



Silvermeadow

Barry Maitland

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A dark and brilliantly plotted crime thriller...full of twists and turns. Always a compelling storyteller, this is Maitland at his best.

Silvermeadow Details

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Author : Barry Maitland

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From Reader Review Silvermeadow for online ebook

Barbara says

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Nerfzilla says

A perfectly serviceable mystery about a girl who is missing from a super mall in Essex, and the return of the nemesis of the detectives in this series. The mall is as much a character as any person in the story. The characters are well drawn and there is some story outside of the mystery but ultimately my feeling was, "meh..." I will try another book by the author to see if this one was an anomaly.

Kelly says

I've been reading the Brock and Kolla series while waiting for some other books to become available at the library. The plots are pretty good, but I find the characters to be a bit flat. Kathy Kolla, in particular, just doesn't quite make it to three dimensions for me. I get that she is supposed to be a bit lacking in interpersonal skills, but sometimes I feel like if she were a real person, I'd be waving a hand in front of her face to test for a reaction. It seems strange that the least interesting character in the books is also the lead character. I guess she's meant to be the straight man?

There are also some pretty egregious editing errors they seem to increase as the series goes along--missing words, sentences that have run together, etc. I don't know why so many Kindle books have these issues!

All that said, I've found the series to be perfectly good light reading, and the plots are engaging enough to make me want to finish the books. In fact, the plots are getting better as they go along, so I'll probably read them all--eventually.

Ashley says

I had a much tougher time getting into this one, especially because it's primarily set in a mega mall and much of the story is influenced by rampant materialism. I also didn't feel the mystery was as challenging to solve as it had been in the previous stories, making much of the focus more on Brock and Kathy's personal lives, some of which was very cringe worthy reading. Despite that, Maitland's writing is still strong and the story interesting enough to finish. And seriously, how many finales are there going to be of Brock and/or Kathy in danger of being maimed or murdered? That trick has been played out and the suspense is fading.

Jeannette says

I didn't find this book in the series as interesting as the ones before it. Kathy seemed to have lost her edge.

Jennifer (JC-S) says

‘On a bleak December morning, the east wind gusting in across the Essex marshes and dousing the city in cold rain, Alison Vlasic decided, finally, to go to the police.’

In ‘Silvermeadow’, two separate crimes intersect. Detective Chief Inspector David Brock is still searching for Gregory North, a cold blooded killer who killed two guards during a bank robbery in Ilford four years ago. Several days after her mother reports her missing, Kerri Vlasich’s shattered body is found. It seems possible that Kerri Vlasich was murdered at Silvermeadow, a huge shopping mall in Essex where Kerri had a job. When a witness to the Ilford robbery claims to have seen North in a shop in Silvermeadow, and the local police station request help from Scotland Yard in relation to Kerri’s murder, David Brock seizes the opportunity to look for North while investigating Kerri’s murder. He puts Detective Sergeant Kathy Kolla on the murder investigation.

The investigations are difficult. Kerri’s family life is complicated, and her protective friends keep some important information from police. In addition, there are rumours that Kerri is not the first person to have gone missing at Silvermeadow. Silvermeadow itself is problematic. It’s a huge sprawling mall, with kilometres of tunnels and some interesting (in the loosest sense) security staff. And what about Gregory North?

The investigations progress slowly, which seems realistic. In the meantime, we have glimpses into the personal lives of both Kathy Kolla and David Brock and their developing relationships with Leon Desai and Suzanne Chambers.

This is the fifth novel in Mr Maitland’s Brock and Kolla series, and was published in 2000. I’ve read six of the twelve or so novels published so far, and I’ve enjoyed each one. While I’m reading them out of order, I’m not finding that a problem as each novel stands alone. However, the disadvantage of reading out of order is missing aspects of the character development and backstory of the main characters.

If you enjoy reading police procedurals, I recommend this series highly.

