



Nowhere child

By Christian White

First published in 2018

Genre & subject

Detective and mystery fiction

Missing persons

Synopsis

Her name is Sammy Went. This photo was taken on her second birthday. Three days later she was gone. On a break between teaching photography classes in Melbourne, Kim Leamy is approached by a stranger investigating the disappearance of a little girl from her Kentucky home twenty-eight years earlier. He believes Kim is that girl. At first she brushes it off, but when Kim scratches the surface of her family history in Australia, questions arise that aren't easily answered. To find the truth, she must travel to Sammy's home of Manson, Kentucky, and into a dark past. As the mystery of Sammy's disappearance unravels and the town's secrets are revealed, this superb novel builds towards an electrifying climax.

Author biography

Christian White is an Australian author and screenwriter. His debut novel, *The Nowhere Child*, won the 2017 Wheeler Centre Victorian Premier's Literary Award for Best Unpublished Manuscript, and will be published in June through Affirm Press and in multiple territories around the world in 2019.

He also co-created the television series *Carnivores*, currently in development with Matchbox Pictures and Heyday TV, and co-wrote *Relic*, a psychological horror feature film to be produced by Carver Films (*The Snowtown Murders*, *Partisan*). The film has received funding support through Screen Australia and Film Victoria, and will be directed by Natalie Erika James. He has written several short films that have screened at film festivals around the world, including *Creswick*, which won Best Short Form Script at the 2017 Australian Writers' Guild AWGIE Awards.

Born and raised on the Mornington Peninsula, Christian had an eclectic range of 'day jobs' before he was able to write fulltime, including food-cart driver on a golf course and video editor for an adult film company. He now spends his days writing from home in Melbourne, where he lives with his wife, filmmaker Summer DeRoche, and their adopted greyhound, Issy. He has a passion for true crime podcasts, Stephen King and anything to do with Bigfoot.

Discussion starters

- What was your initial reaction to the book? Did it hook you immediately or take some time to get in to it?
- This book is set both in both Kentucky and present day Melbourne. How do these two locations enhance or take away from the story?
- What specific themes does the author emphasize throughout the novel? What do you think he is trying to get across to the reader?
- What are the major conflicts in the story?
- How did you feel about the characters? Who did you like or not like and why?
- Which character/s did you feel the most connected or drawn to? Why?
- What moral/ethical choices did the characters make? What did you think of those choices, were they justified? How would you have chosen?
- The book is centrally about Kim and her journey to discover her roots. How would you react if you were in the same situation?
- How do characters change, grow or evolve throughout the course of the story? What events trigger such changes?
- As the characters change through the book does your opinion of them change? How?
- What feelings/emotions did this book evoke for you?
- Did you like the way the book alternates between the present day and thirty years ago? What does this method of writing bring to the story?
- Is the ending satisfying? If so, why? And if not, why not...and how would you change it?

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