



The Drowned Girls

Loreth Anne White

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He surfaced two years ago. Then he disappeared ...

But Detective Angie Pallorino never forgot the violent rapist who left a distinctive calling card—crosses etched into the flesh of his victim’s foreheads.

When a comatose Jane Doe is found in a local cemetery, sexually assaulted, mutilated, and nearly drowned, Angie is struck by the eerie similarities to her earlier unsolved rapes. Could *he* be back?
?

Then the body of a drowned young woman floats up in the Gorge, also bearing the marks of the serial rapist, and the hunt for a predator becomes a hunt for a killer. Assigned to the joint investigative task force, Angie is more than ready to prove that she has what it takes to break into the all-male homicide division. But her private life collides with her professional ambitions when she’s introduced to her temporary partner, James Maddocks—a man she’d met the night before in an intense, anonymous encounter.

Together, Angie and Maddocks agree to put that night behind them. But as their search for the killer intensifies so does their mutual desire. And Angie’s forays into the mind of a monster shake loose some unsettling secrets about her own past . . .

How can she fight for the truth when it turns out her whole life is a lie?

The Drowned Girls Details

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From Reader Review The Drowned Girls for online ebook

CD {Boulder Blvd} says

Loved this!

I think what I loved the most was....everything. This book has an excellent cast of characters who are really fleshed out. From the leading characters of Angie and Maddocks, to the police team they work with, to the political "bigwigs", to the suspects and "persons of interest" in the case. There are a number of intriguing characters.

Angie works sex crimes and this is a particularly gory case. The way the crimes are discovered and the clues that are worked through, I was totally captivated by this book. The relationship aspect of Angie and Maddocks was well done with a nice balance between their relationship and the case. I really liked Maddocks - definitely one of the good guys.

My only negative is that I have been getting tired of the lead female cop being on such a self-destructive path within a police department and with her colleagues. At the beginning of the book, Angie was very insular, non-communicative and with a very controlling attitude. On the flip side, her character has a really interesting back story (explaining why she is the way she is) that was well woven into the plot and I really appreciated it. I also liked that in addition to the depth that her character was developed, she also matured and started to realize she needed to be more of a team player.

Throughout this book I had a level of revenge anticipation. There were definitely some political types that I wanted to see get their comeuppance.

I can't wait to see what happens in the next book in the series.

Thanks to NetGalley and Montlake Romance for an opportunity to read and review an ARC.

Malina Skrobosinski says

Loreth has done it again! This book is simply fantastic!

I've said it before and I'll say it again, where's the movie deals Loreth? This is that nail-biting, edge of your seat, can't wait to finish it kind of novel. As Pallorino and Maddocks close in on The Baptist I felt my heart racing, my breathing became rapid. I couldn't keep it together, the suspense had me. There were moments in this book where I gasped out loud, chuckled to myself, cried... you will feel all the emotions of a good read.

There's something to be said for Loreth Anne White's writing style. It just pulls you in. Her ability to set the scene takes you there, and you're truly along for the ride. *"As he ran, his beam bounced off trees. Shadows loomed and ducked and darted. Mist sifted through the trunks like tattered wraiths, alive, grasping for him, then retreating. A sense of the vastness of this place--the sheer size and scope of this old-growth forest--pressed down on him. No humanity for miles and miles. The trail started to rise, the incline becoming severe as he reached a rock knoll. The sound of surf grew louder."* In this moment I imagined myself there... as if I were Maddocks, all alone, fear and adrenaline pumping through me.

The Baptist made Alfred Hitchcock's, Norman Bates look relatively normal comparatively. The ever growing twist, not knowing who the serial killer, The Baptist, could be keeps the reader interested. Just when you think you have it figured out... guess again. Early into the novel we get a small glimpse into the mind of The Baptist, only understanding his affinity for young women, who seemingly lead secret lives. As the novel progresses The Baptist devolves and we start to learn more and understand his desires and the inner workings of the twisted mind behind this serial killer. As the police close in on him, The Baptist realizes that he can no longer go through with his plans and panic sets in. *"Panic is like a wild horse without the jockey of logic to rein it in."* It's only then that the true horror begins for detectives Maddocks and Pallorino.

