruption at the highest levels of government and society.

Henk's courage is tested to the full in a scenario where tensions within the investigating team come to a head with fatal consequences and Henk narrowly escapes death – something which seems to be becoming part and parcel of Henk's life.

The team is no longer operating and Henk is returned to his previous station. However he is now under a new boss who seems more concerned with ticking boxes and meeting performance measures than actually solving crimes. Henk is reduced to investigating moped thefts much to his frustration. Especially since the perpetrators of the child abuse cases are still at large and his deep felt suspicions about a senior member of the Police still exist.

Pembrey uses Henk's courageous drive for justice to develop further the spy thriller element of the book. This involves international investigations – often carried out covertly. Woven into these developments is the involvement of the local crime boss who was a key character in the previous novel; a scenario that once again leads to Henk being in imminent danger of losing his life. The one good thing to emerge from that is that it helps to bring Henk and his wife back together.

However you would expect a crime novel set in Amsterdam to involve drugs. The author doesn't disappoint. Unfortunately for Henk they bring an additional complexity to his life because of the involvement of his daughter and her Russian fiancé – a man about whom Henk harbours deep suspicions.

Daniel Pembrey spent some of his life in the Amsterdam docks area and he has cleverly used his experience of the region to provide colour, authenticity and interest. The Eurocrime aspect is explored by ventures in Norway, London and Belgium. Some of these link with Henk's wife and her independent journalistic investigations thereby providing an extra dimension to the evolving narrative.

The tale is fast moving and full of interesting constructs throughout and, as is to be expected of any good crime novel, there are some unexpected twists at the end. I must admit that I hadn't spotted at least a couple of those.

The writing style was smooth, well constructed and it created a novel that was a delight to read. I have no doubt that we will be hearing more from this author and I look forward to his next publication with eager anticipation.

Sandy says

Henk van der Pol is a 56 year old Dutch detective in a tight spot. After the fallout from his last case, he's a cop without a home. So when the Justice Minister calls with a job offer, he's willing to listen. It's not exactly a cushy assignment but he has little choice & fewer options.

They want to add him to an elite team hunting an international ring of pedophiles. The investigation centres around the Night Market, a site on the dark web where perpetrators share videos. But Henk's job is not to catch a pedophile. It's to catch a rat. Someone on the team has been leaking information to help the bad guys stay one step ahead of the cops & the Justice Minister wants Henk to clean house.

The situation quickly escalates after Henk joins the team & we begin to realize this is just a pit stop in a case that will have Henk chasing rumours & suspects from Amsterdam to London. The scope of the conspiracy at its heart is mind boggling & decades in the making.

This is a page turner that demands you pay attention. The characters Henk encounters have elevated shiftiness to an art form. As the plot unfolds, there's an unsettling undercurrent fueled by a lack of reliable narrators. The relationships between these people are positively labyrinthine & it's hard to know who's on the same team. At times I wasn't even sure if I believed Henk. His last case left him traumatized & he's having problems with his memory. But is it truly as a result of PTSD or a convenient way of covering his own actions? And was he sent to find the truth or being set up to take a fall?

Despite that, he's a sympathetic character. He's at an age where he realizes his best days may be in the rearview mirror & the constant battle with crime & office politics is taking its toll. The job has been tough on his marriage & he struggles to maintain a relationship with his grown daughter. As horrible truths emerge, he even begins to eye old colleagues with suspicion. Henk is left feeling isolated & riddled with self doubt & you can't help but pull for the guy as the situation becomes increasingly dangerous.

Plenty of action & the need for answers keep this moving at a brisk pace. More than a few bodies hit the ground but it's not something the author dwells on. The child abuse aspect of the plot contains enough detail to further the story but is never graphic or gratuitous. Several of the subplots are continued from The Harbour Master & while a decent amount of background info is given, I think I'd recommend reading it first. This can be read as a stand alone but knowing how things played out in the past gives this book an added punch.

The setting of Amsterdam & its surroundings provides a real sense of place that makes it easy to slip into this tense & compelling story. If you're someone who enjoys those 1000 piece puzzles, this is for you.

Marcel says

I was lucky enough to have an advance copy of this so have already finished it. As with the prequel it is a fast moving and compelling read with plenty of surprises and intrigue. I always find Daniel's writing to be wonderfully descriptive and, as always, this is clearly well researched both in locations and subject matter.

I did find myself struggling to remember some details from the previous book that are referred to, but this

didn't detract from my enjoyment and is probably a good reason to re-read the first book!

Jay Williams says

The intrigue continues in this episode of the saga of Henk van der Pol. While the book is exciting on its own, I recommend you read the earlier books in this series to fully appreciate all the chickens that come home to roost in this story. Pembrey is brilliant on capturing the essence of the Amsterdam Harbor scene, but less so in this story as the action takes precedent. Henk's infiltration of the international task force on child porn ends soon enough, but lights the fuse for many issues to emerge from the shadows to force him to examine his past actions. The suspense grows more intense right up to the very end. Block some time for reading this because you won't put it down.

