

Tekst 11

Reviews: Fiction

Desperate Characters

Paula Fox

Paperback: Flamingo, £6.99, June

When Sophie Brentwood feeds a stray cat that keeps appearing in the garden of her Brooklyn home, it bites her hand. She tries to dismiss the incident as a silly accident but is petrified by thoughts of rabies and death. After the bite, strange misfortunes and disasters begin to haunt Sophie and her husband as if it has triggered the unravelling of faults in their lives and the society in which they live. By the author of *Borrowed Finery*, *Desperate Characters* first appeared in the USA. It is widely considered a post-war American classic and its main themes are as relevant and timely today as they were 30 years ago, with the cracking of personal lives a mirror to a more widespread collapse in post-war society. Paula Fox's precise prose and elegant style are stunning and within its small scope this novel contains a crucial knowledge of human relationships that reaches far beyond its pages.

Jenny Berggren,

Waterstone's Oxford Street

Don't Look Back

Karin Fossum

Paperback: Vintage, £5.99, July

Scandinavian author Karin Fossum's English debut introduces readers to the estimable Inspector Konrad Sejer, a tough and capable policeman. This compelling mystery is set in a small village slumbering under the brooding Kollen Mountain, a seemingly peaceful place where, as in the past, children play innocently in each other's houses and in the streets. When a naked body is discovered at the mountain lake, the village's placidity is irrevocably shattered. What appeared to be a routine case grows increasingly complex and as Sejer's investigation progresses, the village's apparent friendliness and familiarity secede to suspicion and resentment. There is a pleasing cinematic quality to Fossum's prose and, while the plot bears a passing resemblance to Fritz Lang's classic film *M*, it seems also that director David Lynch would have relished her depiction of brooding fear and violence.

Richard Shephard, waterstones.co.uk

Reversible Errors

Scott Turow

Paperback: Pan, £6.99, June

Scott Turow's intricate and complex plot ebbs and flows between the past and present, focusing on a triple homicide committed 10 years ago. Rommy Gandolph, a minor-league scammer, was convicted of the crime but now, as he lies on his deathbed, new evidence has surfaced. The chief deputy prosecuting attorney is convinced of Gandolph's guilt and, together with the original detective on the case, is determined to see justice done. While trying to ignore the possibility that they may have made mistakes, they renew a steamy 10-year-old affair. Sensitive corporate lawyer Arthur Raven is assigned to represent Gandolph and enlists the help of the original trial judge, who is now disbarred and a recovering drug addict. This is meaty and dramatic storytelling with memorable courtroom duels and utterly believable characters.

Vanessa Rowe, Waterstone's Bristol

The Necropolis Railway

Andrew Martin

Paperback: Faber, £7.99, July

Jim Stringer, a Yorkshire lad who is fanatical about trains, thinks he's had his lucky break when a gentleman offers him an introduction to the South Western railway. He moves to London and embarks on the perilous journey involved in becoming a railway man of the 'right sort'. Intent on becoming an engine driver, Jim is anxious to rise up through the ranks in this hierarchical world. His colleagues, however, seem far from welcoming and it transpires the only line he'll ever work on leads to a huge cemetery. He soon discovers that in this dark, mysterious world, all is not as it seems. A gripping murder-mystery story evolves in which Andrew Martin transports us back to 1903, evoking a vivid picture of the sights, sounds and smells of London. Whether you're interested in trains or not, you'll be enthralled by what *The Necropolis Railway* holds in store.

Lindsey Russell,

Waterstone's Macclesfield

The Wrong Doyle

Robert Girardi

Paperback: Sceptre, £7.99

Meet Tim Doyle, mischievous womaniser and descendant of an illustrious line of Doyles all famed for getting into spectacular scrapes. Following the disintegration of his marriage, Doyle returns to his childhood home to claim his late Uncle Buck's legacy – an island with dilapidated holiday chalets and Buck's pride and joy, his run-down Loopy Golf Course. However, Doyle discovers there are others, desperate to take his land at any price, and a series of bizarre threats ensue, with arson attacks and dead possums playing centre stage. What follows is a brilliantly executed and highly entertaining shaggy-dog story, complete with pirates and treasure maps, not to mention the obligatory tale of corporate and institutionalised corruption. With Girardi's acute historical observation this book conveys the extent to which our lives are inextricably entwined with those of our ancestors, and how we can't escape our past.

Caroline Dominey, Waterstone's Durham

Twelve Step Fandango

Chris Haslam

Paperback: Abacus, £6.99, June

When Martin Brock – a weak, befuddled loser who spends his time dealing drugs on the Costa Del Sol – suddenly finds himself with a motorbike and 5 kilos of coke, he thinks he has hit the jackpot. What he didn't bargain for was three very persistent French gangsters, a couple of Irish mobsters and the betrayal of his albatross-of-a-girlfriend. His sudden introduction to a world where no-one can be trusted (or is that just his paranoia?) has him running all over Andalucia in constant fear for his life and as intent on correcting bad English as he is on scoring the next hit. Chris Haslam has written a fast-moving roller-coaster of a 'trip' that has you hanging on to your insides and reading more hilarious descriptions of pain and drug dependency than you may have thought possible. Very funny, smart and a little dangerous.

Vincent Cassar, Waterstone's Bristol

Waterstone's Books Quarterly

Lees bij de volgende opgaven steeds eerst de vraag voordat je de bijbehorende tekst raadpleegt.

■ Tekst 11 Reviews: Fiction

- Je leest graag rechtbankthrillers.
- ^{1p} **42** Wordt in deze verzameling recensies zo'n boek besproken? Zo nee, antwoord "Nee". Zo ja, schrijf de titel van dit boek op.