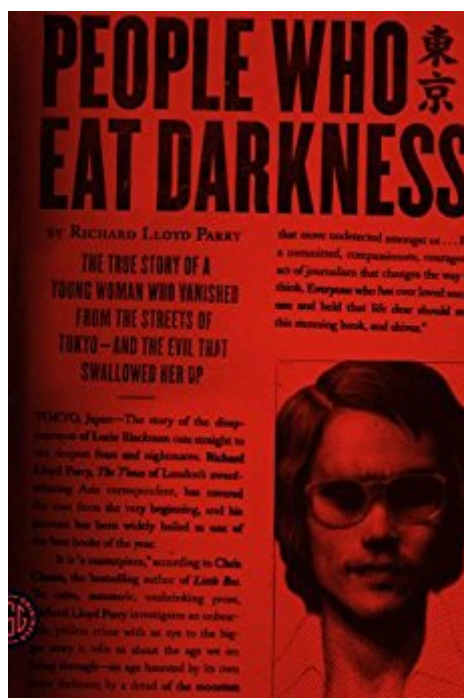


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# People Who Eat Darkness: The True Story Of A Young Woman Who Vanished From The Streets Of Tokyo--and The Evil That Swallowed Her Up



## Synopsis

Lucie Blackman – tall, blond, twenty-one years old – stepped out into the vastness of Tokyo in the summer of 2000, and disappeared forever. The following winter, her dismembered remains were found buried in a seaside cave. Richard Lloyd Parry, an award-winning foreign correspondent, covered Lucie's disappearance and followed the massive search for her, the long investigation, and the even longer trial. Over ten years, he earned the trust of her family and friends, won unique access to the Japanese detectives and Japan's convoluted legal system, and delved deep into the mind of the man accused of the crime, Joji Obara, described by the judge as "unprecedented and extremely evil." The result is a book at once thrilling and revelatory, "In Cold Blood for our times" (Chris Cleave, author of *Incendiary* and *Little Bee*). *The People Who Eat Darkness* is one of Publishers Weekly's Top 10 Best Books of 2012

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is the best book I've read in years. Mr. Parry's writing brings this very frightening story right into the reader's consciousness, with his detailed recounting of the terrible events surrounding the disappearance of a Nice English Girl in an unfamiliar system. This one ranks right up with Thomas

Thompson's *Serpentine*, as another outstanding international crime saga.

This review says everything I wanted to say: *People Who Eat Darkness* is a factual account, but it is as compelling as any thriller. The narrative gallops along, with dramatic twists, turns and half-resolutions. Joji Obara, Lucie's abductor and apparent murderer, is every bit as brilliant and terrifying as the fictional Hannibal Lecter . . . The author's discussion of the effects of Lucie's murder on Tim and the rest of the Blackman family is intimate, sensitive and chilling . . . intelligent, compassionate. (Melanie Kirkpatrick, *The Wall Street Journal*)

Interesting story. I would recommend, however it does veer off on a few tangents, which, while relevant are distracting and lengthy in some cases. Still glad I read it.

The story was captivating. While the story of a young woman embarking of an exciting if risky adventure in life was not uncommon, delving into the twisted mind of the man who preyed on such women was riveting. Mr. Parry brought out the terrible waste of a lovely young life while showing clearly how the dark and dangerous side of life can lurk behind a seemingly harmless facade. The struggles the family faced in coping with Lucie's loss is rarely a side that similar stories delve into. We are often left wondering at the collateral damage that is the result of a terrible act. Here we get to see just how painful and sometimes impossible recovery truly is for those left behind.

Richard Lloyd Parry's true crime book, "*People Who Eat Darkness: The Fate of Lucie Blackman*" has many elements that peaked my interest. First, I love true crime stories. I had never heard of the Blackman case, which made it an even more interesting read. It's actually surprising, since the case seemed to have been big international news and it's quite a horrific story. Second, I love stories set in foreign countries, especially ones that deal with cultural differences. This story, centers around English Born Lucie Blackman, who in her early twenties moved to Japan to work as a hostess in the nightclubs of Roppongi. She disappeared and many months later, her dismembered body was found in a cave on a beach. A man named Joji Obara was arrested and it led to a rather unusual trial by Japanese standards. Third, I purchased a Kindle edition of this book to take with me on my first trip to England. It was a bit of themed travel reading. One of our unplanned/last minute excursions on the trip was to the Isle of Wight. The Isle of Wight happens to have been where Lucie Blackman's father lived during the trial and was featured fairly prominently in the book. I love that I was able to visit the Isle and have it in my frame of reference. The events of Lucie Blackman's death

are horrific, creepy and bizarre. I found it to be completely fascinating and the book a compelling read. Although, I would not recommend this book for the easily squeamish or those that cannot handle graphic details, both regarding the murder and the sex industry. The book goes deep into the dark side of Japan in exploring the various sex clubs and the world of hostessing. It comprises approximately a third of the book. Equally fascinating is the last portion of the book, which explores the Japanese justice system, both through the police investigation and the subsequent trial. It's very different than the Western judicial system and is heavily influenced by the Japanese culture's ideas of honor and shame. The accused, Joji Obara is a very bizarre and mysterious man. Parry spent a lot of time researching Obara as he attempted to piece together Obara's life and motives. Beyond being strange, Obara was very intelligent and wily when perpetrating his crimes. However, he also stood out in a culture that values the ability to blend in. His strange behavior and defiant attitude made him appear cocky and aggressive towards journalist, families of the victims and even his own defense team. The book could have just been a character study on Obara, as it contained a wealth of interesting information. My only complaint about Parry's book, was it needed tighter editing. In parts, the information felt repetitive. It dragged and occasionally seemed unfocused. I felt this especially to be true towards the end of the book, when Parry wrote about his own bizarre communication with Obara, including threats towards the author. This would have best been stated in an afterward or maybe kept to a paragraph. I felt like it was not so pertinent to the story. I also felt like Lucie's family dynamic was talked about to death. It was important to state the impact of her death on her relatives, but it could have been done more succinctly or kept to a particular chapter. The information felt repetitive, rather than fresh. Despite the repetition, Parry's book is a compelling read and Lucie's story is one that needs to be told. Please visit my blog for more book reviews and a trip reports from my England vacation!

I lived in Japan between 1994-1995 and seriously contemplated taking a hostess job because I heard it was easy money for easy work. Although sometimes I regret I never did hostess while living in Tokyo (I taught English instead), after reading this book, perhaps it was a good thing I never did go through with the hostess plans. Mr. Parry does a great job of depicting the way the typical Japanese businessman is seen through the eyes of a young gaijin girl....polite, bashful, unassuming, almost "doof-ish".....it is because of this behavior you feel safe in their world. It is exactly the reason why Lucie did (and I almost did), take a hostess job.....but we forget, that sometimes wolves appear in sheep's clothing. Mr. Parry also did a great job on his portrayal of the Tokyo police and Japanese justice system and the whole way the case was handled....once again,

just like Japanese culture: thoughtful, slow and polite but ultimately misguided and disorganized with everything depending on honor, conscience and virtue. The problem is that most monsters don't have honor, conscience or virtue. I would have really liked the book more if the author had spent less time on the back story of Lucie's parents relationship (we get it; they LOATHE each other) as well as less time on describing what a twank Lucie's father was. Overall this was a very good book and will engage most readers, however, I know I enjoyed it more immensely because of my ties to Japan, familiarity with the culture and from living in the Tokyo area.

I couldn't put this book down. I enjoy books and shows about mysteries. I enjoy learning about the process used to find someone who has disappeared. This book is well written and an absolute page turner. Highly recommended.

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