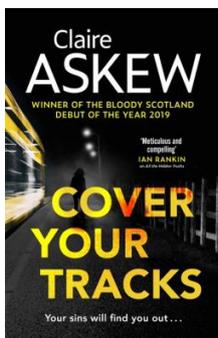


## Cover your tracks by Clair Askew

Reviewed by Pat



It is lovely discover another great Scottish crime series set in Edinburgh featuring DI Helen Birch and DC Amy Kato, this is the third in the series.

DI Birch gets drawn into a police inquiry that her boss, DCI McLeod wants her to keep out of, leaving it to DC Kato to carry out some preliminary inquiries.

Robertson Bennet arrives in Edinburgh from the United States after working in the IT industry for some years. After an absence of 30 years, he is looking for his parents, George and Euphemia 'Phamie' MacDonald who have gone missing.

He had left Scotland, taking his parents savings with him, is now experiencing financial difficulties and needing his inheritance. Birch and Kato find themselves in deep waters in a case that turns out to be both traumatising and more complex than they could ever have imagined.

In a narrative that covers domestic violence and abuse, as well as the unexplained disappearances of several young women dating back many years.

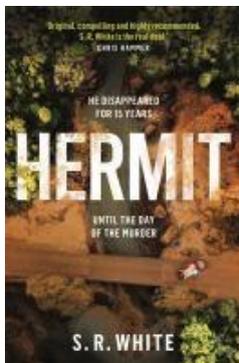
Askew writes compelling crime fiction, with complex characters, particularly Birch, a driven and determined women for whom instincts and hunches play a big part. Birch and Kato have a wonderfully close and supportive relationship that works.

This is great, entertaining and engaging crime fiction where Edinburgh provides a wonderful backdrop to the most disturbing of police investigations.

Interested in this title? Reserve your copy [here](#)

## Hermit by S.R.White

Reviewed by Donna



It is always exciting to find a new Australian author and while SR White is UK born but now living in Queensland, I think we can claim his as one of our own. Hermit is set in a rural Australian town. When police officers are called to the scene of a murder they find a man leaning over the body, knife in hand. That man is Nathan Whittler, a man who for the past fifteen years has lived totally isolated from all human contact. He appears to be deeply traumatised and completely withdrawn.

Detective Dana Russo has been tasked with interviewing Nathan, but has only twelve hours to do so. Dana herself is psychologically scarred from a previous event which threatens to overwhelm her. Two damaged persons, one crime to solve, a ticking clock and a horrific sequence of events to unravel.

This is very much a “slow-burn” of a novel. The crime itself is not the main focus rather it is the stories behind the characters and their damaged pasts that draw you in. This is a very intense and at times breathtaking read but worth it.

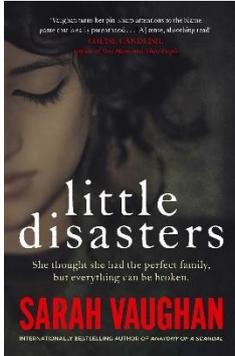
Usually in police procedurals there is a background of politics and dysfunctional police officers working in an environment of apathy, alcohol abuse and corruption. Hermit is unusual in that the police team work well together, in a supportive and collegial way that is very refreshing.

Hermit has some similarities to the writings of Jane Harper and Chris Hammer, so if you are after a character-driven mystery, this is perfect. No big thrills and spills, but a great addition to the Australian rural crime genre

Interested in this title? Reserve your copy [here](#)

## Little disasters by Sarah Vaughan

Reviewed by Pat



A thought-provoking novel exploring the complexity of motherhood and all that connects and disconnects us.

After being friends for a decade Liz sees Jess as a stay-at-home mother-of-three with boundless reserves of patience, energy, and love. Then one moment changes everything.

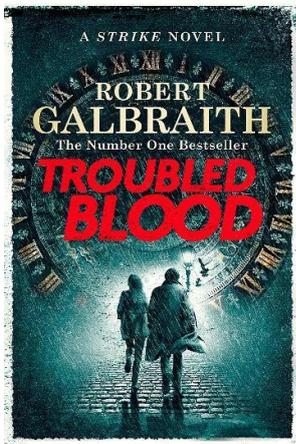
Dark thoughts and carefully guarded secrets surface and Liz is left questioning everything she thought she knew about her friend, and about herself.

This is a fast-paced drama/mystery that I found hard to put down, perfect for fans of Big Little Lies and similar titles, with a twist that makes it a true “who dunnit”. In this unique and clever domestic thriller, Sarah Vaughan focuses the spotlight on exploring new motherhood and post-partum depression.

