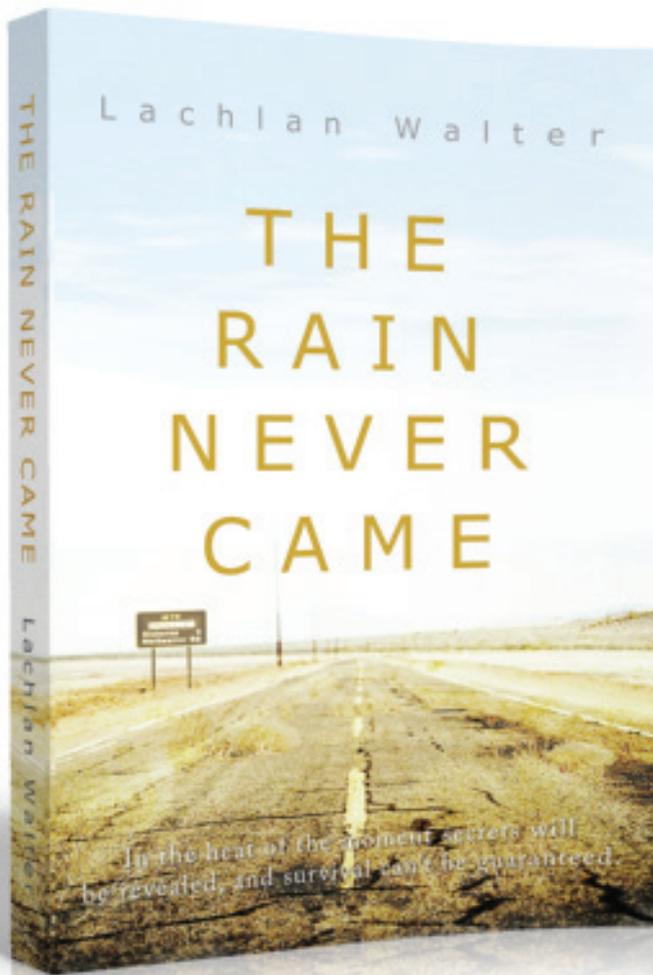




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The Rain Never Came

Author: Lachlan Walter

Genre: Dystopian Fiction

Print ISBN: 978-1-922200-93-8

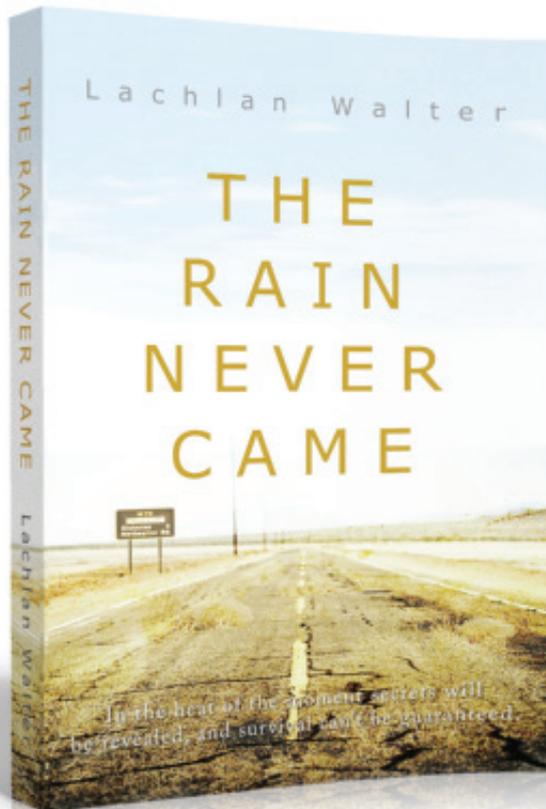
Author Bio

Lachlan Walter is a writer and nursery hand (the garden kind, not the baby kind), who has completed a PhD in Australian post-apocalyptic fiction and national identity. He writes science fiction criticism for *Aurealis* magazine and its offshoot blog, reviews for the independent 'weird music' website *Cyclic Defrost*, and is currently writing a book-length story cycle that aims to take giant monsters seriously. He loves all things music-related, the Australian environment, overlooked genres, and gardening.



