

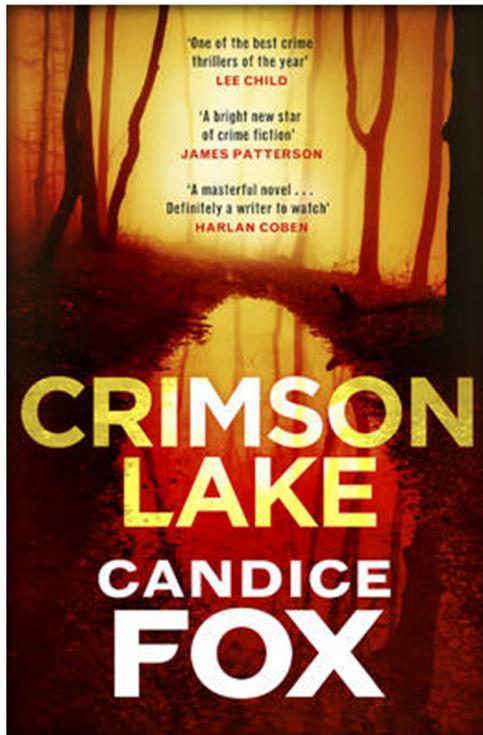


Helping you choose
your next book



LoveReading Reader reviews of **Crimson Lake** by Candice Fox

Below are the complete reviews, written by LoveReading members.



Nicola Kingswell

An edge-of-your seat page turner with three mysteries rolled into one.

On his release after the false conviction for the rape of a young girl, ex-cop Ted Conkaffey sets up residence in Crimson Lake, an outback town near Cairns, hoping to lie low and stay out of trouble. Ted's attorney recommends that he contact local private investigator, Amanda Pharrell, herself having served time for a murder. Amanda and Ted team up to investigate the disappearance of a local writer, Jake Scully. In unravelling the truth behind Jake's disappearance, Ted and Amanda end up solving their own cases, while under the watchful, and hateful, eyes of the angry

local residents.

'Crimson Lake' is a fabulous fast paced read, entwining three mysteries in one great novel. *The cast of characters are interesting and varied, including a sexy reporter, an expert pathologist, lunatic fans, emo kids and some nasty cops. The setting of the Australian outback is a character in itself with the heat and the rain and the crocodiles. I loved Candice Fox's writing style. It kept the story flowing with plenty of twists, turns, red herrings and hooks to keep you guessing. Can't wait to read more from her!*

Catherine Hogwood

A uniquely intertwined crime novel, expertly written, with characters hiding from themselves as well as others.

This crime novel will leave you guessing until the end! The main character, Ted, an ex-police officer moves to Crimson Lake after leaving prison suspected of a horrific crime against a young girl. He hopes to live out life hiding from the rest of the world and the judgement of other people. However, his path crosses with another ex-con, Amanda, who encourages him to join her on solving a missing person's case.

The unique thing about this book is that both main characters, Amanda and Ted, have unsolved crimes linked to them. Whilst they work together to try to solve the case of a missing author they learn more about each other's cases, although neither want to discuss their past.

I loved the way the characters each had their own associated crimes and pasts to confront along the way. It is almost like three crime cases intertwined.

I would recommend this book to those readers who like crime fiction with a twist!

Cathy Small

*You wouldn't think that 6 minutes could have such an impact on someone's life. **Meet Ted Conkaffey who was a police officer until he stopped in a bus stop beside 13 year old Claire Bingley.***

*Following a row with his wife, Ted just needed to get away for a few hours. But this was about to be the biggest mistake of his life. He is accused of abducting a young girl from a lone bus stop. He is innocent but no one believes, he spends time in prison until he is released after limited evidence so he tries to start a new life. He arrives in Crimson Lake but gets caught in a private investigators world investigating other crimes but his past will continue to find him and no one has forgotten the heinous crime he was accused of. **His story unfolds with no one he can trust except convicted killer Amanda. Will the truth ever be told only time will tell.***

Angela Rhodes

***Candice Fox is an exciting new voice from Australia** and has won an award for her book 'Hades' in 2014.*

'Crimson Lake' is different, as there is more than one crime Ted was a Detective until the day he is accused / but not convicted of abducting 13 year old Claire Bingley, last seen standing near Ted's parked car at a bus stop,.

