



City of Darkness

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City of Darkness takes place in 1888 London, where Jack the Ripper roams the streets with impunity and Scotland Yard seems helpless to stop him.

The science of forensics is in its infancy but a few detectives – Trevor Welles among them – recognize that they are dealing with a different sort of killer, a “modern criminal” who chooses his victims at random. If Jack is to be caught, he won’t be caught with Scotland Yard’s normal methods of deduction for there is no logic to this madness. The question is no longer “Why was the victim killed?” but rather “How was the victim killed?” For the first time in the history of detection, science is trumping deductive reasoning.

When a twist of fate puts Trevor in charge of the case, he hastily assembles Scotland Yard’s first forensics team: Davy Mabrey, the first bobby on the scene of the grisliest of the murders, whose working class common sense proves an invaluable asset, Rayley Abrams, a cautious intellectual whose future at the Yard is marginalized due to his Jewish heritage, Tom Bainbridge, a medical student with aristocratic connections and a secret drinking problem, and Emma Kelly, sister of the Ripper’s last victim who has a troubled past and a gift for linguistics. The team finds an unlikely ally in the form of Queen Victoria herself, who takes an unusual level of interest in the Ripper case and secretly funds the unit. But will they stop Jack in time to spare Leanna Bainbridge, the young heiress with whom Trevor has fallen madly and improbably in love?

While City of Darkness takes place in London, its sequel, City of Light, will travel to Paris on the eve of the Exposition Universelle, the ultimate World’s Fair which debuted Edison’s phonograph, Buffalo Bill’s Wild West Show, and the Eiffel Tower. The third book, City of Silence, will take place in St. Petersburg where Victoria’s beloved granddaughter Alexandria is on the verge of marrying the young czar Nicolas, much to her grandmother’s dismay. Throughout the series the Scotland Yard forensics team, which serves as a sort of Victorian-era CSI, will circle the world to investigate high-profile cases, most often at the urging of the Queen.

City of Darkness Details

Date : Published May 10th 2012 by CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform (first published April 1st 2012)

ISBN : 9781477417379

Author : Kim Wright

Format : Paperback 402 pages

Genre : Mystery, Historical, Historical Fiction, Fiction, Thriller, Historical Mystery

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From Reader Review City of Darkness for online ebook

Mel says

Done!

I think it's enjoyable and not a bad read. There were enjoyable parts and annoying parts, just as every book would have.

Good:

- Jack the Ripper and Victorian London backdrop. I am not a Ripper expert, so I enjoyed this setting.
- Surprise twist! I didn't know who Ripper was until a lot of clues were given.. maybe I am just not very well prep for mystery.
- The connection and relationship between the characters are nice. I especially interested in the family drama. I like how they introduce some of the recent social issues of our modern world into their conversations and insight (however, this takes away the authentic feeling of the Victorian times, which is a drawback.)

Eh:

- Consistency in the characters and dialogues - sometimes they are very Victorian, but sometimes they are very modern.
- Sometimes the writing is very troublesome to read because the sentences are fragmented, but perhaps this is a personal style preference. Also, sometimes I loose track of who is speaking in a dialogue, or whose thought we are reading about, ie, who is the preposition "he" referring to - Tom or Trevor? Certain formatting of my book is a bit odd, ie adds additional line sentences or breaks in the middle of a paragraph, which adds to the annoyance as you read the book. This may be due to the setting of my kindle though.

Anyway, anyone who can overlook some inconsistency in the book, and has a general interest in Jack the Ripper would have fun with this.

Nola Arganbright says

Very interesting and intriguing.

A very detailed book that contains numerous facts of the times of Jack the Ripper interwoven with fiction. I enjoyed the well developed characters and strong plotting.

Mike says

I love anything to do with Jack the Ripper; I have since I was a teenager; must be the unsolved nature of the murders that intrigues me so generally I avoid fictional accounts that have to do with the Ripper as they're usually completely ludicrous in playing out who the Ripper supposedly was; even in fiction from. However, this book really captured the Ripper murders quite well; the way the Bainbridge family was tied into the Ripper killings; how the police handled the case; the mistakes that were made (which obviously the author is using current Ripper knowledge in order to show the police's shortcomings). Granted, things like Mary Kelly having possessed quite a lot of classic books and not wanting to really drink that much are a bit much even for fiction but it didn't draw away from the excellent way the author wrote the story. There were quite a few

times after the first few chapters I thought "ok, I already know who the Ripper is in this book." but then more twists and turns were formed as I read and I will be frank, I was quite surprised later on in the book after I went through a couple of other characters who I thought might be the Ripper in this book. If you're a fan of historical fiction and Victorian-era mysteries; you'll really enjoy this book.

