



My Dark Places

By James Ellroy

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My Dark Places By James Ellroy

The internationally acclaimed author of the L.A. Quartet and The Underworld USA Trilogy, James Ellroy, presents another literary masterpiece, this time a true crime murder mystery about his own mother.

In 1958 Jean Ellroy was murdered, her body dumped on a roadway in a seedy L.A. suburb. Her killer was never found, and the police dismissed her as a casualty of a cheap Saturday night. James Ellroy was ten when his mother died, and he spent the next thirty-six years running from her ghost and attempting to exorcize it through crime fiction. In 1994, Ellroy quit running. He went back to L.A., to find out the truth about his mother--and himself.

In *My Dark Places*, our most uncompromising crime writer tells what happened when he teamed up with a brilliant homicide cop to investigate a murder that everyone else had forgotten--and reclaim the mother he had despised, desired, but never dared to love. What ensues is an epic of loss, fixation, and redemption, a memoir that is also a history of the American way of violence.

"Ellroy is more powerful than ever."

--The Nation

"Astonishing . . . original, daring, brilliant."

--Philadelphia Inquirer

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

James Ellroy's trademark is his language: it is sometimes caustically funny and always brazen. When he's hitting on all cylinders, as he is in *My Dark Places*, his style makes punchy rhythms out of short sentences using lingo such as "scoot" (dollar), "trim" (sex), and "brace" (to interrogate). But the premise for *My Dark Places* is what makes it especially compelling: Ellroy goes back to his own childhood to investigate the central mystery behind his obsession with violence against women--the death of his mother when he was 10 years old. It's hard to imagine a more psychologically treacherous, more self-exposing way in which to write about true crime. The *New York Times* calls it a "strenuously involving book.... Early on, Mr. Ellroy makes a promise to his dead mother that seems maudlin at first: 'I want to give you breath.' But he's done just that and--on occasion--taken ours away."

From Publishers Weekly

Crime novelist Ellroy (American Tabloid) was 10 in 1958 when his mother, a divorced nurse and closet alcoholic, was found strangled to death in a deserted schoolyard in California's San Gabriel Valley. The case was still unsolved in 1994, when Ellroy hired retired L.A. homicide detective Bill Stoner to investigate. In this emotionally raw, hypnotic memoir, Ellroy ventures into the murky, Oedipal depths of his lifelong obsession with sex crimes and police work, setting his mother's murder against a grisly backdrop of similar L.A. homicides, from the 1947 Black Dahlia case (the subject of Ellroy's 1987 novel *The Black Dahlia*) to the indictment of O.J. Simpson. Ellroy recounts his troubled coming-of-age: in the wake of his mother's death, he immersed himself in the Nazi literature, petty theft, voyeurism, pornography and crime fiction that pollinated his flowering "tabloid sensibility." Eventually bottoming out on booze and drugs, he sobered up in AA and moved to the East Coast to write fiction. Returning to L.A., Ellroy culls LAPD archives to reconstruct the 1958 investigation of his mother's murder. While he fails to figure out who killed her, he unravels her secretive life, exploring the dalliances and weekend binges she hid from her son and ex-husband. If Baudelaire had produced an episode of *Dragnet*, it might have resembled the feverish, staccato way Ellroy confronts his mother's ghost, re-staging her murder with creepy meticulousness and addressing her repeatedly in the second person. Ellroy's degraded tough-guy shtick at times sounds disingenuously novelistic, and it occasionally gets mired in lists of sex crimes amassed from police archives. That the book lacks the closure or catharsis it sets out to achieve, however, is just one of the hard-won lessons of this deeply disquieting glimpse into Ellroy's heart of darkness and his ongoing battle with the past. Photos not seen by PW. 75,000 first printing; BOMC and QPB selections.

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From Library Journal

In 1958, when crime novelist Ellroy (American Tabloid) was ten years old, his mother was found murdered near Los Angeles. The crime was never solved. In 1994, with the help of a retired detective, Ellroy set out to reinvestigate his mother's death. Despite exhaustive efforts, they were unable to identify the "swarthy" man last seen in a bar with Jean Ellroy. Like Ellroy's fiction, this memoir is terse and hard-boiled, treating his early, homeless life as a petty thief and substance abuser; murderers and victims; and most of all his complex feelings about his mother. Ellroy's search for her killer ultimately became a quest for his mother's true identity. A cathartic journey for Ellroy that will appeal to his readers.

-?Gregor A. Preston, formerly with Univ. of California Lib., Davis

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Frank Johnson:

As people who live in the particular modest era should be update about what going on or information even knowledge to make these people keep up with the era and that is always change and move ahead. Some of you maybe will certainly update themselves by studying books. It is a good choice in your case but the problems coming to you is you don't know what one you should start with. This My Dark Places is our recommendation to cause you to keep up with the world. Why, since this book serves what you want and wish in this era.

Evelyn Rodrigue:

Nowadays reading books become more than want or need but also get a life style. This reading behavior give you lot of advantages. The advantages you got of course the knowledge the particular information inside the book that will improve your knowledge and information. The details you get based on what kind of e-book you read, if you want drive more knowledge just go with training books but if you want really feel happy read one together with theme for entertaining like comic or novel. Typically the My Dark Places is kind of book which is giving the reader unstable experience.

Jackie Caldwell:

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Victor Green:

What is your hobby? Have you heard that will question when you got scholars? We believe that that concern was given by teacher to the students. Many kinds of hobby, Everyone has different hobby. And you also know that little person similar to reading or as studying become their hobby. You need to understand that reading is very important and book as to be the factor. Book is important thing to increase you knowledge, except your teacher or lecturer. You see good news or update in relation to something by book. Different categories of books that can you choose to adopt be your object. One of them are these claims My Dark Places.

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