Interested in this title? Reserve your copy [here](#)

## Troubled blood by Robert Galbraith

Reviewed by Pat



Private Detective Cormoran Strike is visiting his family in Cornwall when he is approached by a woman asking for help finding her mother, Margot Bamborough — who went missing in mysterious circumstances in 1974.

Strike has never tackled a cold case before, let alone one forty years old. But despite the slim chance of success, he is intrigued and takes it on; adding to the long list of cases that he and his partner in the agency, Robin Ellacott, are currently working on. And Robin herself is also juggling a messy divorce and unwanted male attention, as well as battling her own feelings about Strike.

As Strike and Robin investigate Margot's disappearance, they come up against a fiendishly complex case with leads that include tarot cards, a psychopathic serial killer and witnesses who cannot all be trusted. And they learn that even cases decades old can prove to be deadly.

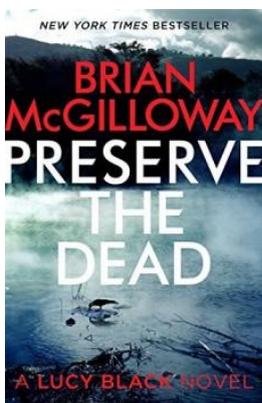
The plot is intriguing but at just over 900 pages long takes an age to unravel. I can't help but feel that the story could have unfolded in less time without losing any of its impact. Lengthy descriptions of characters (even minor ones) and inconsequential meandering into unrelated relationships and the drawn out "courtship" between Strike and Robin left me slightly frustrated. That said I was drawn into the mystery and invested in the outcome.

This is an ideal holiday read, if you have plenty of time.

Reserve your copy [here](#)

## Preserve the dead by Brian McGilloway

Review by Pat



Detective Sergeant Lucy Black is visiting her father, a patient in a secure unit in Gransha Hospital on the banks of the River Foyle. He's been hurt badly in an altercation with another patient, and Lucy is shocked to discover him chained to the bed for safety. But she barely has time to take it all in, before an orderly raises the alarm - a body has been spotted floating in the river below...

The body of an elderly man in a grey suit is hauled ashore: he is cold dead. He has been dead for several days. In fact, a closer examination reveals that he has already been embalmed. A full scale investigation is launched - could this really be the suicide they at first assumed, or is this some kind of sick joke?

Troubled and exhausted, Lucy goes back to her father's shell of a house to get some sleep; but there'll be no rest for her tonight. She's barely in the front door when a neighbour knocks, in total distress - his wife's sister has turned up badly beaten. Can she help?

There are the multilayers that add colour and tone to this story and it is why I enjoy the writing so much. Within the novel this rich blend is supported by fine language and gentle plot development in what is basically a police procedural.

The ability of the author to weave his plot between human interest to criminal depravity means the thrills are exciting and the reality chilling. Above all he takes us on a journey to Derry and fills his book with wonderful descriptions and a hope of renewal for both the place and his character Lucy Black.

A great story of exploitation and corruption; from the con of an old lady to the fraud of public money. I loved it and highly recommend you read it.

Reserve your copy [here](#)

## The Catch by Mick Herron

Reviewed by Pat



Set in the same world as the Slough House series, this explosive novella by bestselling spy-master Mick Herron, is a bite sized treat for fans of this series.

John Bachelor is the saddest kind of spy: not a joe in the field, not even a desk jockey, but a milkman—a part-time pension administrator whose main job is to check in on aging retired spies.

Late in his career and having lost his wife, his house, and his savings after a series of unlucky choices, John's been living in a dead man's London apartment, hoping the bureaucracy isn't going to catch up with him and leave him

homeless.

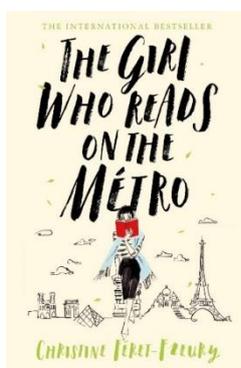
But keeping a secret among spies is a fool's errand, and now John has made himself eminently blackmailable.

A perfect read for a train trip of a rainy afternoon. Fast paced, action packed and full of the twists and turns you would expect from Mick Herron. Treat yourself!

Interested in this title? Reserve your copy [here](#)

## The girl who reads in the metro by Christine Feret-Fleury

Reviewed by Pat



In the vein of *Amelie* and *The Little Paris Bookshop*, a modern fairytale about a French woman whose life is turned upside down when she meets a reclusive bookseller and his young daughter.