Jennifer Cameron-Smith

Tony says

Maitland, Barry. SILVERMEADOW: A Kathy and Brock Mystery. (2000; U.S. – 2002). ****. Here’s our Scotland Yard team together again in another of Maitland’s clever and intelligent plots. This time, they are called in to a huge robbery at the SilverMeadow mall, just outside of London, on the Saturday before Christmas – when the take is fantastic. Two guards were shot dead, and the robbers disappeared with the money, several million pounds, without a trace. In a related case, a young girl is found dead in a trash processing unit, wrapped in cardboard boxes and covered in plastic. She arrived at the unit in a bale of compacted trash that was traced back to the same mall. Now, stories of other young girls that have

disappeared at the mall surface, and Kathy and Brock have their hands full trying to find clues to both the murder and the robbery. We learn a lot about the life of a super mall, and the psychological theories behind them that dictate how they are best built and designed for maximum appeal to consumers. Lots of interesting stuff here, let alone good police procedural work. Maitland seems to keep coming up with surprisingly different plots that keep you guessing until the end. Recommended.

Marfita says

Some day, some day a crime novel will end with "Well, we'll never know exactly how he/she did it." In the meantime, we'll just have unbelievable conversations where the perp explains exactly how and why he/she dunnit. Or here's another idea: "Don't you want to know how I did it before you die horribly?" *Detective faints dead away from loss of blood or just stress and never gets to hear.*

Maitland is a good writer (it's just so hard to explain everything at the end without looking like ... like you're just explaining everything) and the plots are interesting. I learned a teeny bit more about malls than I wanted, but at least it wasn't stamps again.

Now, I'm going into serious spoiler territory. I mean it.

No, I really do.

I guessed the culprit again - in the face of everything. I refused to believe any of the stunning revelations about Harry and Bruno. I clung to Harry as the main villain. He had all the access. He was too helpful. He was a former cop and we all "know" that they're bent. Why didn't Kathy make more of the missing page? I had Harry pegged before she even found it. I knew a page would be missing. Hurry up and find that out, Kathy!

Gavin was too overtly manipulative to be it (and eventually I felt sorry for him). Bruno actually was a baddie, but there was no way he could be involved with the robbery. The "hidden room" that three people knew about was unbelievable, especially under the faux volcano. And it's nice to know that when you've run out of albinos, there are multi-plegics in wheelchairs to be villainous. No, I mean that. Really, there was no one nice in this book, not even children (who are unrepentant herbicides). [I have actually been in Brock's situation. A five year old resented me for splitting up his parents, although I wasn't aware of the family until they had already split. And, actually, I was just a "beard" for the father until the divorce was final. The five year old asked me what I would prefer, "A broken leg or a broken back?" I told him I'd already had a broken leg and that a broken back might be interesting "for a change." Later I told his father to have a talk with the kid. "Oh, he just likes to ask questions." No, something's up. And it was. The father did have the conversation with the kid and discovered that I was resented for the reason stated above. "I straightened it out," I was told. Oh sure.]

Kirsty Darbyshire says

(Holiday reading so my comments are a bit minimal)

Another excellent episode in this series. Silvermeadow is a huge shopping centre outside London (I guess the real life counterpart is Bluewater though the name had me thinking of Meadowhall all the way through) and Kathy Kolla and David Brock are trying to solve a murder at the same time as trying to apprehend an armed robber who has been spotted there.

The continuity with the first book in this series is lovely (this is the fifth) as are the developments in the main characters private lives.

My only niggle is that Maitland writes about Britain from Australia and has characters driving Opel cars when that brand is still sold in the UK under the Vauxhall name and though you do see the odd Opel around I think it's far more likely that the character in question had a Vauxhall Astra. Minor but it kept dragging me from the story.

Cat. says

Great series that always reminds me of Elizabeth George's series. I just discovered Maitland a few months ago, and what a find!

