

## LoveReading Reader reviews of After The Silence: An Inspector Rykel Novel by Jake Woodhouse

Below are the complete reviews, written by LoveReading members.

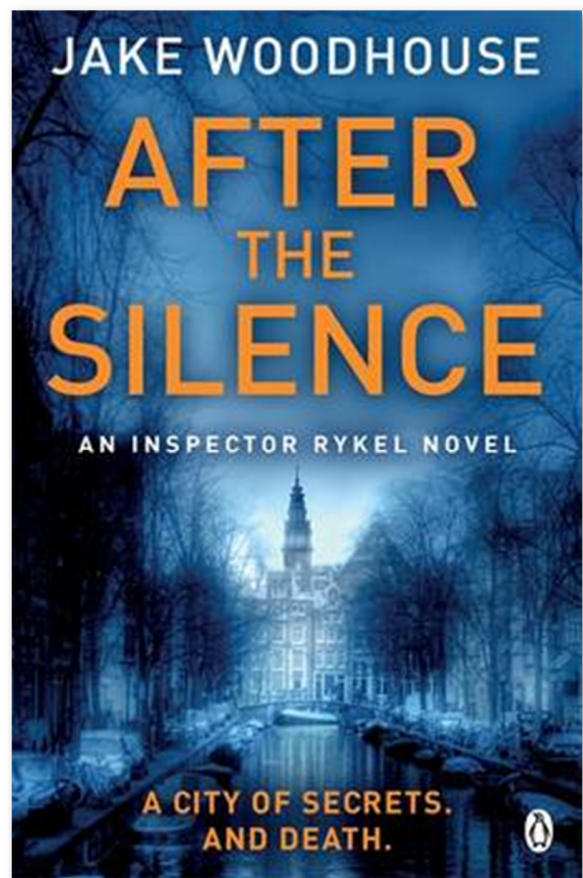
**Victoria Whish**

*The first of a quartet featuring Inspector Rykel, this will definitely whet your appetite for more. A fast-paced thriller that delivers the right amount of twists and turns to keep you hooked.*

*I am so pleased that this is going to be the start of a quartet as I was thoroughly engrossed in the world of Inspector Jaap Rykel. As is common in a lot of detective fiction, Rykel has flaws and has made mistakes that haunt him still and impact on his thoughts and actions. The supporting characters are well-drawn and nobody is one-dimensional or black or white. Our sympathies and certainties are constantly under review as many of the characters act in surprising and unforeseen ways.*

*Amsterdam is a superb setting and is practically a character in its own right. The beautiful, romantic side of Amsterdam is cleverly counter posed with its' seedy, claustrophobic underbelly.*

*The action moves along at a cracking pace and after an initial struggle to adjust to the Dutch names, I was totally captivated and can't wait for the next book in the series!*



## **Sarah Musk**

***A tense, dark detective story set in Amsterdam. The subject matter is grim but Jake Woodhouse tells a very compelling, sometimes complicated tale.***

*This is a very tense story. It starts very dramatically with two deaths - the death of the main character's partner and a hanged man with a mobile phone rammed into his mouth. You know they will be connected but will Inspector Jaap Rykel be able to solve the murders before his conniving superiors stop him and get him off the case? There is also a suspected missing child involved and the constant worry all through the book that she may die or be sold on to a paedophile gang makes reading the book quite stressful at times.*

*Jake Woodhouse is a very accomplished storyteller relating very believable dialogue and behaviour between the police in the two cases.*

*The underbelly of Amsterdam which most readers would only know as a tourist destination is also portrayed realistically. I read the book and although I couldn't say I enjoyed it because it is a very dark story, I did find it a most compelling read.*

## **Jan Kirkcaldy**

*At first it seemed that this was going to be just another routine crime novel but with Dutch names and locations. Yes there were murders, a Black Tulip gang (shades of Enid Blyton), and names to rival those in the works of Stieg Larsson and Jo Nesbo. I was not at first convinced this was all going to work. Knowing the Netherlands and Amsterdam I soon felt I was there and reality shone through with Inspector Jaap Rykel and his friends and colleagues coming to life. All had complex lives and how the crimes affected each one of them was fascinating. Overall it's quite a dark story, though there is light at the end of the tunnel. The investigations delve deep into drugs and child trafficking. It was all quite believable with many likeable characters who soon established themselves in your mind. Typically Dutch which is no bad thing. Rykel is quite charismatic and **I'm already looking forward to the next in Jake Woodhouse's intended 'Amsterdam Quartet' series. A thoroughly enjoyable and gripping read.***

**Reba Khatun**

***'After the Silence' is set in Amsterdam and unlike other non-British and non-American crime novels this novel is easy to follow although the sensitive subject of the book is very upsetting.***

