

73 DOVE STREET by Julie Owen Moylan

Published by Penguin Books

My latest book recommendation is '73 Dove Street' by Julie Owen Moylan. An historical thriller set in the 1950s, it centres around the occupants of a London boarding house, whose lives are shattered by the arrival of a new tenant – one with a dark secret.

MY REVIEW

When Edie Budd arrives at Phyllis Collier's run-down London boarding house, she brings with her a terrible secret that could affect them all. However, Edie is not the only one in the house harbouring secrets.

Phyllis herself is trying to forget a traumatic incident in her past, made even more humiliating by her husband's infidelity with a former tenant. Then there is Tommie, Phyllis's other tenant, who is leading a double life. During the day she cooks and panders to the whims of an eccentric old lady, while at night she gives in to her addiction for seedy Soho nightlife – including a man who takes what she willingly offers but gives nothing back in return.

At first, the three women avoid interacting with each other, but as Edie's past begins to catch up with her, the others are reluctantly drawn into her web of lies – especially Tommie who, by helping Edie, must now consider the course of her own future.

As I was given this book to read by a friend, I was not sure what to expect. However, I soon found myself fully absorbed in its intriguing storyline and interesting characters.

There are two timelines running parallel to each other, which alternate throughout the book. The first begins in London, October 1958, and follows the chain of events set in motion by Edie's arrival at the boarding house. The second begins five years prior to Edie's arrival, which describes the events leading up to her desperate decision to seek lodgings in such an obscure and dilapidated establishment.

As the two timelines begin to merge and the full extent of Edie's situation is revealed, the lives of the three women suddenly collide, leading to a dangerous discovery for Edie, a surprise reunion for Phyllis and a potential life-changing decision for Tommie.

THE AUTHOR

Julie Owen Moylan was born in Cardiff and has worked in a variety of jobs, from trainee hairdresser and chip shop attendant at sixteen to business management consultant and college lecturer in her thirties. She then returned to education to complete her Master's degree in film, before going on to complete a further Master's degree in creative writing. Julie is an alumna of the Faber Academy's Writing a Novel course. She lives in Cardiff with her husband and two cats. Julie can be found on Twitter: @JulieOwenMoylan

'73 Dove Street' is published by Michael Joseph (part of the Penguin Random House Group), and is available in ebook, paperback, hardcover and audiobook format from Amazon. It is also available in paperback and hardcover from Waterstones, W H Smith and Foyles.