



Under Water

Casey Barrett

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“Here be the beginnings of a superb series.”
—Ken Bruen, author of the Jack Taylor series

Duck Darley should have been a winner. Once a competitive swimmer destined for Olympic gold, he drank away his gilded youth and followed his fraudster father’s footsteps into prison. Barely scraping by as an unlicensed private investigator, Duck now chases down cheating spouses for the same Manhattan elite who once viewed him as equal, and drowns bitter memories with whatever fills his glass.

Duck’s lost glory days resurface when he’s tasked with finding the teenaged sister of a former teammate turned Olympic champion. Privileged Madeline McKay vanished over Labor Day weekend, leaving behind a too-perfect West Village apartment and a promising athletic career of her own. Duck thinks he’s hunting for a self-destructive runaway—until Madeline’s film student ex is savagely murdered, and the media spins her as the psycho who killed him.

As Duck searches for Madeline, he’s plunged back into the dark underbelly of Olympic swimming—a world rife with wild lies and terrible violence. And he soon learns that no matter how hard he tries to escape his past, demons still lurk beneath every surface . . .

Under Water Details

Date : Published November 28th 2017 by Kensington

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Author : Casey Barrett

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Genre : Fiction, Mystery

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From Reader Review Under Water for online ebook

Kristine says

I am tired of all private detectives having drinking problems and I guess the added opiate addiction was supposed to be a variation on a theme...so some points for originality. At the end of the story he is trying out sobriety which might be more interesting so I'll give the next one a chance.
Other than that it was a good story.

Yukari Watanabe says

I obtained signed ARC at BEA in June.

The author Casey Barrett was a competitive swimmer and a member of the Canadian Olympic swim team in 1996. He later co-founded New York City's largest learn-to-swim program IMAGINE SWIMMING. He also won three Emmy Awards for his writing work on NBC's coverage of the Olympics Games.

Barrett introduces an amateur private investigator Duck Darley who once was an elite swimmer like Barrett. Duck was destined for Olympic gold, but he became dropout and drunk instead. He was asked to find a missing girl. That brings him back to the swimming world he left 20 years ago.

Barrett's debut mystery has so many details only elite swimmers (and their parents) especially affluent ones know. As I briefly mentioned it to Barrett at BEA, I was once a swim parent. And, we witnessed a similar scandal portrayed in this mystery. As one character describes in the novel, it's almost epidemic. But, while you are in that world, it's very hard to speak up. I applaud Barrett for bringing up this serious issue.

I also applaud Barrett for making the protagonist and his partner Cass interesting. They are broken human beings, but readers care about them. Barrett did well with other characters, too. The plot felt a bit too predictable for me, but it's because I read way too many crime novels.

It's obvious that this will be a series and it will also be a story of Duck and Cass. I'm looking forward to the next book

Brucie says

competent writing, story of arrogant selfish lucky dick (private), did not get my sympathy, good murder mystery with lots of bad actors.

Via says

Page turner

Cin says

I really enjoyed reading this novel. This is definitely a page turner. Great story line. I would recommend this novel to my friends.

I received a free ARC of this book from the Goodreads First Reads program. Thanks a lot for sending me this book!

Robert Parks says

Pretty good for a first novel. It was very nice to read a thriller with a swimming theme, since I swam for so long and now coach.

Taylor says

I sought this book out, and it did not disappoint. Duck is a fascinatingly flawed protagonist. I thought this case would be a bit more straightforward, but it was twisty from beginning to end. I loved the NYC settings; Living on the UES I'm familiar with a lot of the locales, and loved imagining Duck walking the same streets I walk every day. It was also a very interesting glimpse into the world of competitive swimming, an activity I have never really thought about. The final reveal at the end was well worth the investment in these characters. I look forward to more trouble with Duck in future novels.

Sandra says

Good story, somehow made more interesting because of the author's credits!

