

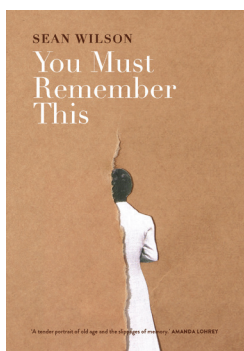
## YOU MUST REMEMBER THIS

Sean Wilson



There have been many novels featuring characters with dementia, but they're rarely written from the point of view of the sufferer. **You Must Remember This** puts the reader inside the mind of Grace, a woman gradually succumbing to the disease. What also makes the book unique is that Wilson has jumbled the chronology, with the chapter numbers out of sequence, presumably to mirror the effects of Grace's erratic memories, where she randomly relives episodes of her life ranging from childhood to the present day. Using the central character as narrator allows the reader to understand and appreciate the cognitive difficulties that Grace experiences as her condition gradually declines.

Through Grace's increasingly chaotic relationships with others, particularly her



daughter, Liz, and granddaughter, Claire, Wilson skilfully depicts the confusion, doubt and fear Grace feels as her memory fails her, or experiences come back to her sporadically with the flickering disjointedness of an old movie.

There are also painful scenes from Grace's childhood and the profoundly dysfunctional family life she endured with an alcoholic mother and shiftless

father. It's not clear whether Wilson is trying to suggest that Grace's childhood abuse in some way made her more susceptible to dementia, which would be hard to determine, however the depressing nature of past events certainly adds to Grace's burden of remembering.

Overall, this is an insightful and deeply compassionate story that will engage readers (of which there would be many) who can relate to the sadly incapacitating nature of this condition.

★★★★☆ BC Affirm Press \$24.99

Reviewed by Anne Green

## WHERE THE BIRDS CALL HER NAME

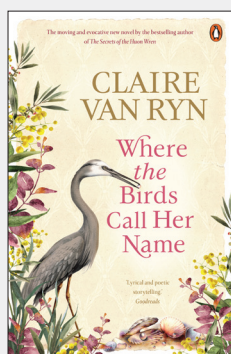
Claire Van Ryn



**Where the Birds Call Her Name** follows two narratives.

The first is set in 1968 during Greta 'Kiki' Winter's childhood in Stanley, among the Tasmanian wetlands. Her father was the local councillor and her mother a taxidermist who created bird dioramas for the Tasmanian Museum of Art Gallery. From the outside, they appear like a contented family but dig deeper to discover that their life is toxic. Greta knows that her future may be sabotaged.

The second is in Broome 2023. Saskia's mother, Greta, has unexpectedly left her a caravan in her will. As Saskia is feeling suffocated with day-to-day life, her mother's gift is the answer to her wishes. Saskia travels with



her daughter, Anouk, to Tasmania to learn about her mother's past.

Saskia realises that her mother's upbringing may not have been as it appeared.

There is bravery and raw honesty as the past clashes with the present, providing answers as to why people behave in certain ways or do their utmost to make changes so the future is not sacrificed.

I warmed to not only the characters but also to the beautifully written Tasmanian landscape. Claire Van Ryn's book is a great ambassador for Tasmania and its wildlife and made me want to visit and explore the beautiful land.

This novel also taught me not to waste time. Be brave and go seek out adventures that you have been wanting to accomplish.

★★★★☆ BC Penguin \$34.99

Reviewed by Claire Stanley

Released March 2025