Juliette leads a perfectly ordinary life in Paris, working a slow office job, dating a string of not-quite-right men, and fighting off melancholy. The only bright spots in her day are her metro rides across the city and the stories she dreams up about the strangers reading books across from her: the old lady, the math student, the amateur ornithologist, the woman in love, the girl who always tears up at page 247.

One morning, avoiding the office for as long as she can, Juliette finds herself on a new block, in front of a rusty gate wedged open with a book. Unable to resist, Juliette walks through, into the bizarre and enchanting lives of Soliman and his young daughter, Zaide. Before she realizes entirely what is happening, Juliette agrees to become a *porteur*, Soliman's name for the booksellers he hires to take stacks of used books out of his store and into the world, using their imagination and intuition to match books with readers.

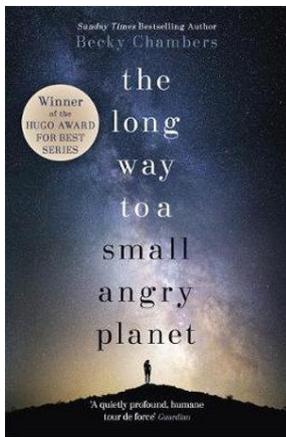
Suddenly, Juliette's daydreaming becomes her reality, and when Soliman asks her to move in to their store to take care of Zaide while he goes away, she has to decide if she is ready to throw herself headfirst into this new life.

Big-hearted, funny, and gloriously zany, *The Girl Who Reads on the Metro* is a delayed coming-of-age story about a young woman who dares to change her life, and a celebration of the power of books to unite us all.

Reserve your copy [here](#)

## The long way to a small angry planet by Becky Chambers

Reviewed by Pat



Follow a motley crew on an exciting journey through space-and one adventurous young explorer who discovers the meaning of family in the far reaches of the universe-in this light-hearted space opera.

Rosemary Harper doesn't expect much when she joins the crew of the aging Wayfarer. While the patched-up ship has seen better days, it offers her a bed, a chance to explore the far-off corners of the galaxy, and most importantly, some distance from her past.

An introspective young woman who learned early to keep to herself, she's never met anyone remotely like the ship's diverse crew, including Sissix, the exotic reptilian pilot, chatty engineers Kizzy and Jenks who keep the ship running, and Ashby, their noble captain.

Recommended to me by a friend one of her favourite ever Sci Fi books, I wasn't sure what to expect. What I found, was a heartily tasty meal of perfectly prepared insects aboard the Wayfarer, enjoying wonderful conversations and a surprisingly diverse collection of humans, aliens, and a truly beautiful soul within an AI.

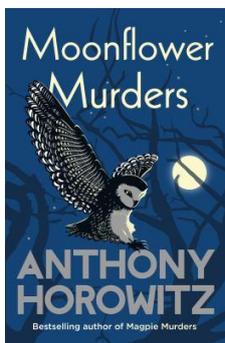
This is space-opera. There's a couple of tight spots, thievery and tragic death. We are invited into ideologically divisive pockets of space and culture. There is also a lot of love in these pages. Not just of the author to her extremely well-drawn characters, but between the characters themselves, hidden in nooks and crannies, blazingly obvious in other instances, and as wide and complex as the worlds the individuals came from.

In other words, we got just the tip of the iceberg, and our imaginations fill in so much of the rest.

Reserve your copy [here](#)

## Moonflower murders by Anthony Horowitz

Review by Skye



I love a cosy murder mystery and Anthony Horowitz is exceptional within this genre.

Moonflower Murders is the sequel to the Magpie Murders, where our unlikely detective (and former publisher) Susan Ryeland once again finds herself, and her insider knowledge, in demand.

Although not essential, I think that you will find this book much more enjoyable if you have read the first in the series. Both have a kind of ‘book in a book’ structure that delivers readers twice the action and intrigue of a standard mystery.

As Moonflower Murders opens, Susan is in Crete running a bed & breakfast with her partner, Andreas. Far from being the idyll of their imaginings, the work is incessant, the guests not always pleasant and it’s not even particularly profitable.

So, when Susan is offered an opportunity to return to England and help a wealthy couple locate the whereabouts of their missing daughter, it provides her with a break from the trials of running a b&b and a chance to make some fast money. Little does she know...

I have really enjoyed this series so far, both books have complex plots and engaging characters. I’ve found them both to be really entertaining reads (actually, I think they’d be fabulous beach books too).

Find it on the catalogue [here](#)