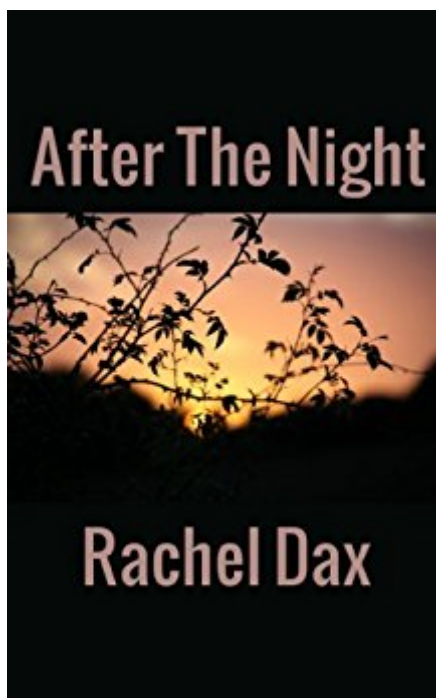


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# After The Night



## Synopsis

After The Night is a sweeping lesbian love story set in a British prison in 1960. When Nurse Leah Webster begins her first job at a prison hospital, little does she know that her world will be turned upside down by falling in love with Chief Officer Jean MacFarlane. But the course of lesbian love does not always run smoothly and together Leah and Jean have to fight homophobia both within and without the prison walls.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Rachel Dax's *After the Night* is a classic read. It is set in England, in the 1960s. Ms. Dax has a unique way with handling the historical. She places the reader along side of the action within that space of time. Beyond that - the drama and characterization is perfectly on point. Dax has an ability to capture the excitement of each moment. I was intrigued from the first page until the last. And then the story stayed with me, and invited me back. Each character was fully developed, and at all times in character. There was too much brilliant plot, passion, and suspense to put the book down. This is an entertaining read, but it has a deeper meaning, and relevance. To miss reading *After the Night* is

to miss knowing a part of our legacy that remains today. I can't wait for her next book to appear. You can bet I'll be in line to add it to my library. I highly recommend it!

What an excellent read this was! I couldn't put this book down. This book was another pleasant surprise for me. Reading the blurb I wasn't too sure about a story set in a prison because I couldn't imagine it as a romantic setting. But I started reading it and got immediately immersed into these characters' lives, including the secondary characters. The author managed to use the context of prison life for both prisoners and employees in a far more interesting way than I could have imagined. Firstly, I have a penchant for the cool on the outside, passionate on the inside character. Right away Jean, a guard at the prison, is rather cool and distant to Leah, a new nurse in the prison whom she's taking around to meet everyone on Leah's first day at work. That immediately got me going because it already made me curious about her as a character. Leah also notices this and is put off, setting up the initial emotional tension between the women since they have to work together. Quickly though, Leah sees that both employees and prisoners have a lot of love and respect for Jean. Curious about the contradictions in her personality at times, Leah starts looking at Jean in a different light. During the course of interacting and Leah watching how Jean acts with the prisoners, Leah finds herself uncomfortably and shockingly falling in love with her. Shocking because she's engaged to be married and well, lesbians are perverted and disgusting, and it can't be possible! What I loved most about this story is how the author captured the realness of what the characters are feeling. How the characters react to what they're feeling is vividly nuanced and expressed. Leah becomes shy and unable to look directly at Jean once she's realized that her feelings for Jean are more than just as a coworker and friend and I acutely felt her discomfort mixed with inner excitement at falling in love. While not getting right away what Leah feels mainly due to being wrapped up in work issues and still carrying pain and regret of a past event that keeps her emotionally locked up, Jean does notice that Leah yields and melts into her when they hug, making her feel rather shy and uncomfortable as well. She's already somewhat at ease with the fact that she might be a lesbian, but she's still rather reserved due to several reasons, partly her own personal emotional state, and partly the anti-lesbian atmosphere going on in the prison. The constant subtle little signals between both women ratcheted up the tension because both are not sure about the other and they cannot openly flirt. The build up to both expressing what they feel and the pacing of it was perfectly executed, I felt. I was aching for them to finally get together. And by the way, for those who are wondering, there are a few sex scenes. Not written graphically, but which felt highly erotic due to the emotional and sexual heat reaching breaking point before they can finally