Cathy DuPont says

Set in London when Jack the Ripper was loose and doing his 'side job' of murdering women, guess this would be called a historical fiction. Don't read many of them, so not entirely sure but sure this was much better than I anticipated.

It was a free Kindle, which makes them even better but regardless, I'll put it down if it's not good. (No longer wasting my time trying to get through books which I don't like.)

Piercy's characters were well developed, the storyline was interesting and weaving Jack the Ripper into the story couldn't be better. She set the landscape in such a way that you had the feeling of being there. Of course I've never been to London so it wouldn't take much to be believable to me but nevertheless it was.

Intend on putting Piercy's other books on my list, but there's a lot of reading ahead of those. Series and authors who I'm loving, just like Piercy.

Barb says

I like murder mysteries set in Victorian London, I haven't read a lot of fiction about the Ripper murders. So, I thought this might be a good new series for me and was eager to sink my teeth into the story.

I read over a hundred pages before deciding to move on to another book. There were too many things that didn't hang well in the context of a Victorian setting. In general, if something is considered in poor taste or bad manners today you know that Victorian sensibilities are going to view it even more harshly. While I can imagine eccentric personalities might have more lax standards in their households, I found it hard to believe that discussing how a body was drained of its blood would be acceptable dinner conversation in mixed company in 1888 regardless of the hostess's unique personality.

There are certain things I'm not willing to overlook in my fiction and inconsistency of character is one of them. I was interested in seeing how things were going to turn out with the main character and her situation. But I threw in the towel when she boldly asks a doctor she is newly acquainted with if the "ladies of the East End offer you something in exchange for your services?" without batting an eye, then goes on to discuss money, his family position (and the fact that he won't inherit) and moments later covers her ears because she doesn't want to hear something (and I'm not quite sure what caused her to cover her ears). You can't have a girl bold and saucy one minute and a delicate flower the next while discussing essentially the same topic of conversation. It makes no sense.

Yes, there were typos and grammatical errors that were slightly annoying but had the story been good I would have kept reading and overlooked them.

Stacie Vaughan says

City of Darkness is the first ebook I read on my new Kindle Fire and it was a great experience! The book was phenomenal and I looked forward to sitting in my bed curled up with blankets reading about the city of London in 1888 while Jack the Ripper roams the streets.

I read Kim Wright's Love in Mid Air two years ago and enjoyed it as well. This book, however, seems to be in a different genre. While Love in Mid Air was more of a women's fiction novel, City of Darkness was an historical mystery. I find her writing style easy to read. I was hooked from the first few pages and had a hard time putting the book down.

I could vividly picture all the characters especially Aunt Gerry, Leanna and Emma. I love that she had such strong female personalities even back in the late 1800s. I got a kick every time Aunt Gerry was mentioned because she was so eccentric, but with a huge heart. They were all very likable and interesting.

I also really liked Trevor Welles and how dedicated and professional he was in trying to solve the Jack the Ripper murders. He went above and beyond and strived to improve the way cases were handled. I imagined how different cases were processed back then with the primitive technology they had. Trevor mentions his desire to learn forensics from the French and tried out a few of their techniques on his own. His experiments always didn't turn out so well though! I was rooting for him to get his big break in the case.

I was fascinated reading the scenes with Jack the Ripper. I've always been interested in true crime books and this case has always intrigued me. Some of the scenes were pretty brutal and I cringed knowing that they are based on fact and real women actually endured his brutality. I was hoping they would catch the guy and put him to justice, but we all know that they never caught the Ripper and City of Darkness stays true to that. Although, I did find out which character was the Ripper in this book and I didn't see it coming. That's all I'm going to say though because I don't want to ruin the suspense!

I can't wait to read the next book in the series, City of Light which takes place in Paris during the World's Fair!

Lori says

For a bibliophile like me there is nothing so exciting as a book that causes my pulse to race, gets me so deeply involved with the characters and the story that I stay up late and push my lunch hour to read, and generally am consumed. City of Darkness was one of those books.

How can I express how much I loved this book? I am almost disappointed that I have read it and I don't have the delight of picking it up again for the first time and becoming a passive bystander to the London streets of 1888.

Author Kim Wright has taken a string of famous unsolved murders - - what may be the first known serial killer and perhaps the most notorious unsolved crimes in history - - and applied a very swift and talented hand to them, to create a fascinating blend of historical fiction, mystery and intrigue. She does a splendid job of capturing the grime, desolation and general depression of the Whitechapel streets inhabited by London's poorest, as well as a glaring disparity between the underprivileged and the well-to-do that reside only a short carriage ride away.