Amanda Pharrell is a private investigator and she like Ted has a dark past, only she was convicted, convicted of murder and now the two have teamed up to investigate the whereabouts of missing writer Jake Scully. Only Mr Scully has dark secrets and here in the steamy, croc infested wetlands of Crimson Lake, it's not only the crocs that are dangerous, so are some of the people, and not just the everyday folk..

If you make a mistake, there is nowhere left to hide...

Sabine Little

A slow burner with complex relationships - one of the best crime novels I've read in a long time. *I found the book a slow read to start with, but it very quickly grew on me. It's been a long time since I warmed to a protagonist like I warmed to Ted Conkaffey – among the long list of crime fighters in the literature, he is something genuinely new. His classic case of “wrong case, wrong time” happens before the book begins, told in occasional flashbacks. Candice Fox artfully intertwines three cases, and Ted Conkaffey conveys a rather realistic sense of both futility and perseverance, as he tries to hold on to his life, his values and his dignity. His encounters with “the world” seem utterly believable, and add a depth to the book, beyond being simply a very readable crime novel. Amanda is harder to like: like Ted in the book, I found her in turns annoying, frustrating and disarmingly vulnerable. Candice Fox has a gift for fleshing out even minor characters very quickly, bringing out their essence in a way that makes you remember them. I'm very glad I got to discover her work, and I will keep an eye out for her future books for sure!*

You can follow Sabine on Twitter: @sabinelittle

Sheila Dale

Well written and very readable thriller, hope for more from this author.

This is the first Candice Fox book I have read and I have mixed feelings about it. The characters are well defined but a strange bunch! We have a convicted murderer, now a private investigator, who may or may not be guilty, a possible paedophile ex-cop, a couple of crooked cops, a dead author with a most unpleasant wife and child and so on. It would have been nice to have a few 'normal' people thrown into the mix and a little bit less going on as the book is effectively trying to solve all three crimes. The only light relief came from the pet

geese.....

The ending was good and neatly tied up all the loose ends although I couldn't really see how any of them got there! Having said that I did enjoy the book and found it very well written and readable and will look out for other books by this author. If you like thrillers give it a go.

Linde Merrick

'Crimson Lake' is such a masterfully constructed thriller that I found I didn't want to put it down. *The interplay between the two main characters, hoping to rebuild their shattered lives in this remote, crocodile-infested town in northern Australia, is skilfully drawn out. Ted Conkaffey, a detective accused but not convicted of the brutal abduction of a teenage girl, is trying to come to terms with his ruined life and looking to overcome his notoriety. Amanda Pharrell, convicted and released from jail for the murder of another teenage girl 10 years previously, is working as a private investigator, tracking lost souls in the wilderness. Their joint investigation into the disappearance of a local celebrity author and Ted's clandestine delving into Amanda's conviction are played out against a backdrop of suspicion, hatred and malice and brought to surprising, but satisfactory denouements.*

Tanya Thurling

I must admit that before this book I'd never even heard of Candice Fox. Now I've finished it I'm wondering why on earth not!

So the story is about detective Ted Conkaffey who one day went to work as usual, only to end up on the wrong side of the interview table accused of a terrible crime. He spends a rough couple of months in prison but the charges end up dropped because of insufficient evidence. He retreats to Crimson Lake with his life in ruins and there he meets Amanda, a private investigator. They end up working together, two ex-convicts, to try and piece together exactly what happened to a high profile author who's gone missing.

