Lovereading Reader reviews of
The Ice
by Laline Paull

Below are the complete reviews, written by Lovereading members.

Phylippa Smithson

A powerful thought provoking read cleverly bringing together our emotional vulnerability with the increasingly fragile physical world in which we live.

Paull’s reputation as a writer reliably bringing something different to the book shelves is further enhanced with The Ice. Evidently well researched it is a hard-hitting reflection of the contrasts of politically power hungry, financially driven individuals and the impact of their obsession on the environment in which they seek to inflict their ambitions.

Sean Cawson is one such individual. His friend, Tom Harding has dedicated his life to saving the environment. Sean survives their Arctic expedition. Tom does not. It’s Tom body which stays hidden amongst the icebergs until the further melting of these natural wonders releases him to his loved ones and subsequently throws Sean into a melt-down of his own. Could it be that his overwhelming ambition led to the death of his friend?

Certainly members of Tom’s family think so. And as his own family, notably ex-wife and unforgiving daughter bring him further down, the ambitious and driven Sean sees a side of himself he struggles to come to turn with.

Beautifully written - the ending will stay with me for a long time.

Please keep these diverse offerings coming Laline Paull.
Cathy Small

An exciting arctic adventure or a cover up. What is the truth about Midgard? The arctic has started to become a tourist attraction with creates great opportunity for business especially for Sean.

This story starts with a calm cruise across the arctic on an adventure to see a polar bear. A misguided trip down a forbidden path leads them to a bear but a disaster scene where a body is found. The story takes us through the past and present lives of all those who set up the business on Midgard to find out the truth of how Tom died and who was operating in the arctic and why. The story grips you and pulls you in to share the emotion of grief and distrust across partners both personal and business. The truth is only revealed at the end and it is a good twist in the tale.

Sarah Musk

An exciting, mesmerising book about international skulduggery and murder in the Arctic. It also raises questions about the future of our polar regions. It should be read.

I really enjoyed this thriller set in the Arctic. It starts off very dramatically with the discovery of a body produced by a massive ice fall and then goes backwards and forwards in time to tell the story of murder and international skulduggery.

The main character, Sean, is a hard, slightly unpleasant driven man who is quite unlikeable at the beginning of the book. However, as the tale unfolds he comes to be seen more as an unwitting victim than a protagonist. There are a few events in the book which really do take you by surprise and the story ducks and dives and swerves around. The ending is very satisfying and not entirely predictable.

The descriptions of the Arctic and, in particular, the ice cave where the main event takes place, are mesmerising. There is also sadness about the disappearing polar bear caused by climate change and man's interference in the area. This book has a strong warning and message about the future of our polar regions - Laline Paull obviously cares very much about how we care for our natural world and this book raises some quite scary scenarios about future exploitation of our planet. This book should be read if you want to envisage one possible future scenario for the Arctic.

Kerry Bridges
An interesting idea of what might happen if the climate does indeed change and a very impressive setting indeed.

Tom Harding and Sean Cawson are Arctic Explorers and best friends but as Sean becomes more successful in business Tom becomes more of an eco-warrior and when his body is recovered three years after the accident in which he disappeared, Sean must re-evaluate all his ideas of what success really means and whether it was worth it.

I like the premise of this book which is set only a few years into the future when climate change has really set in and the Arctic ice is melting. I can see that there is definitely scope for that to be exploited on both sides and I am sure that it will be if that is indeed what transpires and I think Laline Paull’s story based upon that idea is certainly an interesting one.

Having said that, I would have liked the Arctic itself to have been more of a "character" in the book, particularly as a lot of the human characters aren’t actually that likeable themselves - even Sean has done some quite unpleasant things to get where he is and Martine and Kingsmith are thoroughly reprehensible. In actuality, the whole group of people seem to be really self-involved and it is therefore quite difficult to warm to them or start to be interested in what might happen to them.