Lachlan Walter

About *The Rain Never Came*



In a thirsty, drought-stricken Australia, the country is well and truly sunburnt. As the eastern states are evacuated to more appealing climates, a stubborn few resist the forced removal. They hide out in small country towns—where no one would ever bother looking.

Bill Cook and Tobe Cousins are united in their disregard of the law. Aussie larrikins, they pass their hot, monotonous existence drinking at the barely standing pub.

When strange lights appear across the western sky, it seems that those embittered by the drought are seeking revenge. And Bill and Tobe are in their path. In the heat of the moment secrets will be revealed, and survival can't be guaranteed.

Sales Points

- *The Rain Never Came* is a socially relevant dystopian written by an Australian, for Australians.
- Walter crafts a unique blend of Australian humour that international authors cannot match.
- Provides a new take on the buddy adventure and dystopian genres.
- Trades the traditional urban setting for the vivid Australian outback, a landscape that is sure to captivate readers.
- A twisted tale of revenge and secrets, the intrigue is set to keep readers on the edge of their seats.



Book trailers:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5D4-Iz1HbN0>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4R-hny7cTzA>

Book Extract

Without the slightest warning, a raging noise blew in – a roar that tore through the night and shook the earth. The dogs out the front of the pub started howling. Conversations faltered as everyone fell quiet. The noise kept on, steadily growing louder. Tobe and I turned, scanning the sky, seeing nothing. I looked over at him – he was already running for the road, heading for the hill behind the pub.

I followed, unexpectedly clearheaded, taking everything in as if it had been laid out on display.

Everyone ran with us. Sheldon huffed and puffed, cursing his old body. Louise jogged next to me, smiled at me, rapidly overtook me. The Veidts hurried along, somehow making the process look dignified. Max and Maxine moved fast yet made it look like they were taking it easy. Cathy Ng half-limbed and half-ran, clutching at her dressing gown, trying not to catch herself in it. The Kumari Kid darted back and forth, circling the crowd, urging everyone to move faster. The First Country captain led his people on, trailing well behind, watchful and wary.

We kept running. We crested the hill. We all stood in silence, raggedly trying to catch our collective breath.

The wind started, furnace-hot. Its screaming whine and the roar that tore through the sky were the only sounds in the world. From the corner of my eye I saw someone lick their finger and hold it up in the air. I heard someone else say: “It’s coming from the west, dickhead.” And then the word rain seemed to be falling from everyone’s lips.

A flash lit up the horizon, staining the sky dull-orange and crimson-red. Someone started yelling: “Light! Light! Light to the west!”

For a moment, it burned too bright, blinding me. It soon faded away, only to then happen repeatedly. I looked around; everyone seemed to have their eyes shut and their fists clenched.

The world shook again.

We waited, all eyes fixed on the horizon, everyone saying the same word over and over: Rain! Rain! Rain! But none came. After a while, people started drifting away and the only sound left was their angry mutterings and disappointed sighs. I turned my back on the horizon as well. Like everyone else, I stared at the ground as I walked. No one wanted to look anyone else in the eye.

“We waited, all eyes fixed on the horizon, everyone saying the same word over and over: Rain! Rain! Rain! But none came.”

Interview Questions

1

What inspired you to write *The Rain Never Came*?

Some years ago, I moved back to my hometown at the tail end of Australia's Millennium Drought. It's a small country town, deep in the bush, and was suffering from the ravages of the dry. At that time, life was quite strange—communities were pulling together in the face of adversity, and at the same time fraying at the edges. People were growing desperate: water theft and folk walking off their farms had become all-too-common occurrences. All of our 20th-century technology meant nothing against nature's whims. It seemed as if the past had returned, a world of dust and brute work and thirst. And yet we were surrounded by the new. More than anything else, this hybrid world resembled certain post-apocalyptic worlds of speculative fiction, and so *The Rain Never Came* was born.

