
James Ellroy

The Black Dahlia (L.A. Quartet #1)

Title: The Black Dahlia (L.A. Quartet #1)

Author: James Ellroy

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Description

On January 15, 1947, the torture-ravished body of a beautiful young woman is found in a Los Angeles vacant lot. The victim makes headlines as the Black Dahlia—and so begins the greatest manhunt in California history. Caught up in the investigation are Bucky Bleichert and Lee Blanchard: Warrants Squad cops, friends, and rivals in love with the same woman. But both are obsessed with the Dahlia—driven by dark needs to know everything about her past, to capture her killer, to possess the woman even in death. Their quest will take them on a hellish journey through the underbelly of postwar Hollywood, to the core of the dead girl's twisted life, past the extremes of their own psyches—into a region of total madness.

Insightful reviews

Jim: Pretty good. I liked the reader & the basic story. I think it went on too long, though. There sure were plenty of twists & turns. I really liked the way the case was worked, none of this instant stuff I see on the TV all the time. Lots of footwork & brute concentration.

The convoluted & hidden agendas of everyone involved was interesting & very real. There was a perfect character in the entire book, but all of them were interesting & understandable. Even when I was rooting for Bucky, I half expected him to cop out (yeah, pun) & when he did, that was OK. When he didn't, it was even better.

I had a few problems with the story, but only one was big enough to really get to me. ([view spoiler](#))

All in all, it was enjoyable & I'm going on to the next one.

Steve: On January 15, 1947, the torture-ravished body of a beautiful young woman is found in a Los Angeles vacant lot. The victim makes headlines as the Black Dahlia—and so begins the greatest manhunt in California history. Caught up in the investigation are Bucky Bleichert and Lee Blanchard: Warrants Squad cops, friends, and rivals in love with the same woman. But both are obsessed with the Dahlia—driven by dark needs to know everything about her past, to capture her killer, to possess the woman even in death. Their quest will take them on a hellish journey through the underbelly of postwar Hollywood, to the core of the dead girl's twisted life, past the extremes of their own psyches—into a region of total madness.

This was an intense, wild ride of a novel. Hidden motives, questionable morals, crooked cops, double-crosses, and a spiderweb of links to crime after crime after crime make this one of the best noir books ever written, maybe even one of the best books of all genres.

I wasn't intending on reading the next book in the series, [The Big Nowhere](#), but James Ellroy is such a great writer, I'm rearranging my TBR list to accommodate the rest of the books in the LA Quartet.

Eric_W: "I want to be known as the greatest crime novelist who ever lived." Strong words from James Ellroy, whose novels combine the harsh dialogue and dark characters of [Raymond Chandler](#) and the evisceration of dirty family secrets that Ross MacDonal was so good at. The Black Dahlia takes place in Los Angeles just after the end WW II. Two officers, Mr. Ice and Mr. Fire, as they are nicknamed for their boxing styles -- they are both ex-boxers -- return to the ring for the glory of the LAPD and its tax referendum. They become friends and partners, both in love with the same woman, but that's only the beginning of the complications.

The dissected, brutalized body of a beautiful woman is discovered. Blanchard, the senior officer, takes a personal interest in the case because of the guilt he has been unable to exorcize, following the murder years before of his little sister. The case becomes a labyrinth of entanglements, however, as the two officers discover things about each other they wish they had not known. The case becomes an obsession for both. To reveal more would give away too many plot twists.

An article about Ellroy in New York (August 24, 1992) reveals that writing Dahlia must have been cathartic for him. Ellroy's mother was strangled under circumstances quite similar to those of the character in his novel. Ellroy's life has a dark side, too. His simulation of a crazy person was vivid enough to convince an army psychiatrist, who voided his enlistment in the army during Vietnam. Judging by some of the other things he did, I'm not sure if he was acting. He was in and out of jail for burglary, intoxication, and homelessness. Libraries became his only refuge, and he read constantly. He spent much of his twenties and thirties trying to shake the dual demons of alcohol and drugs, and his writing reflects the anger and intensity that his friend Joseph Wambaugh still sees in him whenever they get together. His characters are not nice people: the police anti-heroes break laws and kill people. They resemble the criminals they chase, but they are wracked by guilt. Society is corruption.

His books are wonderful reading, however, because of the intricate plots and great dialogue. But Ellroy warns, "I don't want to entertain readers. I want to shock them. I want a hellishly violent story told in hellishly violent language by a very bad man."