There's more to this novel than just the classic cat and mouse game of that of police and serial killer. There's a story within a story. Loreth does a great job with character development and dialogue. You connect to these characters, you associate yourself with them. The dialogue is real and you can imagine these people in your life one way or another. We begin to learn the story behind Angie and why she's never felt connected to the people in her life, her parents, her colleagues, she's never had many friends to amount to anything. She's closed herself off, suppressed emotions and hasn't allowed herself to feel love, to grieve, only feeling pain. The only thing numbing the pain is her insatiable lust. Lust that soon leads to a world of trouble for Angie.

This is just the first novel in the trilogy and I'm hooked. I can't wait to learn more about Angie's life and that of the other characters and see what new mysteries await them. Loreth has brought life to these characters and I find myself rooting for them all the way.

I received this book through NetGalley for my honest review.

♥Rachel♥ says

4.5 Stars

The Drowned Girls is an atmospheric, dark, and captivating mystery. Add in the chemistry filled romance between Angie and Maddocks and you have another win from Loreth Anne White.

We're launched into Angie Pallorino's life as she's on the prowl for anonymous sex. This is her escape of choice ever since losing her partner and a three year-old victim on the same tragic night. The encounter is passionate and brief, but ends up being not as anonymous as Angie would've liked, because the next day Angie finds out her she's working with the man, James Maddocks, at the Victoria Metro Police Department. The awkward situation takes a back seat (sort of) to the troubling case Angie has landed, because her newest case bears striking similarities to two brutal rape cases she was unable to close. It soon becomes apparent that this sicko is back and upping his game. Angie and Maddocks struggle to catch this guy before he grabs up a new victim, while dealing their growing attraction.

Angie is complex, a little prickly, and flawed, but she's a likable character. Her actions and reactions were understandable making it easy for me to form an attachment to her, and hope everything worked out. Angie is distrustful of Holgerson, her new partner, and initially of Maddocks, and has every reason to be considering the blowback from the department after losing her partner. Angie's family life and past are a whole other story, and I had my suspicions early on about what had happened. Her past will continue to be a factor in the next story.

Holgerson, Angie's partner in the sex crimes unit, reminds me of Detective Stephen Holder in the TV series

The Killing. A great secondary character I'm sure we'll learn more about in the future.

James Maddocks was every bit a main character as Angie, IMO, and I just loved him! How could I not love a man who rescues a three-legged scruffy terrier?! Angie and Maddocks were a great team, even with some of the friction they had trying to feel each other out, they were in sync with each other as they investigated, interrogated suspects, and slowly got close.

The setting of Victoria, British Columbia in winter was eerie and beautiful; brought to life through Ms. White's vivid descriptions that gave a sinister edge to the mysteries at play. I must warn that the crimes described were graphic and gruesome at times, but not any more than you'd get from a Criminal Minds episode.

The Drowned Girls is a thrilling, addictive mystery, with many interesting layers and side stories. The multiple POVs completely worked, IMO, and I enjoyed every viewpoint. Well, maybe except for the killer's. The Drowned Girls is a tie for my favorite Loreth Anne White story or at least a close second to **In the Waning Light**. While this main mystery was solved parts of Angie's past is still up in the air. I know she won't be able to stop until she has all the answers. I can't wait to get my hands on the next installment!

A copy was kindly provided by Montlake Romance via Netgalley in exchange for an honest review.

This review is also posted at The Readers Den.

Mary Beth *Traveling Sister* says

I just loved this book. This author is a new author for me. I will be reading more of her books. It is very well written. It is a very dark, gritty, and twisty thriller. It kept me on the edge of my seat. The intrigue kept me on my toes the entire time and even if I had many pieces of the puzzle, I couldn't figure out how exactly they connected to make the whole picture. There were several storylines in this book and, in my opinion, there were all captivating. I just couldn't stop reading it. It was so suspenseful and a great turn pager.