So the story isn't as fast paced as I usually like but at no point in the book did I find myself thinking 'oh there's nothing happening!' You've basically got three stories in one. Ted and Amanda working together to find the author, Ted's back story and Amanda's back story. If I'm honest it was Amanda's story I was desperate to know. She's quite a character. OK let's be honest slightly nuts. But you can't help loving her. Her direct attitude, the way she loves to rhyme, and

*the fact that she's a genuine crazy cat lady! Did she really do the terrible thing she was accused of? Did Ted? He seems like a nice guy and the more you read and the more you see how badly he's treated, you can't help but feel sorry for him but does he deserve it? Only one way to find out. **Read it. You won't be disappointed.***

Julie Bertschin

A great page turning mystery which illustrates how difficult it is to overcome being in the public eye for a crime for which you are not responsible. A great read!

Crimson Lake is the setting for this gripping tale, where Ed, an ex-cop escapes to after being wrongly accused of abducting a young girl. His lawyer is the only one to believe in his innocence and suggests he meet up with Amanda Pharrell who herself has been through a similar experience, having been convicted of a murder of a young girl many years ago, having served her sentence and trying to make a new life for herself in the scrutiny of the public eye. Ed joins Amanda in investigating the murder of a local author, Jake Scully, whose body is missing, the only evidence being a piece of his hip bone found in the stomach of a crocodile. Whilst they delve deeper into the secret life that the author hid from his own family, both Ted and Amanda learn more about the crimes that each of them have been accused of and how the truths about those events have yet to be uncovered. As they uncover the truth behind Jake's death they become closer, learning that they have both been the victim of circumstances beyond their control. The injustices they have both suffered work to bring them together, ultimately finding a sense of peace.

Dana Captainino

Set in Australia, the novel begins with the abduction and attack on a young girl. The consequences of this changes the life of the main protagonist - former Detective Ted Conkaffey irrevocably. He is accused, serves in prison but is never convicted and decides to escape the vicious tongues and reactions of his colleagues and community. He goes to the crocodile swamp infested region in Cairns - Crimson Lake.

Here he hooks up with private investigator Amanda Pharrell whose own criminal history makes her a pariah in the local community. They begin working on the intriguing case of the disappearance of local author Jake Scully.

As the case progresses Ted himself becomes a victim of hate crime as the local people learn his story.

Undeterred the two outcasts pursue Jake's story relentlessly scratching and chiselling beneath the surface until the shocking truth emerges.

There is a lot of hatred and judgement in this novel with the recurring themes of children sinned against and sinning. But - there is also a gentle nurturing side - especially featuring 'Woman' and her offspring. The innocents and the protectors once again. Ultimately though Candice Fox challenges our sense of the role children play in their relationships with others and how far from a general sense of normality this can stray.

Crimson Lake is also the only book I have read which features man-eating crocodiles.

Edel Waugh

When Ted Conkaffey, former detective is accused but not convicted of a crime, the only person just about likely to give him a chance in a work place was former criminal herself Amanda Pharrell who runs a detective agency. The crime Ted was accused of was heinous, so a fresh start and new career is just what he needs.

*Their work relationship together is amusing, they both have their own issues and neither of them are forgetting their past anytime soon but they can tease each other to a certain degree and they have each other's back. When working on their first case together we really get to learn more about their past and what drives them, as well as **a really great mystery surrounding a missing author whose disappearance becomes unsettling. If you enjoyed Stephen King's 'Misery' then check this out!***

Rachel Bridgeman

An epic thriller, a race against time to find a missing author overshadowed by an unsolved crime...brilliant storytelling and plotting.

More than a straight out thriller, this hunt for a missing person has the backdrop of crocodile infested Australian swamps that create an atmosphere which becomes as much a character in 'Crimson Lake' as its leads.

The unreliable (or is he?) Det Conkaffey who has been unable to escape his past, a private detective with no scruples join forces to find a missing author.

A devious and entangling read, I really enjoyed it and would definitely read more!

Many thanks Lovereading for this proof copy.