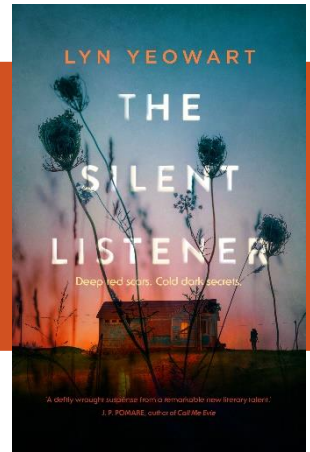




The silent listener

Lyn Yeowart



Author Background

Lyn Yeowart grew up in working-class rural Victoria in the 1970s. She completed a teaching degree at Rusden State College of Victoria and studied linguistics and literature so she could teach English as she always loved words and reading.

Lyn is a communications professional with a passion for storytelling. She has a background in journalism and public relations having worked for several prominent organisations across various industries. With a keen eye for detail and a knack for crafting compelling narratives, Lyn has a unique ability to engage and captivate audiences through her writing.

Lyn now resides happily in Melbourne.

Book Summary

Set between three timelines, the 1940s, 50s and 60s, “The silent listener” is a dark, raw betrayal of life in rural Australia. Each decade is as absorbing as the next as the story goes back and forth in time, following the Henderson family as they try to make a living on a dairy farm. Eleven-year-old Joy Henderson lives in constant fear of her father who rules with an iron hand. Despite this, decades later she returns to the farm to nurse him on his deathbed. Her sister, Ruth is also there, whispering dark words and urging revenge.

Her father confesses to Joy about a despicable crime he committed in his past. Soon after, Joy finds him dead with a belt pulled tightly around his neck.

The death of Joy’s father and his confession dredges up a cold case involving a missing little girl in the 1960s. Senior Constable Alex Shepherd who is still haunted by this case now has the chance to finally lay it to rest, but questions loom over the nature of the confession and Joy Henderson’s testimony.

Will the truth finally be revealed?

Discussion Questions

- ❖ From the beginning, Shepherd was convinced that Joy had killed George. Was it a good idea to pursue her the way he did? What did he think in the end?
- ❖ Did you like or admire young Joy? What about adult Joy?
- ❖ Joy has a rare form of synaesthesia, which is why she sees some words as images. How was this important to the novel?
- ❖ Who was responsible for what happened to Wendy?
- ❖ What motivated Vicki? Should she have gone looking through old medical records and given them to Shepherd?
- ❖ Is there a difference between what is morally right and what is legally right? How did this come into play in the novel?
- ❖ Are today's attitudes to family violence different to those of the 1940s, 1960s and 1980s? Is there less family violence these days? What are the long-term ramifications of physical and psychological violence perpetrated on children?

References

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