The bits about the Arctic at the beginning of each chapter are interesting, but don’t always seem to relate to the rest of the action at that stage in the book and could probably be better placed with more careful thought. They do add to the idea of the Arctic being strange and interesting though, and again, this made me want to hear more about the land in the book than the machinations of the people involved.

Glenda Worth

‘The Ice’, a totally believable novel about how global warming may affect the Arctic in years to come. Set in the near future with two friends obsessed with the Arctic but see different futures ahead.

‘The Ice’ by Laline Paull is a crime novel set in the near future with an environmental background. At a time when the Arctic sea ice has melted and global warming is in full flow, two friends come together in a business venture. They have slightly differing opinions as to what they will achieve from this, but both are sure of each other’s love for the icy landscape. Tom is an
environmentalist who ends up disappearing and is consequently found three years later when a glacier is ‘calving’. Sean his friend was devastated at the time and is horrified when Tom’s body is found floating in the Arctic waters.

As the story unfolds we get to know about Sean’s business dealings, his love life and his trading with the government as he tries to make money through rich visitors to his haven. There are interesting pages at the beginning of each chapter from Arctic manuals which help to set the scene. The characters in the novel are portrayed very well with their different views and struggles which are all evident at the inquest into Tom’s death near the end of the book. The grief felt at the court hearing by Tom’s family plus Sean’s struggle keeps the reader intrigued until the end. A totally believable scenario by Laline Paull who has taken a subject the world is already worried about in global warming and developed her story around that.

Michelle Hodson

Unusual & riveting. A story touching on events which could so easily happen. Eco cider may well be our future!

Set in a world where the arctic sea ice has melted and a battle is raging between environmentalists and big global business anxious to carve up and exploit this new emerging frontier. At the forefront of the story are two great friends. Sean Cawson who has been seduced by a ‘shady’ entrepreneur and his own financial success and Tom an eco-warrior to the end.

This novel is filled with extremely well drawn, believable characters with an unusual, original storyline which kept me riveted.

If you want something outside the norm with a great plot and genuine characters this is the one for you.

Highly recommended.

Katie Hoare

‘The Ice’ follows the story of the inquest of Tom Harding who was found dead three years after an accident in the Arctic, by the visitors on the Vanir who were looking for a polar bear. Tom Harding was the friend of Sean Cawson, who most of the story follows, and follows the inquest into Tom’s death. Sean had taken Tom on into his firm against the judgement of others in the firm, especially has Sean’s luxury business goes into the Arctic Circle. Tom’s interests
were in saving the planet and the eco system.

Sean has connections in high places and this adds to the plot, along with the chapters that have passages that have been taken from memoirs and diaries. A really good thriller taking the reader to and from the cold of the Arctic, and back to England. As well as going back and forth in the timeline gives an insight of how things turned out the way they did for both men.

Jennifer Moville

The arctic is in trouble. The ice is melting fast. Global warming is affecting every one and all the wildlife.

A cruise ship has arrived in the area with all the passengers hoping to see a polar bear. Instead they find a body.

The body turns out to be that of a man who disappeared three years ago - Tom Harding. A glacier has melted and his body once frozen in time has revealed itself.

He was last seen alive by his best friend Sean Cawson.

The author tells a lot about the inquest and as the coroner delves deeper into the past you learn what happened to Sean and Tom not only in business but in their private lives. You also learn of global warming - a matter so important in real life today - and you realise that the only person who can make a change is you - you and everyone else on the planet. The story in the book of how animal sightings are becoming rarer in the Arctic hits home in that species are becoming endangered and will become extinct if people don’t act fast. Laline has written a great murder / mystery with a very important back line - take heed.

Siobhan McDowell

What a thrilling read this novel was!

I was immediately grabbed by the lapels and whisked into a world that was so alien to me.

This land was described so clearly that I felt I was looking out of a window onto a dying world.

The characters were drawn really clearly so much so that from the opening chapters it was evident that there was trouble at the top!
The plot was fast-moving and handled by an expert!