The author did a great job in the character development of the characters, and a serial killer that you couldn't figure out who they were till the end. I can't even begin to describe how much I loved Angie. She is very brave and smart. She acts impulsively with her anger issues, and wants to have control. She and her partner, Maddox make a great pair of detectives. Each dealing with their own issues, they're both very interesting. I enjoyed following with them as they followed the clues to track down one of the most scariest sexual predators.

Detective James Maddocks has picked up his life and moved to be closer to his daughter, Ginny. James and Angie meet under some very unusual circumstances. When they learn who the other is, it comes as quite a shock. There is a killer on the prey and Angie is determined to catch this freak who is torturing and killing young teenagers. Little does she know, this case goes far deeper than she ever could have imagined.

I just loved the ending in this book. It was so good. When I got close to the end I was in such awe. It was a five star ending to me. I loved every minute of it. I hope I do not have to wait long to read book two. I can't wait to read it.

I want to thank Netgalley, the publisher and Loreth Anne White for the copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

Selene says

[Multiple POVs, 3rd person. (hide spoiler)]

Lisa says

I just loved every minute of this book it got me right from the beginning & could not put it down this was a dark gritty crime thriller that sent chills up your spine, was compelling well written & the characters were so damn likable. I thought Sargent James Maddox was outstanding his presence throughout was brilliant, the author connected Maddox & Pallorino well they were like peas in a pod it worked to a T.

I wont go into the plot as there is to much going on in this book to write down lets just say there are killings girls being raped, carvings into the head genitals cut out GET MY DRIFT!! & its up to Pallorino & Maddox to solve it there is affairs between a top judge & a Mayor which tipped the plot to a higher level.

Both Maddox & Angie Pallorino have a deep passion for each other which I found made the tension rise up a level there is nothing I did not like about this book looking forward to no2 which I have already wish listed.

Just one more thing Maddox & Angie do have their demons to contend with & the writer deals with this perfectly a big 5 Star*S a must read.

Meredith says

Darkness permeates *The Drowned Girls*. Loreth Anne White creates a world filled with sick and twisted individuals who commit heinous sex crimes. Thankfully, kick-ass sex crimes investigator Angie Pallorino is there to take them down! There are some very disturbing and gruesome moments in this book, but romance, a likable crew of characters, and a three-legged dog are mixed in to counteract the darkness.

Sex crimes investigator Angie Pallorino days are filled with investigating horrible cases. At the same time, Angie is running from her own demons, and has anonymous sex to cope and stay in control. However, Angie makes a mistake when she chooses the wrong man, James Maddocks, for one of her anonymous flings. Unbeknownst her, Maddocks is her new partner and superior.

Further complicating Angie's life is her relationship with her parents. Her schizophrenic mother has recently been admitted to a mental health facility, and things concerning her childhood aren't adding up. When Angie begins having hallucinations, she fears she too is facing mental illness. She sees visions of a little girl, and repeatedly hears polish nursery rhymes. To sum things up, Angie is on the brink of disaster.

When Angie is brought in on a homicide case, all of the different facets of her life collide: her new partner, her past, and a new case all come together to reach an explosive ending.

This book kept me on my toes. I wasn't sure how things were going to play out, which I always love. I also loved the chemistry between Angie and Maddocks. But my favorite part, was Jack-O (the three legged-dog)! Looking forward to book two!

I received a copy of this book from NetGalley and the publisher in exchange for an honest review.

Melissa says

If you have yet to experience a Loreth Anne White novel, I'm here to tell you, **you're missing out**. She's proven time and again to this reader, she's not an author that skimps on the details. In fact, it's pretty apparent, especially with this storyline, she put a ton of research and thought into the psyche of her characters, the inner workings of the investigation and the underlying religious aspects; while still managing to strike a nice balance between the suspense and romance. The one caveat I feel I should mention—this isn't one I would recommend for the timid, queasy or faint-hearted. The sex, violence, gore and depravity is graphic and often grotesque—to the point it gets under your skin and may start to chip away at your sunny outlook. You'll be living and breathing *every* dark aspect of this complex investigation.

