

A Cause for Celebration

Latest Rebus tale a winner

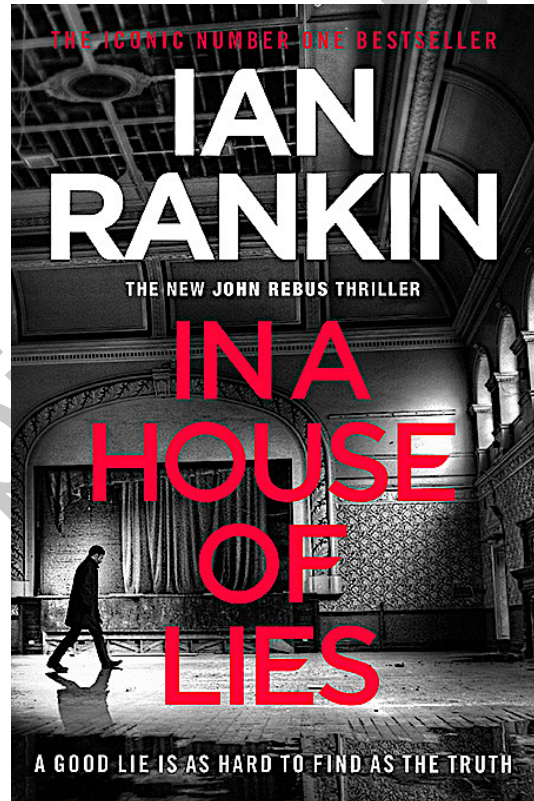
Suspended Sentences

by Jim Napier

The twenty-third tale in Ian Rankin's immensely successful John Rebus series, this outing finds the semi-retired Edinburgh detective informally working (or more accurately, sticking his nose into) the discovery of a body discovered by school kids on wooded farmland outside Edinburgh.

Rebus had been involved in the original missing-persons inquiry a decade earlier, and it had come up empty. Now they are faced with tangible evidence: a body in the boot of a car, killed by repeated blows to the head, and bound at the ankles by what seem to be police-issue handcuffs. The victim is one Stuart Bloom, a gay private investigator who had been hired by a local sleazy film producer named Jackie Ness. Both the car and the body are on Ness's land.

The victim's family had made plenty of noise during the original investigation, and there were suspicions at the time that the inquiry had been compromised, but nothing had come of them. DI Siobhan Clarke is part of a major



incident team taking a fresh look into the case, trying to discover what went wrong and whether anyone inside the force had been responsible for a cover-up. Having been involved in the original case John Rebus is not above doubt, nor are two other officers who were close to one of the suspects in the inquiry, and who are now, ironically, part of the Anti-Corruption Unit looking into the

way it was handled. And for good measure, Rebus's old adversary DI Malcolm Fox is also part of the team looking into the case. All in all, it seems as though far too many people involved in the original inquiry may have something to hide.

A uniquely talented writer, the Scottish-born Ian Rankin almost single-handedly created the genre known as Scottish Noir, and has

been setting the bar in contemporary crime writing for more than thirty years. His latest work, *In A House off Lies*, is vintage Rankin: every line is fresh, the characters finely-etched, their relationships nuanced; the dialogue bristles and the plot is intricately layered. Impeccably crafted and darkly iconic, *In A House of Lies* is crime writing at its very best.

Previously published on *Reviewing the Evidence*, November 2018.

§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 review site, Deadly Diversions. His debut crime novel *Legacy* was published in the Spring of 2017, and the second in the series, *Ridley's War*, is scheduled for release in 2019.



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