Shady deals and dodgy movers and shakers were strewn throughout the pages and then there was Sean. This central character had his troubles by the dozen...a broken marriage and a hostile daughter and the author was sympathetic to his problems.

The guilt that Sean shouldered was well and truly described and I felt a tremendous pity for him...I wanted it all to turn out good for him!

I absolutely would recommend this book to anyone ...an amazing read!

Thanks you so much for the opportunity to dive in between the pages!

Angie Rhodes

The Arctic has now melted and the wildlife is now fast becoming extinct, ships race against each other and time to catch glimpses of the Polar Bear.

On board the ship The Vanir, the crew find more than a Polar Bear. They find a body. The body is that of Tom Harding, best friend of Sean Cawson, lost three years ago while helping Sean to launch a new business venture and who was the last person to see him alive.

Sometimes, Tom and Sean’ clashed, while Sean wanted to conquer the world, and Tom wanted to save it. Is there more to Tom's disappearance than meets the eye? How far will someone go just to get what he wants?

‘The Ice’ will have you questioning how the much the world is changing and how dangerous those in power can be.

Edel Waugh

The main plot of the story is set in the Arctic after the Arctic sea ice has melted. It has caused big business and not all of it is legal. Tom and Sean are two men in a crew who go to the Arctic to explore, friends and comrades, you need to really trust who you bring with you on this type of adventure. When tragedy occurs many questions are asked and they linger throughout the years leaving a sense of unease that will all have to finally be answered no matter how terrible the answers . The story was awesome, we see it primarily from Sean's perspective and it's not all black and white. The story does not give up its secrets straight away so there was a nice build-up of tension leading to the end of the book. This is a book to read in one gulp! Awesome!
Jan Kirkcaldy

A fascinating tale from the start, set in an imagined, not too distant future. Based on the premise that global warming clears a way through the Arctic, it explores all the possibilities regarding big business and the opening of new shipping routes and the places that would be created. A cruise ship in the area, on a hunt for elusive polar bears unexpectedly uncovers a body in the icy waters and thereby hangs our tale. Tom Harding, an ecologist, had been presumed dead for 4 years after joining forces to promote the area with a university friend of 30 years earlier, Sean Cawson, now a high flying businessman. With their common interest in Arctic exploration. We find out what had happened. Intrigue, politics and much else is involved. Interesting speculation about how life might be in future was fascinating but the story did try to cover too much and seemed to get bogged to some extent in places. I enjoyed it but felt it needed some editing to make it a little more reader friendly. Less can be more sometimes.

Janet Monks

A thriller where a melted Arctic Sea has created new opportunities for astute, ruthless businesspeople. A setting in which the beauty and fierceness of the terrain should never be underestimated. This is not the type of genre that I usually read, nevertheless I enjoyed it. Most of the appreciation came from the fact that it made me think, imagining a world (which we all might live to see) where the Arctic Sea has melted. Mixing a mysterious death alongside this theme created a new type of thriller, in which the main character Sean Cawson is given the chance to reflect on his life choices, and what is truly important. Perhaps not the greatest book I’ll read this year and one I wouldn't normally pick up, but I’m glad I did.

Jillian McFrederick

An intriguing mix of mystery with a strong political and environmental message, this novel is a great read with a depth often missing from modern novels.

Set in the near future as global warming is advancing at an alarming rate, a cruise boat on the hunt for sight of a polar bear chances on the unexpected appearance of a body from underwater depths. The reappearance of this victim of accidental death several years before reopens the investigation into what
happened. Strong characterisation, betrayal and broken relationships keep us hooked and as the back story is revealed, the ambitious reach of the story extends beyond mere personalities.

A great read and I would highly recommend this novel.
The peaceful, secluded, country hideaway of three diverse, lonely, supposedly lesbian, women is suddenly shattered when their gardener discovers a partially decomposed corpse in the old Ice House on their grounds. The peaceful, secluded, country hideaway of three diverse, lonely, supposedly lesbian, women is suddenly shattered when their gardener discovers a partially decomposed corpse in the old Ice See full summary ». Stars