While Leanna Bainbridge turned out to be a strong and willful heroine (very much unlike what proper

Victorian ladies were to be) and I liked her very much, the heart of the story for me was carried by Trevor Welles. He was quick and smart, without being pretentious, and determined to stop Jack the Ripper's reign of terror, regardless of his choice of victim. He was a fascinating central character as he was not a dashing hero (you will find no Mr. Darcy here) and he had no serious romantic entanglements to add allure. Yet his tenacity, his devotion to the job and foresight to move science to the forefront made me adore him.

Another character I loved sharing the pages with was Aunt Gerry, most definitely an anomaly for the Victorian era, an eccentric spinster by choice who traveled to safari on her own and wasn't shy about speaking her mind. She was such a bold and vivid character, I could see her in my mind and hear her speaking as I turned the pages.

Ms. Wright pens villains with broad strokes and it's to her credit that I thoroughly disliked one or two characters with a passion!

The forensic portions of the book were intense and very satisfying. It was remarkable to read of the early crime-scene "investigations" which amounted to little more than washing the blood from the streets, identifying the victim and photographing the victim's eyes as it was believed then that the last images the deceased saw would be forever seared on their eyes and could be captured by camera. Equally fun was to read of Trevor's ideas and suggestions, knowing how different crime detection would be in the next century.

As a self-admitted true crime junkie, I always dive head first into books like City of Darkness but can also be very critical. You will find no criticisms from me with regard to this book. Ms. Wright stayed true to history and true to the facts of the actual Ripper cases. She gave a real voice to the Ripper's last known victim, Mary Kelly, even allowing the reader to follow her into her world, complete with leering looks, exchanges of soup for skin and a love of reading. She even gave Queen Victoria, notorious for her modesty, a cameo.

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Christina ~ Brunette Reader says

No rating, DNF at 15%

Three reasons why:

1) Five or six points of view just in the first chapter, together with stilted dialogues and superfluous descriptiveness.

2) *Trash*: an americanism par excellence.

3) And then this did it:

*"The Bainbridge family emeralds and the **Gainsborough** portrait of our mother, I entrust to my sister [...]"*

Now, if you want to do artists-names-dropping fine with me, but at least play safe:

Thomas Gainsborough died in 1788. How many are the chances for a character (a still active scientist, not a decrepit man) dying in 1888 to have a mother who has been portrayed by Gainsborough? Also considering

the average lifespan was shorter in the 19th Century and women usually had children when much younger than today? Why not doing a little research, we're talking about historical fiction here, and dig out "safer" big names such as Sir Thomas Lawrence, Sir William Beechy or John Constable?

That this was a freebie softens the blow, but it's still not worth neither the time nor the headache for me.

Lynda Kelly says

This was a very good story with some very sloppy editing which easily cost it a star from me. It astounds me time and time again why someone would go to all this trouble, all the research too in the case of this story and then chuck it out there with no thought for a good proofreading exercise !! WHY would you do that ?? The main issue with this book was that there were lots and lots of words dropped from sentences most bizarrely....like in/a/the/to. They drove me to utter distraction, not because I've not seen the same in other e-books, just not in this quantity !!

Then tracks was used and not tracts, sites and not sights, started not stared, form not from, triffle not trifle. I did make a note some way in wondering if English is the author's first language. Things like earlier found instead of found earlier and this were and not these.

Then one person's surname was spelt 3 different ways-Milford, Minford and Mitford !! There were missing apostrophes as well as misplaced ones and then someone else's name went from Abrams to Abram and Kinsley was also spelled as Kingsly and Worcester is not Worchester and night does not spell night. Council was used too where counsel was meant and the same for played where placed should have been used. The usual pouring being used instead of poring reared its ugly head in this book as well.

I have the other 2 stories in this series downloaded too but will definitely call it a day if the 2nd one starts off with similar mistakes as then I'll know none of them have been edited properly.

It just seems such a waste of effort to write a good book and to release it in this mess.

Aoife says

This started off so promising...I loved the opening that showed us Martha Tabram's last minutes. I usually hate cold openings in books but Wright managed to describe it in a way that made me actually feel for her. Then we got introduced to Leanna's family and they seem quite interesting but then it soon goes downhill and soon I simply didn't care for any of the characters anymore. They're all incredibly flat and cliched. Cecil is the gambling jerk, William...exists, Leanna's aunt is QUIRKY and FEMINIST and did we mention quirky?

Well and Leanna? As she's the main-character she should at least have been interesting and gotten some character development but no. Halfway through the novel she tells the reader in great detail that while she lived with her family in the country she didn't really realize how limited a women's possibilities were at that time but now that she lives in London and has spent time with her aunt and other suffragettes and had some other eye-opening experiences she's changed...

FUCK IT SHOW DON'T TELL!