This one takes place primarily in a mega-mall outside of London called "Silvermeadow." There are two real investigations going on at the mall: a missing teenage girl who turns up dead in a box compacter (ugh!), and a sighting of a notorious bank robber and murderer. The only part of the book that was just too facile was that of course both investigations are related; they have to be or the book just wouldn't work. And Kathy does a lot of talking herself into that fact, when the reader already knows, as soon as both stories are mentioned. Otherwise, the story progresses very appropriately, with good character development. We do get to see behind Brock and Kathy's face-saving walls into their personal lives this time.

Really, though, this is a book delving into mall culture, "lost" people (including teens), and what we may have lost in our culture by giving completely over to consumerism. Of course, there is the obligatory climax scene where the bad guys are confronted -- and I have to say that I was somewhat blindsided by who it turns out to be -- but again, it seemed natural and literate.

Long aside: I'm happy to now be on the side of "right" in this book, having lived in mall culture for the first 15 years of my life: every Saturday afternoon as early as I can remember until I went off to college--and possibly over summer vacations as well--Mom and I went to the library and the mall and bought something. What could we have been shopping for every week?! As an adult, I am apparently the only woman on Planet Earth who loathes shopping. At least the wandering about through store after store looking for just that perfect dress...or whatever. I'm more of a "boy" shopper: list in hand, I go directly to the store that sells what I need. I buy. I leave. If the first store doesn't have what I want, I go one (ONE!) other place, then give up: who needs it anyway? Wandering with my mom all those years through (at that

point) the largest mall in the world cured me for the rest of my life.

Anyway. I can't wait till the next Kathy & Brock book appears.

Mike Gabor says

DCI Brock is informed that an old adversary, Upper North, has been spotted at a shopping mall on the outskirts of London. Trying not to alert him, Brock takes on another case that occurred at the mall, the disappearance of a teenage girl. He assembles his team and as they start to look into the disappearance they realize that there might be others missing as well.

Another good entry in this series. The book started out a bit slow for me but then picked up its pace. Even though there were two separate cases the author did a fine job of tying everything together at the end. Brock and Kolla are both very likable characters and the secondary players are brought to life very well. Looking forward to reading more in this series.

Gail says

A good friend knows I enjoy reading procedural mysteries, especially those set in Great Britain, so she shared her collection of Barry Maitland's Brock and Kolla series. They feature David Brock, a seasoned male detective chief inspector, who mentors Kathy Kolla, a younger female detective sergeant. I also like Deborah Crombie's Kincaid and James series for the male-female duo, however, Maitland's series is much darker and the style of writing is very different. The reader is often on the edge of one's seat as Brock and Kolla face physical assault and emotional upheaval on a regular basis. Silvermeadow, the mega shopping mall featured in this 5th book in the series, provides for interesting turns and twists in the story line and is a "character" itself.

carmen casale says

Poor ending

I enjoyed the book until the end which I found unrealistic. Not the best of this series. If you intend to read the series recommend you start at the first book.

Kay says

A 350 page police procedural that could have been told in 200 pages - and would have made a better book.

Ivonne Rovira says

While investigating the return of a sociopathic bank robber to England, Detective Chief Inspector David Brock and Sergeant Kathy Kolla are bamboozled into also looking into the disappearance of a 14-year-old schoolgirl. Both of the otherwise unconnected crimes do have one commonality: Both have a connection to Silvermeadow, a state-of-the-art enclosed mall that boasts over 1 million square feet of retail space and 26 food courts. One character calls it the third-largest mall in Europe, making it clear that author Barry Maitland modeled the fictional Silvermeadow on Meadowhall in Yorkshire or Intu Lakeside in Essex. To say anymore than that is to give the game away.

How suspenseful is Silvermeadow? Using the audio version, I meant to listen to a few moments just to get to sleep; instead, I had to stay with the novel until past 3 p.m. so that I could listen to the very last word. Mysteries in the Brock and Kathy series always capture readers; however, this one proved to be the most riveting yet. I'd recommend this novel to anyone. (While I've enjoyed the novels in order, *Silvermeadow* could be appreciated even by readers who begin with it, the fifth in the series.)