A sex crimes investigator for the last six years, Angie Pallorino is looking to get out. To make a move to the homicide unit and leave behind the sordid things she's witnessed and the recent loss of her partner. She's pretty much a badass—fierce, fearless and smart—but that's not to say she doesn't have a boatload of issues. I'm convinced at this point, there aren't many detectives that don't harbor some type of addiction, at least in the fictional world of policing, and Angie is no exception. Her drug of choice—anonymous sex.

The situation in which she meets her temporary partner, James Maddocks had to be my favorite part of the entire story (*I've mentioned I'm a total romance junkie, right?*); talk about an unexpected twist of fate. On second thought, maybe it was the phone call the next morning or the nickname she came up with for him, after failing to learn his name, that got to me. For some reason, that nickname made me laugh every time it popped up in her head and even though she chose to keep it to herself, I'm convinced Maddocks would have appreciated it.

Maddocks and Angie are partnered up on a joint task force to take down a serial killer. One they believe has escalated from rape to female circumcision and murder. There are a host of issues at play here—the fact that Maddocks has been asked to report back on Angie's conduct, the hallucinations and flashbacks that render Angie helpless at the most inopportune times and underscoring it all, the **unwavering chemistry** between the two detectives.

While the meat of this gritty story is the suspense surrounding the case, there's also a healthy side of romance that provides the balance. There's no denying Angie and Maddocks have a crazy intense connection, the question becomes—*is trying to make a relationship work worth the risk?* Honestly, let's be real for a minute though, who could resist falling for Maddocks—a gorgeous and genuinely nice guy that happens to be a fixer of sorts, rescuer of Jack-O and then there's that nickname again; can't forget about that.

The setup of the story grabbed me, held on for dear life, and pretty much demanded I do nothing else but solve this case right alongside Maddocks and Angie. They weren't the only interesting characters in this

bunch though. Kjel Holgerson (*Angie's replacement partner in sex crimes*) always seemed to have something up his sleeve and hopefully we find out just what it is in *The Lullaby Girl*, along with the answers to all of the other nagging question I have.

**Thank you to Montlake Romance and NetGalley for a copy in exchange for an honest review.*

Krystin Rachel (Here's The Fucking Twist) says

My book ish: Blog | Insta

I'm telling you right now, this book is the motherfucking shit.

Not even an exaggeration, honey.

And it's the shit for one reason. Yes, it's got murder. Yes, it's got sex. Yes, it's got a psycho serial killer. Yes, it's hitting that fine line in the level of detail. Yes, it reads like real life honesty. Yes, it's got gore. Yes, it takes place in C to the A to the N to the A to the D to the A...

Hold on, did I spell that right? *goes back to check* Yep.

CANADA!

But listen to me readers and lovers, without Detective Angie Pallorino as a lead character we would be sitting at a three star rating. That's just the truth.

Was there anything astonishing about the story line? Not really. It's interesting, but at the end of the day it's a police procedural. Extra points for taking place in Canada and getting my patriotic self a little hyped about that, because I'm always reading books that take place in the UK or the US – and quite honestly I've had just about enough of the United States at this CRAZY Trump Juncture – but, I'm pretty sure serial killers obsessed with religious bullshit has been done to death.

But do you know what's not done to death?

Serial killers obsessed with religious bullshit *who are being hunted by Angie Pallorino*.

She might be my favourite new character that I've read in a long while. She's giving you angry, damaged, ambitious and intelligent sex-vixen realness, 100% of her page time. She does not disappoint in how well thought out her psychological issues are, and how cohesive it is to the story line.

I will say there are explicit sex scenes in this one that gave me the vapours, and typically I don't really like that in my novels unless I'm specifically looking for it. Like, oh we're hunting a very dangerous psycho who could kill again at any second, but real quick let me throw it in you. No, thanks.

But the sex scenes in this actually worked for me because they were personally telling as much as they were physically telling...and they were *veryyyyyy* physically telling.