Yeah...she just tells this the reader. Do we see this change? No. We see her arriving in London and almost immediately getting involved in a love-triangle-quadrangle-thingy with the copper investigating the Ripper case (who is in love with her), her maid (who is in love with the copper) and the so-suspicious-it-hurts saint-like East End-doctor (with whom she is in love) and there are also pretty dresses and trips to the theatre...and I'm just sick of it.

Oh yeah, Jack the Ripper is in there, too somewhere. Don't ask.

A shame, really. I've got another book by the author that's set in St. Petersburg and it would have been awesome to read a novel set there but now I think I'll pass.

Penelope Bartotto says

Where to begin, where to begin? How about I say I absolutely loved this book!!!

It takes a lot for me to say that, with multiple exclamation points, but this book definitely earned it. If I ranked books, this would hands down be a 5 Star book. I picked this up as a freebie for my Kindle, as I love a good historical novel. I also have this macabre fascination with murder mysteries true and fictional, so the fact this revolved around the White Chapel murders attributed to "Jack the Ripper" I was even more intrigued.

One quote stood out for me, and sets up a fairly large part of the story and plot:

"Professions aren't for eldest sons, professions are for youngest sons. Eldest sons inherit, middle sons marry well."

With these words we start to get a better handle on the Bainbridge family dynamics. Our female lead character is Leanna Bainbridge who after an unexpected shock travels to London to stay with her Great Aunt Geraldine, a rather eccentric lady for her time. When she arrives in London, she is introduced via her aunt, to a cast of characters that include, our male leads; Detective Trevor Welles and Dr. John Harrowman.

London is the big city to Leanna, who comes from a bit more humble upbringing. She is privileged though and can steer clear of the stomping grounds of the East End Murderer. Not so the unlucky victims, the prostitutes, that are brutally butchered. Scotland Yard must through a long standing tradition of police work out the window and incorporate new techniques as they realize this wicked killer is one step ahead of them, literally at times. From the concept that you caught the criminal and justice was served, it was a new idea to have to try to solve the crime first, using very new forensic medicine. Old detectives clashed with the young inspectors who brought these new ideas to light, but in the end, it was all the same, justice had to be served. Even the Queen herself want an end brought to these dreadful crimes.

What makes this novel stand out above others is the incredible way that Wright blends historical facts into a fictional story, she weaves a plot that draws the reader in and keeps them there. Her characters are not flat names on a page, but become people you feel invested in, thus well rounded, and craftily developed. I cannot lie this is one of those books that keeps you glued to the pages, if I was reading at night I easily found myself putting off going to sleep, just to read another page and usually a few more pages on top of that. This book is simply that good.

City of Darkness is the first book in Wright's City of Mystery series, and I know I will be picking up that second one and enjoying it as well.

Kimberly says

Interesting take on Jack the Ripper. I never guessed who the Ripper was, at least in this author's opinion. I liked the story about the Bainbridge family, with the throwing away of normal customs for 1888. It was a nice mixture of fiction with known facts. I liked the info on early forensics, as well. Was a little slow at the beginning, but did pick up, which is why I went with only 3 stars.

Polstar says

I SO wanted to love this book. I've lived in London over half of my life and am fascinated with this city - especially during the Victorian era. Like a lot of people, I am also slightly fascinated by the Ripper murders. So this book should have been perfect for me.

The good bit - I managed to finish it! So that's not a bad thing because I often stop reading a book as soon as it starts annoying me. However there were elements of this book that kept me reading. Most of the characters were engaging enough to make me want to find out more about them and I like to read books that explore that era and the murders.

Unfortunately I can't give this book more than 2 stars ('it was ok') because there were a couple of things that really irritated me about it.

Firstly the inconsistencies in the dialogue. Sometimes it felt as if the characters were in Victorian London and others they were sitting in Starbucks in 21st Century USA. A writer needs to give their characters a consistent voice and vernacular for you to believe them and engage with them, unfortunately I didn't feel as though this was true.

Secondly, and this may seem petty to some, the Americanisms of the language really got to me after a while. I know that this book must have been researched so why did the author use 'sidewalk', 'trash' and describe people as traveling 'blocks'? If I was reading a book set in America then fine, but Victorian London?

This was an interesting premise and the 'real' Ripper in the story surprised me (although we all know it's Tumblety right?). So it was ok. Just that. Ok.

mzbeastle says

The author, in my opinion, did a good job capturing the "feeling" and atmosphere of late 1800s London. I enjoyed the twist on this "Ripper" tale, unpredictable (although I did feel like I was being led to a false conclusion) and well written. Kept my attention!

Michelle says

Good book

You people should just read this book yourselves and write your own review on this novel yourself and I really enjoyed reading this book very much so. Shelley MA