Chris: while I hearken to Dexter Gordon, i believe that when you shut your eyes you could nearly scent the cigarette smoke, pay attention the commotion within the nightclub, and faintly style the whiskey and think the glass on your hand. The Black Dahlia is like that. yet extra sinister. you possibly can listen Dexter's sax, yet taking a look round you notice that that the bar isn't really a pleasant position to be---the ladies within the membership are dangerous, and the boys much more so. From below each one fedora you spot eyes that diversity from callously detached to those who appraise you maliciously. And there is one set of eyes that replicate insanity and murder. Ellroy's 40's are a much cry from the wish and Crosby 40's I bear in mind from video clips I watched as a kid. they aren't at the comparable planet. Ellroy tells a story of incredible cruelty, the place cash is the single factor that counts in life, the place humans search and die for the vacancy of fame, and the place individuals are used and discarded at the streets as soon as their usefullness has expired. it's a soul-less position and any look for redemption or justice will go away you reeling in the street along with your palms in empty pockets. What a big novel. Darker than you could almost certainly imagine, after which darker still. A compelling tale with characters you are going to by no means forget. A complex, interlacing plot that left me in

awe of Ellroy's craft. i cannot think a greater written crime novel. the total time i used to be reading, I felt thoroughly immersed within the story, in Ellroy's world, and deeply feeling and pain for his outstanding characters. i do not are looking to say whatever concerning the plot. there are such a lot of surprises during this novel. Do your self a desire and stay away from spoilers and simply read....

Richard Violet: most folk are acquainted with the case of the Black Dahlia, some of the most notorious unsolved homicide instances in united states history, the place a young, lovely Hollywood starlet named Elizabeth brief is located in a vacant lot, her physique mutilated, disemboweled, and minimize in half. yet this is not a real crime book. simply as within the exceptional the massive Nowhere, the 1st booklet I learn by way of writer James Ellroy, he mixes L.A. heritage and interesting fictional characters and weaves an grand tapestry of the seedy and wicked global of 1940's Los Angeles. the radical is informed from the viewpoint of Dwight "Bucky" Bleichert, who begins the e-book as a promising new LAPD warrants officer, until eventually he will get embroiled in terms of the Black Dahlia, altering his lifestyles without end in additional methods than one, as he's swept up within the obsessive circus that the research becomes. This fixation at the case is own for the author, he additionally fell sufferer to the Dahlia's pull in actual existence within the overdue 50's after Ellroy's mom used to be brutally murdered. He grew to become eager about old violent crime and learning the homicide of Elizabeth brief grew to become a proxy for facing his mother's death. This own attachment fills the publication with actual earnestness and fervour that helped to make it a criminal offense classic. Aside from the truth that Ellroy's traditional knack for excellent wordplay is on display, probably the most attention-grabbing issues in regards to the novel is the way in which the obsession over the Dahlia is detailed, an obsession that jumps from individual to individual like a disease, consuming away at every body it touches. even supposing his accomplice jumps headfirst into the investigation, Bucky begins relatively unfazed via the murder, frustrated on the media frenzy and desirous to come back to operating warrants; catching basic undesirable men he can understand, no longer ones that reduce Glasgow smiles into beautiful girls' faces from ear to ear. yet finally he succumbs to the Dahlia's pull and falls deeper, the best way Danny does within the significant Nowhere, so deep it turns into all he thinks about. The Black Dahlia is the tale of that sort of obsession, the person who can consume away on the soul.

Nikita T. Mitchell: i am not gigantic in this entire "going green" trend, yet this day i assumed approximately something all booklet fans can do to give a contribution to society: use your library card extra often. you possibly concept I had anything shrewdpermanent to say. Sorry to disappoint yet allow me explain. My research of The Black Dahlia:-324 pages within the book-67 pages until eventually the plot starts to unfold-300 pages prior to the ebook turns into unputdownable, as i love to name itWhat does that go away us with?...approximately sixty seven pages of wasted paper and 233 pages worthy in simple terms borrowing from the library... in basic terms 7.4% (24/324) of the publication worthy procuring Granted, I in simple terms paid approximately \$5 for the publication (thanks to half.com) technically I should've in simple terms spent like forty cents. Plus take into consideration what number bushes that could've been stored if James Ellroy, the author, had easily gotten to the point. yet who is counting...?The center of the plot is predicated on a 1940's la homicide mystery. The physique of a tender lady was once present in a vacant lot mutilated, lower in half, and disemboweled. detectives, ex-boxers, tackle the case and develop into overly keen about this younger woman's

existence - and loss of life - to the purpose the place it actually destroys their very own lives. What I actually struggled with whereas examining this publication used to be the inclusion of random storylines in addition to the over the top - and ordinarily unnecessary - info that made the ebook means longer than it had to be. For instance, the 1st sixty seven pages of the unconventional are spent constructing the connection among the 2 detectives and describing their boxing past. The writer additionally over-used police jargon which merely made it tougher for me to hook up with the characters. The book's in simple terms saving grace used to be the final 30(ish) pages the place the twisted plot got here into focus. In conclusion... What I liked: the twisted secret plot What I disliked: Ellroy's lack of ability to target what was once very important to me, the reader While this booklet could be worthy examining for you mystery/suspense fans out there, I might strongly recommend that you just keep our timber and borrow The Black Dahlia out of your neighborhood library. do not permit one other wasted web page get printed. (Posted on Uptown Literatti: <http://uptownliteratti.blogspot.com/2...>)

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