*'After The Silence' is a real page-turner of a book with its deep characters and moving storyline. I hated putting this book down as I wanted to get to the end. Inspector Jack Rykel is called out when a naked body is found hanging from a tree with a mobile phone jammed in the victim's mouth. Jaap's partner, Andreas is murdered whilst trying to find out more information about a notorious gang, The Black Tulips. Somehow, the two cases are linked and it is up to Jaap to find the connection. Jaap must work with Kees but can he trust him?*

*Tanya is called to investigate an arson. She knows this isn't just a typical arson when they discover two bodies in the ashes. Also alarmingly she discovers a child's doll but where is the child? Enquiries reveal that the couple brought the child. Tanya must find the child before she is put in even more danger.*

*I look forward to reading the other books in Jake Woodhouse's Amsterdam Quartet.*

**Cleo Bannister - <http://cleopatralovesbooks.wordpress.com>**

***An action packed thriller set in Amsterdam.***

*This is billed as an action packed thriller and it is certainly that! The book starts violently with a Police Officer being pursued by a man in a mask, his last thoughts that of his wife and his unborn child and his partner Inspector Japp Rykel.*

*Set over a tight time-period of five days in the depths of winter it is Japp Rykel who has multiple murders, child abduction and a gang that import all types of nasties called the Black Tulips to contend with. This is in addition to the normal discontented and dysfunctional team and excessive demands from his superiors!*

*To be honest I found the multiple themes and violence in this book a little too much for my taste, the pace is fast and at first I found the characters quite hard to distinguish although this eased as I got further through the book and their traits became more apparent.*

***The first of the Amsterdam Quartet, if you like your police procedurals fast and furious this could be the book for you.***

## **Magda North**

*I wanted to like 'After The Silence' as much as I liked its gorgeous Penguin cover. However, the subject matter was a bit hardcore for me, and I found the males macho and lechy. There weren't many characters to warm to. Amsterdam makes for a great setting and I wanted to feel more of it. The author spins plates with his plotting, and does well to keep the strands in the air. **This book was not one for me, but there's plenty there to make it worth a read.***

## **Carol Peace**

***European crime at its best.***

*I have read other European crime books and found them compelling and other than trying to remember the names used they are great reads.*

*When a body is found hanging on a hook in the Amsterdam old town the first problem is how to get it down as it is over the canals. Inspector Jaap Rykel knows that this is a brutal murder and finds himself leading the investigation.*

*His partner however has just been murdered and he is told not to have anything to do with that case. Elsewhere a couple are found in their burnt out house. The detective looking into this notices a doll in the bushes but the couple have no children, she can't let it go and when she finds herself working with Jaap they both have their own demons to lay.*

*The investigations are all intertwined, or are they? I enjoyed this book although I did find myself thinking it was a little slow in the middle. The last few chapters however made up for that and the pace quickened up. **A very solid read.***

## **Marta Sloma**

***Not your average crime, not your clean cut police officers, not your typical location. Which is why 'After the Silence' is such a compelling read.***

*Amsterdam. Crime. Inspectors with issues. Quite serious issues. That pretty much sums up Jake Woodhouse's 'After the Silence'. But don't worry, there is more to the story.*

*The Amsterdam we see is beautifully moody in the cold January, the crime is despicable but doesn't go into too gory a detail, and the Inspectors? They are a mess but still get to the truth.*

*I just hope the next three books in this Amsterdam quartet will showcase the main character, Jaap Rykel, better, because after book one we still don't really know him. It seems we've just skimmed the surface with this man with the past, we barely learned that something happened that made him pack up and leave the job for some time, that he returned healed but not fully mended. And I believe there is more to Jaap, as well as his co-workers who each have to work through their issues if they want to stay on the job and do it right.*

### **Barbara Goldie**

#### ***Amsterdam and thrilling crime a real mix!***

*I really like Amsterdam and crime thrillers so finding the two in the same novel seemed a good mix. I was not disappointed and also discovered a new author and a new Inspector.*

*Inspector Jaap Rykel has had a breakdown, has an inexperienced detective and a sergeant with a drug habit, it certainly sets the scene for a good story. A businessman is found hanging but this is not Rykel's only problem. There are lots of issues going on as well, from money laundering and child abuse to bullying and sexism.*

*It's very fast and the action takes place over a short period. The characters are colourful and well developed all have unique identity and personality set for a great series. **I really enjoyed the author's portrayal of the seedy side of Amsterdam and look forward to the next offering from Jake Woodhouse. A recommended read.***

### **Cathy Petersen @Cerysthepup**

#### ***Haunted characters and dark secrets at the heart of Amsterdam make for an engrossing first novel.***

*I struggled a lot with this initially, although the prologue was an excellent start. As I got more into the book however, things did pick up. Once the plot took a darker turn I felt it really got going and while I didn't enjoy it as much as other crime novels I have read it did work really well. As a debut it has great potential and while I personally feel a bit jaded so far as detectives with tortured backstories are concerned, this did work quite well and fitted with the plotline. Certainly an author to keep an eye on I think.*