If you want to know what happens to a emotionally shut down woman when she has emotionally connecting sex for the first time, read this. I'm not saying I do or do not have experience with this because you are not my therapist, but if I were to have an understanding of that then this would have totally connected to me in a very real way.

I could have done without the nickname 'Mr. Big Dick', though.

The character bestowed with that unfortunate, but apparently measurably accurate, nickname is Angie's new partner, James Maddocks. Though he's supposed to be this enigmatic, sexy beast of a man that helps to change Angie's life a little bit, I wasn't as interested in him as I should have been considering his role. He's was kind of vague in his character development, you know besides, the size of his penis being mentioned a lot.

Personality wise he seemed kind of bland, kind of too focused on his grown ass daughter's feelings over his divorce, and kind of too focused on his divorce. He seemed emotionally distracted, so I wasn't able to connect to him or even really decide if I liked him.

That's not to say he and Angie didn't have chemistry, because....

You get it.

This book feels taken care of, like the author babied it until it was ready to fly. It's well researched in terms of the psychology and the religious aspects, but I do have some questions about the more Americanized parts of the politics and justice system. Was it done on purpose, disregarding facts? Or was it not researched? Points for wanting to set a novel in Canada, but minus points for not engaging in our different political and justice systems all the way.

Overall, the setting is dark, the story line is dark, Angie is dark and the sex is dark but somehow this book made me feel light and airy and a little turned on.

4.5 stars rounded down.

book source: Montlake Romance via NetGalley in exchange for a review.

◆ Anna's ??????g\$ ◆ says

≈ 4 STARS

I finally finished it.

It took me forever. But it's not the book. The book wasn't bad. 3.5 stars, maybe? 4 stars?

It's the bloody reading slump. At its finest.

Anyhow, some parts of the book were super engaging and some parts were... a little bit less engaging.

The plot was well-developed and interesting.
Nothing mind-blowing but still very, very good.
And I really liked the writing.

Despite the fact that this is a police procedural, there's a little bit of romance in it. The sex scenes are rare but explicit. Personally, I liked that.

The heroine is one badass chick.

She's an intelligent and strong woman and a tough detective. I love how she's portrayed as a human being, of flesh and blood, and not some superheroine with super powers and super strength. She's vulnerable. She has anger management issues and indulges in meaningless sex. I can't say she's one of my favorite heroines but I did like her.

The hero, on the other hand, is very likable but somehow 'vague'. I just couldn't read him. We don't have enough background information on him. All we know is that he has a daughter and is going through a nasty divorce.

(And he wears his wedding ring until the very end. He says it's for his daughter. A daughter who goes to *college*. The romantic in me couldn't forgive him.)

Funny thing, I wasn't blown away by this book and yet, I can't stop thinking about it. The more time passes, the more I'm convinced that I have a book hangover. And I can't wait for the next book.

Kendall says

Holy shit balls! NOW that IS what I call an excellent thriller series!

Loreth Ann White is a new author for me but I will definitely be reading more from this author! I commend Loreth for her enormous amount of talent that she has. You can tell that she thoroughly researched topics to enhance the story, characters, and overall suspense plot. But, I do have to say this is an extremely darrrrrrrk and gory read. You are living and breathing in the mind of this sick and sadistic serial killer that preys on women.

Characterization in this novel is SUPERB. Wow, I can't tell you enough how much I loved Angie Pallorino. Bad ass, smart, sassy, and independent female detective that has a strong desire to catch sexual predators. Now.... of course Angie has her own issues that are affecting her career as a detective which in my opinion... beautifully enhances the story.

We also have Angie's partner Maddocks alongside his little cute 3 legged dog Jack-0. Let's be honest... I think I fell in love with Maddocks myself multiple times..... Seriously lol.

I loved watching the unwavering chemistry between Maddocks and Pallorino. I was in awe how the author manages to put a little romance despite the heavy and dark overall tone to the story. Between the romance, characterization, and ON point gory details... I COULD not get enough of this novel.