Abby Slater- Fairbrother says

Henk is back!

With yet another disturbing case on his hands!

Summoned to a briefing with Willem Van Der Steen, a justice minister. We learn Henk's new case is to infiltrate a six-man team called SVU X19, SVU meaning special victims unit. To become a mole/plant of sorts and investigate the team and their work, spot a leak and report back to AIVD (Dutch secret service). No easy task, but with rumours of a leak within a team whose role it is, is to prevent child exploitation and sexual abuse. It is one Henk can't say no too!

The SVU X19 team is based in a remote location at Driebergen. We learn of the individuals and their backgrounds, which makes for fascinating reading. How do you assemble a team to track some of Europe's most heinous criminals? We also learn of their past cases, which is rather disturbing due to the nature of the crimes committed. We also learn of their current case, surveillance on Heirich Karreman a prominent architect within Amsterdam. This was very reminiscent of the prominent figures who have been exposed in the UK for historical acts of child sexual abuse. This team handles the cases that would give civilians nightmares, It certainly would me!

The SVU X19 team is made up of several characters Manfred Boomkamp, Gunther Engelhart, Jacques Rahm, Tommy Franks, Ivo Vermeulen and Henk. Daniel Pembrey has really excelled himself with the characterisation of this team. It is one of the best formations I have read in a very long time. It really is, brilliant writing. I can't write too much more, for fear of leaving spoilers. But the evolution of this team is simply breath-taking!

The plot continues to develop and it is more and more unpredictable. It is written in such a style, that you never know what will be revealed and discovered next. Obviously the theme is dark, dealing with issues of child abuse, exploitation of children in the system and child pornography within the novel. But I think this shows the obstacles that organisations/governments face in trying to bring down global, image sharing/creating, paedophile rings. A crime committed and reliant on the upmost secrecy and must avoid detection at all costs.

How does the various agency's link in and take them down? What does it take to work on these teams? How do you track activity that spans Europe? What becomes of the police/agents who deal with these crimes day in and day out? As the author puts it, 'Sometimes, to catch the bad guys you have to think like one.....'

Highly recommended 5*

Andrew Pellow says

This is the second Henk van der Pol novel by Daniel Pembrey, following on from the events described in the excellent “The Harbour Master”. Although it can be read as a stand-alone novel I believe the reader would benefit from reading “The Harbour Master” first.

In Henk van der Pol Daniel Pembrey has come up with a detective in the Harry Bosch mould – likeable but at the same time with his own dark side and demons to fight. He clearly has a series of novels in mind and I, for one, cannot wait for the next instalment.

Using Amsterdam as the main setting, Pembrey manages to take you to locations you are familiar with, and may even think you know well, and show you the dark underside. His writing is taut and engaging and he is never gratuitous in his use of violence. What is there is the plot is always needed and described in enough detail to let the reader know exactly what has happened without going too far.

The plot itself has enough twists and turns to keep the most exacting reader satisfied and yet none of them seem contrived.

All in all an excellent read and one I would thoroughly recommend.

Sharon says

Night Market, Van der Pol #2. 2017. Detective Henk van der Pol, The Netherlands, Daniel Pembrey, UK. iBook. 3/5

Where The Harbour Master left off, this takes over and although it takes awhile with many side avenues Henk is following work wise, including his own memory issues, his efforts to find the truth never leaves him despite many obstacles including quite a few deaths and serious injuries to himself, put in his way. Quite a pattern of crime, including child abuse (old and new) he is attempting to unravel and it all gets pretty exciting reading the final quarter.... The writer has found his stride in book two. And with the book about the young Henk.....

The Harbour Master, Van der Pol #1 2016. iBook. ? 1/5

Night Market, Van der Pol #2. 2017. iBook. ? 3/5

Initiation: Amsterdam '83' 2018. Kindle ? young van der Pol.... 3/5

Ms Kathryn Pizar says

5*. An absolutely cracking follow-up.

Sometimes the second book doesn't quite match the success of the first. Not so with Night Market though. A great follow-up from The Harbourmaster, with Henk van der Pol being transferred to a new, but short lived

unit. It was fast paced, with plenty of action, and I read it in two sittings, reluctant to put it down. There were some unsavoury characters including rogue secret service agents, and a drug dealer that resurfaced but only fleetingly, and a storyline that had a sinking submarine, child abuse, corruption in high places, and Henk chasing a stolen Vespa.

I like Henk, he's a good bloke, and brilliant at his job even though he gets himself into a few scrapes. His wife and daughter however, are a different matter. They both have this antagonism towards his job, and come across as a particularly difficult and selfish pair of individuals, always wanting their own way in everything. His wife leaves him because she objects to his job in the SVU, but then returns to him when that job folds. His daughter lives with a Russian of dubious means, and speaks to Henk in the most disrespectful offhanded way. Not a very likeable pair, but integral to Henk's story.