**Gavin Dimmock** - <http://the-mustachioed-reader.blogspot.co.uk>

***A brutal killing; a couple burnt to death in a house fire; a missing child. These crimes lead Inspector Rykel and his colleagues into the darkest side of depravity in Amsterdam.***

*A man is found hanging under an Amsterdam bridge. The bodies of a couple are found in a burnt-down house in a coastal town and a child is missing. The crimes lead Inspector Jaap Rykel and a young female detective from out of town on a dangerous race through the darkest side of Amsterdam in their attempt to prevent further deaths.*

*I found this to be a fast paced and lively novel that pulls you into the life of Rykel and his colleagues. It's a bit "twisty and bendy", leaving you wanting to turn the pages and discover more. We have become quite used to, and desperate for, the recent Scandinavian crime genre and this book offers a little detour nearer home. The setting of Amsterdam is interesting and allows plenty of scope for villainy and various shenanigans.*

*This is the first instalment in a promised quartet of "Amsterdam" novels and is an engaging introduction to the series. All in all, I found it to be a good read. However, I have a few reservations; the cast of characters is quite long, with a good number popping up early in the story. This isn't a bad thing as it helps to develop the sense of depth and confusion in the investigation; but it does make for some difficulty in keeping track of who is who. The relationships between some of the leading characters is also quite complicated and, perhaps, unlikely.*

*In some respects this is yet another police procedural story and has the, by now, standard departmental politics, frictions and resentments. Also, most characters have a "back story", explained in varying degrees of detail that show them as haunted/troubled/broken by their pasts. Can cops in fiction ever be simply "normal"?*

**Chris Parfitt**

***Well written introduction to Inspector Japp Rykel that takes you on a trip into the darker side of Amsterdam where drugs and prostitution are only the tip of the iceberg.***

*This is the first in a series of novels set in Amsterdam.*

*The story opens with a naked man's body found hanging from a hook high above one of Amsterdam's iconic canals and as the pieces fall into place a web of lies and deception lead Inspector Jaap Rykel deeper and deeper into the murky*

*world of human trafficking and child pornography.*

*The story grips right from the start and this is one of those books that you can lose yourself in, where you look up and realise that an hour has passed in what seems like ten minutes.*

*This is the author's first novel but you would not know this from the style and confidence of his writing.*

*The story rattles along at a cracking pace and never slows down which keeps you turning the pages. This really is one of those "just one more chapter" books that means you get up for work wishing you had put the light out that little bit earlier.*

*At any point in the novel I felt that I would be able to close my eyes and picture the exact scene down to the boats moored alongside the canal and the distant squeal of the tram wheels on the rails.*

*At the same time he manages to capture the beauty and heartbeat of the city whilst making you aware that below the thin veneer of the tourist brochure there is a darker and more menacing under current.*

*The characters are all fully formed and as the story progresses the reader is gradually introduced to their various backstories and character traits. I would recommend this book to anyone who enjoys well written crime fiction that doesn't insult the reader's intelligence but also does not try to be too clever at the same time.*

### **Cyllene Griffiths**

*Woodhouse bases his debut crime novel mainly in Amsterdam and seems to manage to encompass all of the most grisly criminal acts you can imagine. The story progresses through murder, arson, kidnapping, child abuse and a few others along the way. The main characters have their own ways of coping with the stresses of dealing with such cases and also their own personal conflicts to deal with.*

*Inspector Rykel must investigate a bizarre and brutal murder but is troubled by the recent unsolved death of his police partner. His investigations connect to an arson attack outside of his area where two people were burnt to death but leaving behind clues about a little girl, whose existence and current whereabouts is unknown. Working with a Junior Detective from this case they start to uncover a gruesome trail of trafficking, child abuse and pornography, with some unwanted links to Rykel's partners' death and obstructive colleagues,*

*this is looking at becoming one of the most demanding cases Rykel has ever worked on.*

***Despite the awful nature of the crimes this is a not a depressing read – it is compelling and absorbing and a real treat for crime thriller fans.***

*Perhaps because I am unfamiliar with the Dutch language, I found the unusual names sometimes difficult to remember but this didn't detract from the story and the principle characters were fluid and well written. I am sure a following of the forthcoming Inspector Rykel series (apparently there are three more due) would cure any language problems and I, for one, am sure to become a committed fan.*

### **Alan Brown**

***A book which is set up to compare with the best of today's crime fiction. Not quite there yet as the plot lines are not as strong as they could be?***

*This book uses chapters with time and dates to give structure to the story. Before this starts there is an abstract verse which does not read easily within the format.*

*The set up of the crime fiction is very welcome attracting the reader to the protagonists of the tale. However the author continues to develop the nuances of the relationships which although interesting puts a stall on the story which makes it difficult to keep reading.*

*Felt disappointed at the end as I had to work hard to read a good story.*

*This is the first of a series and now that character development has been completed perhaps future books will be easier reads*