Hold on to your hats people... because this is a series you DO NOT want to miss! This story grabbed me and I had to hold on for life until I finished this addicting read! I can't wait to dive into The Lullaby Girl!!!

5 stars!!!

Jonetta says

Detective Angie Pallorino is part of the Victoria Metro Police Department sex crimes unit and answers the call for a young woman desecrated in a nearby cemetery. She and her new partner are still finding their way with each other (mostly not) and haven't created "team" yet. She's got LOTS of baggage and being the only woman in the detective ranks doesn't make things easier. When they determine that this case has a lot of similarities to two she investigated a few years ago, both are included on a special task force created when a homicide occurs. Homicide detective James Maddocks, new to the department, is in for a rather big surprise when he's teamed with Angie.

I've seen quite a few fictional damaged female detectives over the years and Angie ranks high on that list of most flawed. Combined with her risky behaviors and tendency to be a lone ranger, she makes for a dangerous cocktail. Her relationship with Maddocks, who got her in one, was a highlight of the story as he had the ability to read and disarm her despite the boulders she constructs. The case was distressing with its sexual overtones involving young girls but captures your attention from the onset. The secondary plot related to Angie's family just made for a strongly layered story.

I enjoyed the story, especially as the author is one who has the skill to create a vivid sense of place. The weather in Victoria, British Columbia is a critical part of everything and I just felt wet and cold for the duration. I'm glad not everything was resolved by the end (not including all the critical stuff) as what's left is just intriguing. I'm looking forward to where the series leads.

(I received an ARC in exchange for an honest review)

Angela DeSilva says

I can't wait for book two.

This book was so suspenseful. I couldn't stop flipping pages. Angie is such an interesting detective. I loved her

This was a great book that I thoroughly enjoyed and plan to read more from this author.

Sarah Joint says

At over 500 pages, I doubted this book could keep the intensity going the whole time... but it did. It doesn't let up! This is a great introduction to a fascinating new character, Angie Pallorino. Like many protagonists in suspense novels, she's damaged... but her past is undeniably intriguing and she's a bit sexy too. If you prefer your mysteries to have no sex or romance, this might not be for you. There's some sweet romance, but it's also a bit dirty. It can get **a bit graphic** at times in several ways.

Great detectives are always haunted by unsolved cases... the ones who got away. For Angie, one is a rapist last active a couple of years ago. She'd never seen anything like it. Everyone was left hoping he'd died or been sent to prison for a different crime... but he seems to be back. His calling card is a cross etched on the forehead. A lock of hair taken away. These details were kept from the public, but either he's back or someone has a lot of information they shouldn't...

Wanting to move to the homicide division from sex crimes, Angie seeks to prove herself. She knows it won't be easy. She lost her partner on the job not so long ago, and many blame her for the demise of a fine detective. The tough road to her goal becomes just a little more rocky when she meets her new coworker... who happens to be the man she picked up the night before for a one time only fling. Oops.

I'm so excited to read a book with a damaged female detective who manages to still feel fresh and exciting. I'm so happy I read a lot of positive reviews about this one, which inspired me to pick it up! Looking forward to book number two. I hope it's as difficult to put down as the first.

I received a copy of this book from Net Galley and Montlake Romance, thank you! My review is honest and unbiased.

Wendy says

If the Prologue doesn't grab you I don't know what will!

The Drowned Girls, by Loreth Anne White, is thrilling, chilling suspense, with a touch of romance that I just couldn't put down.

Detective Angie Pallorino, with the sex crimes unit, has anonymous sex to not only deal with the demons of her past but to help herself stay in control. However, unbeknownst to Angie, one of her anonymous sex partners happens to be James Maddocks, her new partner. They work together to track down a horrific sexual predator and murderer while dealing with their own issues.

A unique storyline, complex and captivating characters, dangerous and intense situations, and intriguing twists and turns result in The Drowned Girls being one of my favourite novels in this genre.

This is my first experience reading any of Loreth Anne White's work. I highly recommend it and look forward to the rest of the series as well as her stand alone novels.

Thank you to NetGalley and Montlake Romance for an arc of this novel.
