

REVIEW OF 'THE AUGUST MONTHS' BY STEFFIE WALLACE
3RRR 'On the Blower' – Tony Biggs with Kerrie Window, from Dymocks
Melbourne ('The Queen of Dymocks') 21/4/17

Kerrie Window: My next book was sent to me by an author called Steffie Wallace; it's called 'The August Months' - she actually sent me a lovely letter as well....

Tony Biggs: Mmmm....

Kerrie Window: ...and some of it said that she wrote this book, very up to the minute, after a family tragedy, but she said, 'books have the capacity to inspire, challenge, change and comfort us in so many different ways, as well as providing entertainment and knowledge', which I think is so true. And her book is; she wrote it after the death of her son at 20 – he overdosed - this is written in '96, reissued last year. She wrote it to get through the grief and she also took up painting - she's got a website with her paintings and there are a lot of landscapes, like Port Douglas in a storm and what have you - fantastic! I love them because they're really brooding and gloomy, quite dramatic!

I always dread getting books sent to me by people, but I had to put it down twice on the tram because it just was so incredibly moving. And she *can* write. A lot of people write to get through things and they can't write; this is great. I could barely put it down. It's a story of three women, so we have Em, who's an alcoholic and crashes a car and gets sent off to rehab...

Tony Biggs: Oh, so it's fiction...

Kerrie Window: It is fiction, but it is based on her story so it is written as fiction. I think fiction that comes from a true story is, just - if you can write - is just so much richer than other fiction – it just shines through what she went through. So Em is in rehab for alcoholism, then there's Mar who's doing advertising for the centre and other things. She has her own problems as well; one of her scenes in the book just reduced me to tears! And there's the niece of Em as well.

So these three women come together and it goes back and forth between when Dylan, Em's son, died of an overdose, and the present day when she's in rehab then when she gets out and how she copes with giving up alcohol and how Mar copes with her overeating problem, and Phoebe the niece. Just *love* this book so I just couldn't recommend it more highly for anyone, especially who's gone through something or who is going through addiction, perhaps, or just drinks too much after work! It's just a great book! That's 'The August Months' by Steffie Wallace.

Tony Biggs: 'The August Months'...

Kerrie Window: It's about addiction and recovery...

Tony Biggs: Mmm...

Kerrie Window: So you can come out the other side.

Tony Biggs: All right, as long as it didn't leave you down there when you finished it!

Kerrie Window: No, not at all.

Tony Biggs: OK.

Kerrie Window: No, it's moving and inspirational because these three women get through their various things and I just found it very uplifting.

Tony Biggs: And importantly, as Kerrie has said, it's *well* written, it's not just a harrowing scrawl...

Kerrie Window: No, it's very well written and the three women, in their own ways, are great – I like them all!