

A Killing Compulsion

Sixth DC Goodhew a compelling read

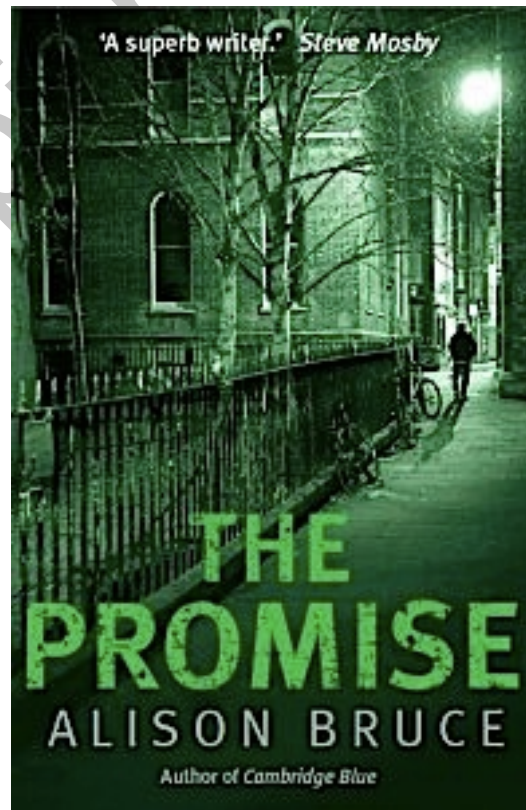
Suspended Sentences

by Jim Napier

Kyle Phipps is a British soldier recently back from the Afghan War. Battling the effects of PTSD, he struggles to adjust to civilian life, but finds himself caught up in a series of personal crises: in a single night his relationship with his wife Hannah ends, and he is denied access to his young son Harry. But that's only the beginning. Ever since finding the body of a young woman, Lila Rashnikov, the memory of her face had come to dominate Kyle's life, and Hannah had unwisely set in motion events that turned Lila's killer on to Kyle's own family as well.

Like Kyle, DC Gary Goodhew's own life is in turmoil. He is recovering from the death of a colleague and nearly fatal injuries suffered in a previous case, and not at all certain that he's ready to return to work. Trolling the cold files of unsolved cases, his colleague PC Sue Gully discovers that when Goodhew was eleven his grandfather had been killed during a Break-and-Enter case. DC Marks — now DI Marks, and her boss — had supervised the case. Vital

information about his grandfather's case had been withheld from Gary because of his age at the time, and even when years had passed and he joined the force Goodhew had never been told the truth, posing a significant issue for Sue Gully and DI Marks.



When a middle-aged man, sleeping rough, is found beaten to death, the pathologist reveals that the victim's eyes had also been mutilated, post mortem. When

Goodhew returns to work he is called to the scene, and recognizes the victim as a former friend and informer, a fact that would normally raise questions about Goodhew's involvement in the case. But when they both realise that the death is the work of a serial killer, DI Marks lets Goodhew remain on the team. In a converging plotline both Kyle Phipps and Gary Goodhew will be forced to put aside their personal crises to confront a cunning murderer with a dark agenda and

the perfect cover to commit his crimes.

A compelling police procedural, *The Promise* is the sixth in Bruce's highly successful series featuring DC Gary Goodhew and set in Cambridge. At times graphic, it is nonetheless solidly plotted, with convincing characters and a layered sub-plot that explores Goodhew's nuanced relationships with those around him. An engrossing and satisfying read, and I look forward to the next in the series.

First published on *Reviewing the Evidence*, April 2016.

Since 2005 Jim Napier's reviews and interviews have appeared in several Canadian newspapers and on various crime fiction and literary websites, including his own award-winning site, *Deadly Diversions*. He can be reached at jnapier@deadlydiversions.com

