

Into The Night by Sarah Bailey

5 stars

A thoroughly enjoyable murder mystery

Detective Sergeant Gemma Woodstock has moved to Melbourne from a small town and is hoping to finally be given a lead on a major murder case. She is a complex character having left her small hometown, Smithson, to become a better detective.

She has left behind her young son, Ben, with his father Scott and although she misses her child dreadfully she realises that her ambition is paramount and that she is not really cut out to be a full-time mother. She attracts potential boyfriends but prefers sex with strangers in hotels.

At the start of the book she is investigating the apparently motiveless death of a homeless man and the death of an escort girl who fell to her death from a balcony at the home of a retired justice, Frank Jacoby.

Everything changes when a hugely popular up and coming young actor, Sterling Wade, is stabbed to death while filming a movie. The problem is that the scene being filmed involved more than 400 zombies attacking Sterling in masks. It is impossible to see what happened even though the knife used is left on the scene.

However, Gemma is thrilled to be given the lead on this crime despite having to share it with DS Nick Fleet with whom she has an ambivalent relationship.

As with any murder case the victim's life becomes open to everyone but in Sterling's case he has a grieving fiancée, Elizabeth Short but also a male friend, Brodie Kent, who insists that Sterling was in fact in a gay relationship with him and was using Elizabeth as a shield to avoid any rumours being made public. Various other characters from within the film industry become potential suspects and Gemma and Nick must try and work out what has happened. The situation is not helped when connections crop up between this case and the other two cases that Gemma has been working on.

I enjoyed this book. It is fast-paced and full of interesting characters and various twists and turns keep the reader guessing. The outpouring of grief from everyone connected with Sterling is almost overwhelming but how much is genuine and what was the truth about Sterling's relationships?

Although this is the second book in the series, there is no need to have read the first book although I am planning to if possible. I hope that this series will be continued as Gemma is a character I would like to see develop and find out how she continues her life both professionally and personally.

Dexter

Breakaway Reviewers received a copy of the book to review