

Question and Answer with Rachel Amphlett, author of *A Darker Place*

1. What can you tell us about *A Darker Place*?

The frozen body of a man is discovered in a used car yard on the hottest day of the year, his face contorted by fear and pain.

Detective Kay Hunter and her team are assigned the case, but when they find out who the victim is, their worst fears are realised.

There is another man missing – but is he a victim, or a killer?

With time running out and witnesses afraid to talk, Kay is thrust into one of the most challenging investigations of her career to date.

2. What inspired the story behind *A Darker Place*?

This is probably one of the hardest books I've written to date, simply due to having such a strange murder pop into my head for the opening scene, and then trying to work out how the hell it happened!

I'm always inspired by current events and although I haven't mentioned the past horrendous 12 months everyone's been through, I have been intrigued about some of the things that were once perhaps considered niche that have now become part of everyday life. I won't give too much away, but I do like to get readers wondering what really goes on behind closed doors of those everyday situations we take for granted.

3. Which took shape first: plot, character, or setting?

The setting usually comes first for me, particularly with a long-running series. In the case of *A Darker Place* it was the opening scene: the body of a frozen man is discovered on the back seat of a vehicle in a used car yard.

After that, I'm as intrigued as my detectives to find out who he is, how he got there, and why!

4. What was the biggest challenge this book presented? What about the biggest opportunity?

The biggest challenge was getting the science right when dealing with a frozen body—both getting the victim in that state in the first place, and then making sure my pathologist defrosted him properly without losing any – ahem! – vital evidence...

The biggest opportunity with any new writing project is to push myself as an author and develop new skills every time. I like problem-solving, so when my detectives hit a dead end, it's fun working out with them in what direction they go next.

It's why I always love writing witness interviews—I never know what the answers are going to be until my detectives ask the question.