

Finding the Missing Peace



By Stephen G Baker

I discovered recently that “A national commission investigating loneliness in the UK in January 2017 showed that a fifth of the population privately admits they are ‘always or often lonely’.”¹

Herbert Van Zeller, 1905–1984, once wrote “the soul hardly ever realises it, but whether he is believer or not, his loneliness is really a homesickness for God”. That’s quite a statement. Loneliness is deeper than a lack of company and it affects people in all stages of life.

The following quote from an article in the Guardian newspaper gives us an insight into the loneliness that afflicts young people: “I’m 22 years old and going into my fourth year in medical school. I have been using study to escape loneliness, insecurity and anxiety.”² So here is an intelligent young woman and despite all the prospects that she has in life she is lonely.

Social media posts and images are often a cover up for the fears, anxiety and rejection that many fear. There is a real loneliness in many lives. Liz Hoggard in her article in the *Daily Telegraph* writes: “Researchers now recognise that loneliness is a serious public health issue. As a predictor of early death, it eclipses obesity. Some studies argue that it is a bigger killer than cancer or heart disease.”³

The Bible teaches that we were not designed to be solitary creatures; our social needs are deeply ingrained in our personalities. “It is not good that the man should be alone” is a classic and abiding statement of truth.⁴ At a basic level we were created to have a relationship with God as well as with other human beings. Numerous times in scripture we come across the statement: “I will be their God and they shall be my people.”⁵ In the original creation God came down and walked with Adam and Eve but sin entered and that relationship was damaged.⁶

Sin separates us from God in this life, and the next, if we fail to address our need of forgiveness and salvation. God is the source of joy, peace, contentment, justice and all the valuable things we crave for in life. Without God, we are without hope in this life.⁷ I believe that the ultimate answer to loneliness is found in a person – Jesus Christ. Life can only be lived to the full when God is involved. Jesus said “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.”⁸

1 <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/women/life/life-looks-good-surface-lonely/April-2017/>

2 <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2018/sep/09/i-have-worked-hard-at-my-studies-but-only-to-escape-loneliness-mariella-frostrup>

3 <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/women/life/life-looks-good-surface-lonely/April-2017/>

4 The Bible – Genesis 2. 18

5 The Bible - Lev. 26. 12, Jer. 31. 33, Jer. 32. 38, 2 Cor. 6. 16

6 The Bible - Gen. 3. 8

7 The Bible – Eph. 2. 12

8 The Bible – John 17. 3

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www.findingthemissingpeace.co.uk



Award-winning Wirral novelist, **Margaret Murphy**, who pens thrillers as **A.D. Garrett** and **Ashley Dyer**, recommends two books per month, across a range of styles and a mixture of new and old.

A LITTLE DEATH by Laura Wilson

Quercus, £0.99

ASIN: B009S8HJ04 (Kindle edition)



First published in 1999, *A Little Death* presents the reader with a triple murder on page two, and then leaves no room for speculation: we are told quite firmly at the outset that one of the three must have shot the others and then committed suicide. It is a testament to Laura Wilson’s storytelling skills that

she not only keeps our interest, but winds up the intrigue so that this book is hard to put down.

The narrative unfolds through the alternating perspectives of the main protagonists – Georgina, Edmund, and the admirable Ada – each voice possessing its own distinct and distinctive qualities. A childhood death is responsible for their ruined lives and doomed prospects, and what unfolds is a tale of sacrifice and selfishness, isolation and missed opportunities. Written in a deceptively sedate style, it nevertheless had me galloping through the pages to see what the characters would get up to in the next chapter.

A Little Death provides a strong sense of time and place, which has become a trademark for Wilson’s later works. Understated, witty, and sharply observed, it builds layer on layer, to a seductive and spellbinding mystery.

A FATAL INHERITANCE by Rachel Rhys

Doubleday ISBN-10: 0857524739



A Fatal Inheritance begins in post-war London. Eve Forrester, raised by a mother who seemingly disapproves of her very existence, has escaped into a loveless marriage to an overbearing prig and is now living a dismal life in a grey suburb. But the arrival of a solicitor’s letter changes all that – for Eve has come into an inheritance from a wealthy stranger, and the nature of the inheritance must remain a mystery until Eve presents herself at the office of a notary in Cannes.

The contrast between post-war austerity in London and the excesses of the Riviera could not be starker. Yet the glamour of glittering parties with film star guests, and the luxury, colour and light of the place is tainted for Eve: she finds herself surrounded by rivals and in grave peril.

Rooted in the Golden Age fiction of Agatha Christie, and reminiscent of the psychological novels of Barbara Vine, with a whiff of Patricia Highsmith’s Ripley series, *A Fatal Inheritance* is a pleasing tale of mystery, adventure, and romance.

For all lovers of psychological suspense, Margaret will be in conversation with best-selling crime author, Sharon Bolton, at Bebington library at 1pm on 22nd November (as part of ‘Time To Read’). Tickets will be available soon from the library (0151 606 2665), or check the events page at www.ashley-dyer.com

SPLINTER IN THE BLOOD, written as **Ashley Dyer**, is now available. For writing and forensics tips visit Facebook @AshleyDyerNovels Connect with Margaret on Twitter @AshleyDyer201