



# A Dark and Stormy Murder

*Julia Buckley*

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**A Dark and Stormy Murder** Julia Buckley

**An aspiring suspense novelist lands in the middle of a real crime, in the first in a captivating new series by the author of the Undercover Dish Mysteries.**

*Lena London's literary dreams are coming true—as long as she can avoid any real-life villains...*

Camilla Graham's bestselling suspense novels inspired Lena London to become a writer, so when she lands a job as Camilla's new assistant, she can't believe her luck. Not only will she help her idol craft an enchanting new mystery, she'll get to live rent-free in Camilla's gorgeous Victorian home in the quaint town of Blue Lake, Indiana.

But Lena's fortune soon changes for the worse. First, she lands in the center of small town gossip for befriending the local recluse. Then, she stumbles across one thing that a Camilla Graham novel is never without—a dead body, found on her new boss's lakefront property.

Now Lena must take a page out of one of Camilla's books to hunt down clues in a real crime that seems to be connected to the novelist's mysterious estate—before the killer writes them both out of the story for good...

*From the Paperback edition.*

## A Dark and Stormy Murder Details

Date : Published July 5th 2016 by Berkley

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Author : Julia Buckley

Format : Kindle Edition 303 pages

Genre : Mystery, Cozy Mystery, Fiction

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# From Reader Review A Dark and Stormy Murder for online ebook

## Sarah says

First in a series.

I had high hopes for this book, looking at all the 5 star reviews (though frankly there are some reviewers out there who seem to give *everything* 5 stars...), so I am kind of disappointed.

What I liked: The main characters. I like Lena and Camilla. They clicked for me.

What I didn't like: We were threatened with a love triangle.

What I did like: It was resolved at the end of the book, rather than left to drag on, and on, and on...

What I didn't like: This was a big one. Enough that I bumped the rating to a 2 star. The mystery within the mystery was interesting, but the ending pissed me off. Mystery partly solved, but now it's a bigger mystery and it might as well have, "To Be Continued" at the end of the book.

I'm sorry, but I find "cliff-hanger" endings to be a cheap money grab. Worried your series might not continue? Need to insure that the reader picks up the next book? Leave the ending open! The reader won't mind waiting nearly a year to find out what happens next, right? Yes, yes, I will mind. A lot. Previous series that have done this have lost me for good, (I'm looking at you, Debbie Macomber!) doing exactly this.

This series has now been relegated to my library list. I will pick up the next book, and give it a chance, but I'm not paying for it.

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## Book of Secrets says

It was a dark and stormy night...

Aspiring author Lena London lands her dream job as assistant to her most favorite writer, Camilla Graham. Lena never dreamed that she'd be pulled into a real murder mystery, but that's exactly what happens when she spots a dead body not far from Camilla's Victorian home.

I enjoy books about books, and this one in particular was a delight because it was all about classic Gothic romantic suspense, and the main character getting to live inside one. Lena went full on fangirl around Camilla, which I could totally relate to.

Readers are presented with two mysteries in this book, first, the dead body Lena finds, and also, a mystery involving Camilla's brooding and handsome neighbor, Sam West. Sam's wife has been missing for a year. What happened to her? Was Sam somehow involved? Public opinion says yes, though Lena feels otherwise. I thought it was a bit strange that Lena had a fierce insta-loyalty toward Sam, to the point where she embarrasses herself in front of the police. \*shrugs\*

This was a fun read, a bit different than a typical cozy in that it leaves part of the mystery open-ended. I'm

looking forward to continuing with the next book.

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

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## **? Irena ? says**

As a vacation book, i.e. fast and not too demanding, *A Dark and Stormy Murder* is pretty good.

I liked the clear cut story of an aspiring writer who got the chance to work with her idol. I liked the setting of a small town. I liked the red herrings the author subtly used.

I think the character of her idol Camilla is too perfect, a sort of what you'd like to think about authors, but is rarely the case, but I still liked them together.

I didn't like a couple of small moments, but I understand that at least one or two of those moved something forward.

I wasn't a fan of her putting everyone in one basket or another. After meeting a couple of people in the town she concludes 'men rude, women nice'. Ridiculous.

All that aside, what I didn't like was the triangle the heroine found herself in. You see, there are two men and she ends up with the one I wouldn't pick.

That story left an opening for a cliffhanger of sorts. The main story in this book (murder mystery) is solved, but other things are left for another book.

Overall, I liked this story and I'll check the next one too.

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## **Lisa Ks Book Reviews says**

There are many things I can say about this first book in the new series by author Julia Buckley. The first thing that comes to mind? That would be . . . WOW!

A DARK AND STORMY MURDER is a brilliant mix of the feel of Agatha Christie, Caroline Keene, and also a little bit Hitchcocky, but wonderfully balanced by Julia Buckley. This extraordinary story is cozy in all senses of the word, but with a certain something that makes it stand apart.