John McKenna says

Under Water

Mysterious Book Report No. 341

by John Dwaine McKenna

The MBR is ever on the lookout for debut authors with arresting characters, compelling plots and above-average wordsmithing talent. When we find one, we do our best to alert all of you, so that together, we can read and enjoy the writer and character as they grow. Those types of people are hard to find, and when we do, it's cause to celebrate . . . so put your party hat on, turn the TV off and fire-up the La-Z-Boy. It's time to read.

Under Water, (Kensington Publishing Corp., \$25.00, 309 pages, ISBN 978-1-4697-0968-4) by Casey Barrett, is a great summer read. It's a dynamic first novel featuring a wise-cracking, tough and young, ex-competitive swimmer who was destined for Olympics Gold. Then, his father disgraced the family by

committing financial fraud and going to prison. In a riches-to-rags story, his son Lawrence known as “Duck” Darley—destitute now—begins drinking, dealing drugs and quits the team, then watches as one of his teammates goes on to win four Olympic gold medals. Duck, meanwhile, goes on, to deal a little dope that somehow became a lot of dope when I wasn’t looking. At age twenty, Duck gets busted with a couple of pounds of weed and goes away for a couple years for possession with intent to distribute. Once he gets paroled, he becomes a high-functioning alcoholic and pill-popper, who makes his living by finding things. He’s not a PI. That’s passé. Instead, sort of like a superhero for hire, he’ll find out if your spouse is cheating, for example, with whom, where and how . . . and take pictures. Now, more than a decade later, the mother of his old teammate contacts Duck to hire him to find her missing daughter, Madeline. She’s eighteen, rich, a talented swimmer . . . and self-destructive. She’s been missing for a week and Duck thinks it’s just another case of a spoiled, bratty runaway. Then her roommate turns up savagely murdered and Maddie, as she’s known, becomes the primary suspect in the media. The search soon turns deadly. Duck is attacked and nearly beaten to death as the case sucks him ever-deeper into the morass of Olympic swimming, where lies and violence lie just below the surface, and every one of the competitors will do whatever it takes to gain the edge. Duck didn’t win any medals, but he’ll win you over with his actions and flat-out bad-assivness. He’s a winner!

Kerry Pickens says

I read a lot of mysteries, so as far as this genre goes this was decent writing for a first time author. There were several things that put me off about the book, the first being that one of the main characters is a professional dominatrix I find that revolting. Not to mention that I am Jewish, and there is reference to an S&M event with a Orthodox rabbi which is even more ridiculous. I don't understand why this needs to be a theme of this book. Also the main character in the book is a alcoholic pill popper, and the amount he ingests would put most people in a coma. Not very likable characters.

Shanna Hale says

Pretty good. Fast paced from page one, with lots of detail into the world of competitive swimming. Duck is not the most likable character, but that's also part of his charm. His heart is really in the right place, even if his addictions take over more than not. His sidekick is one of the more interesting characters I have read. A dominatrix detective? Why yes, she is. This story really shows the differences between the haves and the have-nots, and the haves who have fallen from grace. Looking forward to what Casey Barrett comes out with next.

Irene says

Received a copy from Goodreads Giveaways.

Interesting characters, even though they are somewhat broken. May be a touchy subject for some. The ending was somewhat disturbing, but nevertheless, I still enjoyed reading this book.

Thought it was well written and well worth the read. Would like to read more about Duck Darley and Cass.

Raymond says

If you like Ken Bruen's Jack Taylor books, you'll probably like this. Protagonist is seriously flawed, drinking and drugging too much, but he manages to make progress notwithstanding the brutal beatings he suffers.

Kendra Richerson-Balzer says

It's a great book. A little dark and rather bizarre but still well written and entertaining!

★Sunshine★ says

I didn't realize this was a debut novel when I requested it and I still wouldn't know if I hadn't gone to Barrett's page to see what other works he has to offer. I'm really impressed with this novel and I'm excited that it's a first in series. The next book, *Against Nature*, is due out next year and I'm already looking forward to it.

This was an excellent book. I thought the story was interesting and the characters well-done. The writing was engaging. Well done, Mr. Barrett.