express their love for each other in a physical way. While this story is largely a romance, there's an overall arc of all the characters, including the well-defined secondary characters, dealing with homophobia for that time period. Jean has no family, but Leah does and she has to deal with painful consequences of being in love with a woman. Homophobia also affected all the women in the prison, those who were accused of being perverted as well as the accusers and the actions they take against those women. Kudos to the author though because it wasn't all doom and gloom. Leah and Jean, as well as the prisoners accused of having homosexual affairs, true or not, have many non-bigoted allies on their side who keep working to help them out and fight any retribution or negative actions against them. Jean and Leah also get support so they can just be together as a couple. The one thing that I would say negatively about this book is that in a lot of places the characters get melodramatic and emotionally sticky. At first I was a bit eye roll at it, but then I realized that in a lot of ways that's how people from that time period talked or have been portrayed in books and movies from that time. Also, this is just an extremely passionate story: the romance, the characters, the social issues, all of it. So a little melodrama was not a distracter really. If you're looking for a well written, impassioned and warm love story this is it. Also, the ending includes something I rarely read in a lesbian love stories. I won't say yay or nay to it because it's a matter of personal preference. But in this case, with these two women, it worked for me. Heat level: 2-3 Few sex scenes not graphically written

A really enjoyable story set in a women's prison in mid 20th century. Being constantly reminded of the emotionally devastating and often violent anti-gay attitudes of the time made me realize anew how fortunate many of us, who grew up then, were to survive virtually unscathed. The characters in the story were beautifully drawn and believable. Those of us old enough will definitely relate to family situations, and to the multitude of variations in attitudes. Dax paints relationships very realistically - spurned fiancé, parents (one accepting the other not), bosses and co-workers. She lets us experience again the discovery of how little we really know when it comes to others' attitudes and biases when Leah finds support where least expected. If one is looking for a "typical" modern lesbian romance, this isn't it. It is a story that will stay with me for the realistic human interaction and the real love story. The "roller coaster" of the women's emotions and experience are great.

"After the Night", written by Rachel Dax, was the first book ever put on my new Kindle. It is still on there and recently I had the chance to re-read it. It will be staying on my Kindle to be read again in the future. It is that good. Young nurse, Leah Webster, is thrust into a world strange and foreign to

her. Cool, remote Officer Jean MacFarlane is assigned to show her the women's prison where she will be working. First impressions are not always what they seem, though, and Leah soon discovers that 'Mac', as she is known to some of the prisoners, is a kind and fair overseer of the prisoners in her care. The cold, stone walls of the prison have seen much tragedy, as has Officer Jean MacFarlane, but Leah's joining of the staff provides a chance at healing and change for those around her. Leah, herself, learns to see the world much differently as a result of her interaction with the personalities she meets. While the bars and doors of an institution cannot constrain love, the social mores of the time can be crueler than any locked cell. Ms. Dax successfully captures the mood and temperament, not only of the times it covers, but also of what it was like for women in the British penal system of the 1960's. The need to be discreet in our not too distant past is made palpable by Ms. Dax's economy of words and her spot-on dialogue. The restrictive mood of the prison and of life outside the prison was viscerally felt while reading this story. Rachel's research into her subject matter is impeccable. Personalities come alive, and the weaving together of the storyline's threads is flawless. Romantic scenes can be difficult to write, so I've been told, but Ms. Dax handles them with just the right amount of 'heat'. The main characters' growing attraction to each other is well paced and believable. And the drama of life both inside and outside the prison makes for a compelling read. I highly recommend "After the Night" for your Kindle collection. You, too, may want to keep it on there to be read more than once.

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