From the third page I had already clicked with protagonist Lena London, and her friend Allison. By the end of chapter two, I was fascinated with Lena's writing hero, Camilla Graham. As I kept reading, I couldn't wait to see who I was going to meet next!

Ms. Buckley has penned an amazing story of classic mystery, suspense, and intrigue. Her writing is so on point, I could smell the rain hanging in the dark clouds. Every description pulled me further in, leading me through more than one mystery, and holding my in its grip until the wonderful conclusion. With the way this book ended, the next installment promises to be just as amazing!

Check out the back of the book for an excerpt from, THE BIG CHILI, book one in Julia Buckley's Under Cover Dish Mysteries.

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## Linda says

Aspiring writer, Lena London, receives the job offer of a lifetime--bestselling author, Camilla Graham, Lena's idol, is looking for a ghost writer to help her plot her newest manuscript. Lena and her cat, Lestrade, travel to beautiful Blue Lake, Indiana and move into Camilla's home. Les becomes quick friends with Camilla's two German Sheperds, Rochester and Heathcliff. Lena and Camilla immediately bond--two great minds think much alike and compliment one another making a great team.

This clever, fresh plot involves a mystery within a mystery. As Lena settles in and ventures out to meet townsfolk, she's told Graham House has a secret. Which it does. Several, actually. Readers will be on the edge of their seats as clues unravel and reveal what's happening behind the scenes.

Secondly, Camilla's mysterious neighbor, Sam West, has a missing wife and no idea whether she's dead or alive. As Sam and Lena realize they enjoy each other's company, Lena takes steps to find out the details of Victoria West's sudden disappearance a year ago. The story ends in a cliffhanger as Camilla and Lena decide to put their heads together to solve the mystery of the missing wife. I eagerly anticipate book two of the Writer's Apprentice Mystery series!

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## Julie says

A Dark and Stormy Murder ( A Writer's Apprentice Mystery #1) by Julia Buckley is a 2016 Berkley publication.

This first book in the series sets the tone for future installments with a solid base, interesting characters, and an ongoing investigation that will bleed over into the next release. I thoroughly enjoyed this mystery and enjoyed living vicariously through Lena. She lives out every reader or aspiring writers dream.

No doubt about it, I am definitely on board for the next installment. I can see this series becoming one of my favorites, if things continue on at this pace.

Overall, this is an excellent beginning for this new series. This book will appeal to a wide range of mystery lovers, but especially to those who enjoy clean reads and cozy mysteries.

4 stars

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To read the full review, click on this link:

<https://www.nightowlreviews.com/v5/Re...>

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## **Fred says**

A Dark And Storm Murder is the first book in the A Writer's Apprentice Mystery series.

Lena London has just gotten her dream job. Her friend, Allison, called to let her know that Camilla Graham, one of Lena's favorite authors was looking for an assistant. Lena immediately called and a week later is heading for Blue Lake, IN to start a job she had only hoped to have.

The day after arriving, Lena decides to take Graham's two German Shepherd for a walk and to take a look at the town of Blue Lake. As she begins her walk, she meets Sam West, a neighbor to Graham, who seems very unfriendly and recluse like. She soon learns that he had been accused of murdering his wife, but the police were never able to find her body or enough information to charge him. Most of the residents of Blue Lake have shunned him, but something tells Lena that he is not guilty of anything.

Then later the same day, as Lena is looking out the window of her room, she sees what appears to be a body on the beach of Blue Lake. When Camilla and Lena go down to the lake they find the lifeless body of Martin Jonas. Then strange noises begin to be heard in Graham's house, some are even enough to set the dogs on edge.

This is enough for two mystery writers to start to investigate where the strange noises are coming from and if they might have anything to do with the body of Jonas. In the meantime, Lena has begun to search the internet for information on Sam West and what might have happened to his estranged wife.

Two suspenseful mysteries to solved in this exciting new series. A little more suspense and excitement than most of the cozy type books that I read and it was quite nice to read a more serious story. Not really dark, more like dusk.

Buckley provides the readers with interesting and enjoyable characters and I hope that we will learn more about some of the local residents.

I feel there is more to learn about Sam West and am looking forward to seeing where his character goes and also with Doug Heller, a detective with the Blue Lake Police.

Most definitely will be watching for the next book in this exciting series.

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## **Ali says**

This book started well. I was really enjoying it, but somewhere along the way I started to question the protagonist's sanity. I was convinced that the explanation for her unhinged and abrupt behavior would be that the book was a novel within a novel. I thought, this must be the novel she's writing and all will be revealed in the book's final pages. What else could explain everything that happened in the span of a few short days? What else could explain a plot so unbelievable that it literally left me with a furrowed brow? Alas, it was not to be. All the final pages revealed was another mystery. I applaud the author for not pushing forward with the hint of a love triangle, but I question true love after three conversations, waffles, and a suspected murderer confessing that they followed you. Oh, I forgot - his innocence was in his eyes.

