Profanity In B Side By Janis Jones

I am reviewing B Side by Janis Jones.

B Side is a hard-hitting, gritty crime novel that addresses age-old prejudices and problems which continue to plague modern society. The story begins as a young woman named Casey Terranova prepares to celebrate her anniversary with her girlfriend, a police detective named Mara Bays. While Mara is en route home, Casey is brutally attacked in what appears to be a homophobic hate crime. A schizophrenic homeless man nicknamed Skeezy, whom Casey has befriended hears the attack and retrieves the baton and broken cell phone thrown from the porch by the attacker. It is also revealed that Mara was in a romantic relationship with her partner, Derek Jenssen, before becoming involved with Casey.

As the investigation proceeds, sexist and homophobic biases on the part of the police officers assisting Mara and Derek as well as instances of police corruption are brought to light. Mara learns of startling connections between the police department and the attacker, and everything is brought to a startling conclusion as her research leads her to the heartbreaking truth.

This book does contain profanity, and the first instance appears on the second page of the first chapter. The profanity fits the characters and the style of the story. There are strong suggestions of sexual activity in several instances but no explicit descriptions of said activity.

I give this book three out of four stars. It appears to be professionally edited. The story flows well, there are no spelling errors, and the author uses appropriate sentence structure, grammar, and punctuation. The paragraphs are brief and concise and break in the appropriate places.

I like the way the book packs a lot of story into a brief, concise package. The author gets the job done without becoming overly verbose. That she manages to involve a lot of back story on her characters without becoming mired in detail is impressive indeed.

The thing I disliked most was the author’s tendency to change tenses frequently from present tense to past tense and back again. I am unsure if this was a deliberate technique on her part, but it was somewhat disconcerting. I felt that it would improve the story’s readability to choose one tense or the other and stick to it.

This book is a good read for anyone who enjoys crime dramas with a gritty edge and who will not be upset by graphic descriptions of violence or by use of profanity. Neither the violence nor the profanity is gratuitous, both are suited to the tone of the story and to the characters. However, people who prefer to avoid violence and profanity in their reading material would be advised to avoid this story.