

Review of Long Bright River, by Liz Moore, read by Allyson Ryan.

I read (listened to) this book during the pandemic when I was starved for good reads and also good audiobooks. One of the reasons that I chose it was the location in which the book took place....the Kensington section of Philadelphia. I taught in this area for many years and all of the street names, locations and descriptions were jarringly familiar.

The book explores the life of two sisters, estranged for some time, whose lives are totally divergent. Mickey is a Philadelphia policewoman, Kasey an addict living on the streets of Kensington. There have been a string of unsolved murders of young women, and it is during this time that Kasey disappears. Mickey's life takes on a new purpose as she obsessively searches for her missing sister and deals with the unseen forces that are at work in the police department.

This book takes a deep look at some of the horrible and hopeless conditions in which many homeless addicts find themselves, and what they do to survive. It also shines a light on some of the more unsavory members of the police force and enables the reader to understand just how tangled some of these issues have become. Even though it is a work of fiction, we are only too aware of how close to the truth this novel is.

I was riveted by Mickey's determination and grit, even in the face of disciplinary action and great danger to herself. This is something that will keep the reader listening and there were times when I just couldn't take off my headphones as I wanted to see what happened next. The book isn't doom and gloom, but a glimpse into the lives and circumstances in which the main characters find themselves and how they are able to find resolution to the many issues that face them.