Daniel Pembury has written this and The Harbourmaster in the first person which I'm not normally keen on, but it gives a better perspective of Henk's character.

So a great book, and I can't wait for number three.

John McCormick says

Once again my thanks to Nudge Readers for providing this book to read and impartially review.

Henk van der Pol is back in this second book the sequel to the excellent "The Harbour Master" and as before our hero is soon up to his neck in trouble and intrigue, putting himself and his family into serious danger. Taxed by the Justice Minister to infiltrate a team investigating an online child exploitation network, involving powerful people and celebrities he is very soon aware that this is a far more complex case than at first appears.

The book starts quietly but keeps you involved, and soon there are sub plots, and twists that keep you guessing to see how the story ends.

Unusually for a book in what hopefully will be a continuing long running series, this story refers to the previous book quite heavily, but nevertheless that should not spoil your enjoyment of this terrific book which is atmospheric descriptive and very well written, the characterisations excellent, to the point where you actually care whether Henk when fighting for his life will come through in one piece or not.

This Policeman is in some ways a law unto himself a maverick, honest and incorruptible but not above bending the law in a good cause to bring the villains to justice.

This book is a real page turner and I heartily recommend it.

Ben says

I bought the Night Market while I was halfway through reading the prequel, The Harbor Master, whilst on holiday in Amsterdam. I was enjoying the Harbour Master so much that I knew I would want to read the sequel when I was done!

In Night Market, Henk is back doing what he loves best, using his detective skills and getting himself into places that always seem to get him in trouble! Except this time there was a lot more action! The author Daniel Pembrey, like in the first book, puts a great picture in your head of the surroundings that Henk finds himself in with his creative writing. Also like the first book, there are plenty of plot twists, making it an easy and enjoyable to read.

Sadly unlike the first book however, there is no confirmation of another Henk Van Der Pol story being released. I really hope Daniel writes another book about Henk, who I think is a great and likeable character. Thanks again for another good read Daniel and Henk!

Linda Hepworth says

Detective Henk van de Pol is asked by the Dutch Minister of Justice to infiltrate a team investigating an online child exploitation and paedophilia network and he somewhat reluctantly he agrees, although so far in his career he had managed to avoid having to immerse himself in this highly disagreeable and shadowy world. He had been all too aware of the quote from Nietzsche which warns: “Battle not with monsters, lest ye become a monster, and if you gaze into the abyss, the abyss gazes also into you” and was reminded of it when faced with his wife’s strong opposition to his acceptance of the job. The investigations he is drawn into are complex and multi-faceted, and just as disturbing as he had feared and he feels very isolated within the new team as he has no idea which of his colleagues is trustworthy. In addition, levels of corruption, as well as various politically motivated influences, add extra levels of confusion to an already challenging investigation.

I thought that the author handled some very difficult themes with both knowledge and sensitivity and that he created, for the most part, credible characters and a coherent plotline. He also evoked a convincing sense of time and place in the locations used in the story, Amsterdam, London and Norway. However, it was very clear from the outset that this is a sequel to *The Harbour Master*, the author’s first novel in the series, and from my experience of reading this book, I would recommend that any potential reader would be well advised to read the former before reading *Night Market* because there are some complex relationships and plot-lines which continue in this book and which only very slowly become apparent. I found myself becoming very frustrated that, lacking this prior knowledge, I wasn’t able to fully understand what was influencing van de Pol’s reactions and decision making – and that I was spending far too much time on trying to do so rather than immersing myself in the story! The struggle did eventually feel easier about three quarters of the way through but, had I not been reviewing it, I would probably have given up on it. However, I did persevere and, by the time I had finished, I had started to feel that I could grow to like this detective! For anyone who has already read the first book in the series there are, I’m sure, some very satisfactory resolutions of “unfinished business”. I was particularly fascinated by the tense and complex relationships between van de Pol and his wife and daughter (which had previously been explored in *The Harbour Master*) and so, as I finished the book wanting to know more about how these would develop, I have to acknowledge that the author has created some interesting characters! However, a sequel should be easier to read as a stand-alone story than I found this one to be, hence my low rating.

My thanks to No Exit Press/Real Readers for providing this copy in exchange for an honest review.

Thebooktrail says

Daniel Pembrey is fast becoming my go to author for the darker side of locations. This is not the Amsterdam you’d expect to see if you went there for yourself. Even a journey to Oslo is not what you would expect. But then that’s the gritty cleverness of Daniel Pembrey – he puts you in places you know well but then he grabs

the floor right out from beneath you feet and sends you reeling.

Full review to come but I wanted to say that fans of his earlier books should have this on their list and look for it when it comes out in April. There are some disturbing thoughts and themes in this book but the skill of the writer makes this dark and creepy background a unique shadowy area for a crime of this magnitude.

Daniel does it again!