2

Do you think it's important that small towns are represented in fiction?

There is so much more to Australia than its capital cities and the outback, and yet these places situate the majority of our fiction. This is a terrible shame, as our country is a patchwork of different environments bound together by small towns. From mangrove swamps to rainforests, and from snowy mountains to scrubby grassland, it is the towns in-between that give contexts to these landscapes. They tell a different kind of Australian story, one defined by remoteness, community and a close connection with the bush, where old and new Australia meet and coexist. Having grown up in a small town, I always wanted to see more of them on the printed page.

3

Does the Australian Outback make a particularly good setting for horror and dystopia?

Empty and isolated spaces are the perfect settings for an exploration of the darker themes of speculative fiction: violence, fear, horror, the unknown, the dystopian, and the post-apocalyptic. Being an enormous country in which the vast majority of the population cling to the coastlines, Australia is full of such empty and isolated spaces, making it the perfect setting to explore such themes, especially when we also consider the ancient and primal atmosphere of our flora and fauna. Nothing holds as much mystery and potential threat as the Australian bush at night...

4

Why did you decide to make your protagonists brothers-in-law?

Being an examination of stereotypically 'Australian' reactions and masculinity in the face of inexorable change, it seemed appropriate to structure the novel around two classically Australian 'mates'. But mateship can bend so far that it will break, a fact that led me to wonder: just how enduring can some ties be? And what does it take to break them? Positioning the two mates of *The Rain Never Came* as brothers-in-law seemed the perfect vehicle to test the strength of these ties, as nothing binds us like family.

5

Tell us why we should pick up *The Rain Never Came*.

At some time most of us have probably looked around at our sunburnt land and thought: 'Maybe the end of the world is already here.' Beyond that, *The Rain Never Came* is also a fast-paced post-apocalyptic story with an undeniably Australian style and atmosphere, which will hopefully broaden people's understanding of what being 'Australian' can mean, open our eyes to the ways that climate change may alter our lives, and strip the word mateship of its conservative connotations and return it to its egalitarian roots.

Product Information

Order Information

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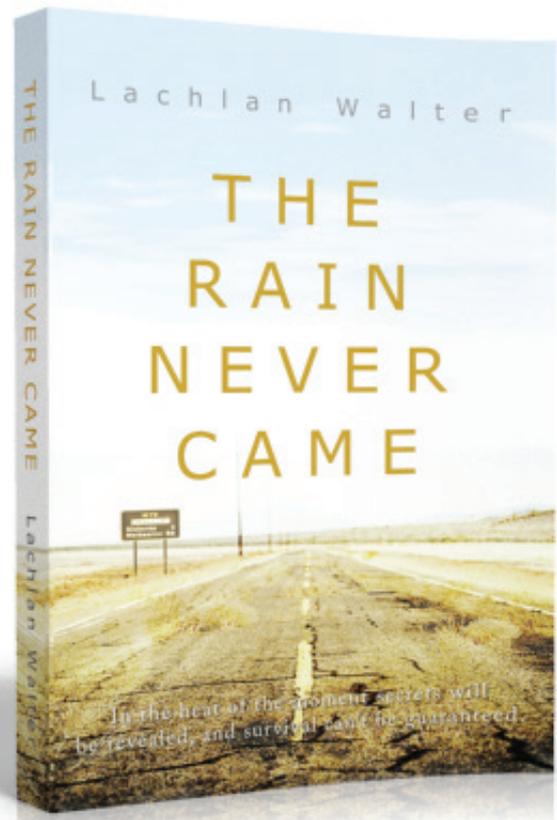
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