This was The ultimate Mary Sue wish fulfillment fantasy with a side of Gone Girl and I'm left wondering what could have been. Lena held so much promise until she went insane, but on the bright side she's super pretty. We know she's super pretty because just about every minor character let us know. Doug and Sam were mere caricatures, but there was room for so much more. It felt like time was wasted. There was too much space dedicated to the protagonist's crazy obsession, and make no mistake it was both crazy and an obsession, and too little time fleshing out Allison and Rhonda, and the mystery, and really anything or anyone. This entire novel was a study in too much and too little all at the same time.

I was drawn in by the idea of working for the novelist that had such a profound part in your coming-of-age. It would be like me working for Judy Blume or Richard Peck. I would be giddy to the point of stupid. However, somewhere early on this first in a series became something very different and I just didn't like it.

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## **Tina at A COZY GIRL READS AND WRITES Blog says**

review coming soon

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## **Trish says**

I liked this one a lot, too.

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## **Jonathan says**

*\*I received a free copy of this book in exchange for an honest review from Berkley and Netgalley. This title will be released on July 5. All thoughts and opinions stated in this review are entirely my own.\**

If *A Dark and Stormy Murder* is any indication, you'd better get ready because Julia Buckley is soon going to be a common name in the cozy mystery world. I loved this book so much, I absolutely couldn't put it down and I was honestly disappointed that it ended so soon.

Lena was an absolute joy to read about. She was smart, kind, and had just the right amount of snarkiness to make her funny at times. Camilla, though, was my favorite character. Even at the end of the book there's some holes in her life that I'd like filled, but I believe we'll see them filled in the next book. There's a slight love triangle happening (which is the only downpoint of the entire book) but by the end it seems to be wrapped up. Both of the love interests were equally wonderful in my opinion, so I hope the story continues on the same track to dissipate the love triangle but keep both love interests.

The setting was beautiful and different from the cozy norm. Most cozy mysteries take place in the east or in the south, and honestly it can get tiring reading about the same areas. However, I love it when I stumble a book set in the midwest, which is actually where I live. It's a nice change of pace.

The mystery was also great. There were actually two mysteries going on at the time and both were well plotted and honestly surprising. I can't wait to see where Ms. Buckley goes with the second book and the second mystery, which was left a little bit of a cliffhanger.

Overall an startlingly good first in a series book. After reading this book and *The Big Chili* I can say that I'll be following Ms. Buckley's work for awhile yet. Highly recommend!

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### **Karen says**

I just finished *A Dark and Stormy Murder* by Julia Buckley Saturday night, not only did I not want to put it down, I did not want it to end. This was one of the best books I have ever read. When I put the book on my table Saturday morning I had no idea what I was in for! The cover art perfectly captures the feel of the book and I so love it when that happens! The title is also a perfect fit, if ever there was a book that called to me based on sight alone it was this one. The double mysteries, setting, characters and working relationship between the characters is truly special and envelopes you from page one!

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### **Dawn Frazier says**

WOW!!! I won an early copy of this book, and what a treat it was. This is one of the best mysteries I have ever read. It grabbed me from page one, and didn't let go. The whole book is absolutely perfect! I loved the characters, the setting, the mystery. I hated to see it end! I hope this is one series that keeps going. This first book is so great, I could, and eventually will, read it again!

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### **Mark Baker says**

Aspiring novelist Lena London has been given the change of a lifetime, helping her idol, best-selling author Camilla Graham, polish up her newest novel. But Lena has hardly arrived in town when she finds the dead body of a young man near Camilla's house. What is going on?

There is a strong element of wish fulfillment in this novel, and I must admit I enjoyed that real life fantasy. Camilla writes gothic novels, and there are elements of those here as an homage to the genre. Even though I'm not familiar with that genre, I still spotted a few; I probably missed others, but it wasn't that big a deal to me. The characters are fun and the plot was strong. I did have some issues with the pacing at the end, but overall, I enjoyed this. It certainly left me anxious for the next one.

NOTE: I received a copy of this book in hopes I would review it.

Read my full review at [Carstairs Considers](#).

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### **Ita says**

This didn't work for me.

1. The heroine has met a suspected murderer four times and the first time he was an obnoxious ass. Now she believes he's innocent because he's so sincere and honest, because no one can *\*act\** sincere, right? Then a Cop does this suspect a favor and heroine goes nuts and throws pecans at the REALLY NICE COP. Really?

2. They find a picture of someone smiling. They cover up everything but the eyes. The eyes show FEAR. Really? If you took a picture of my eyes right now, could you see that I'm thinking REALLY???

3. An old lady sets a trap for a suspected murderer. Her plan is that if he falls into the trap, she will call the cops. Let me repeat: she's old and an amateur. She's dealing with a possible MURDERER. Needless to say, things don't go as planned. Really?

There's a to-be-continued ending, but I can see that it's going to be filled with more "really?'s" so I'm done with this author.

I see others liked it a lot, but my suspension of disbelief threshold must be a lot higher than most people.

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