



Twelve Days of Winter: Crime at Christmas

Stuart MacBride

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A collection of interlinked tales of crime and retribution laced with dark humour, set around the festive season – from the No. 1 bestseller Stuart MacBride

Thieves, drug dealers, lap-dancers, gangsters and even the odd good guy populate these twelve tales exploring the seedier side of life in North East Scotland.

Twelve Days of Winter: Crime at Christmas Details

Date : Published (first published 2011)

ISBN :

Author : Stuart MacBride

Format : ebook 128 pages

Genre : Mystery, Crime, Short Stories, Fiction, Thriller, Holiday, Christmas, Audiobook



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?tsukino? says

Twelve Days of Winter: Crime at Christmas

Una lettura natalizia alternativa. Una serie di brevi racconti thriller autoconclusivi ma genialmente collegati l'uno all'altro (i dodici racconti sono stati pubblicati anche singolarmente con il titolo Crimini di Natale).

Il bello è che, nonostante il genere truce, c'è più atmosfera natalizia in alcuni di questi racconti, che in certi romanzi rosa specializzati nel genere.

Mi è piaciuto anche perché a Natale non ci sono solo storie smielate.

Angela Verdenius says

Excellent! Interwoven short crime stories set at Christmas time. Almost like watching a subtle domino effect!!!

Alex Cantone says

This one did nothing for me. Set in NE Scotland's seamier side and based on the "12 Days of Christmas" I gave it away after #4. Quirky at best. Hope his other works are better.

David Stimpson says

12 clever linked stories ..MacBride is so great

Alison says

* This book definitely served a purpose for me - it was good to have an audio book of short stories for me to listen to with my husband as we travelled around visiting relatives over Christmas this year.

* I enjoyed the first story the most by far, finding the writing fast paced whilst successfully enabling me to picture the story developing.

* As the book went on, I continued to enjoy the pace and the introduction of various characters and I found the links between the stories were fun to pick out.

* The goriness however was a bit too consistently full-on for me - it was impactful and sometimes even humorous at times, but I became a bit dulled to it in the latter stories and sometimes I found that the stories were too predictable for my liking.

* Having said all of that, I would recommend this book to people who like the genre and would definitely consider reading a full length book by the same author.

Abc says

Questa raccolta di racconti è proprio sorprendente! C'è una sottile vena di umorismo nero che a me piace molto. Ovviamente non tutte le storie sono allo stesso livello. Le mie preferite sono: i piccioncini (mi ha fatto morire dal ridere), hotline (sull'imprevedibilità degli eventi), cucina francese (attenzione a ciò che vi mettono nel piatto!) e la banda delle cornamuse (a Natale siamo tutti più buoni). I racconti sono tutti ambientati nel periodo che precede il Natale, ma non hanno assolutamente nulla di natalizio, anzi! Da notare anche che le storie sono anche legate fra loro, in una spirale di crudeltà che la metà basta.

Chiara says

Quanto mi piace lo stile di MacBride! Racconti brevi ma intensi, non ce n'è uno che non mi sia piaciuto.

Zoey says

12 short crime stories to the theme of the 12 Days of Christmas, all set in the seedier streets of Scotland in the lead up to Christmas. An enjoyable read listen (great narrator) & I liked how all the stories were linked somehow.

Siobhan says

I've had Stuart MacBride's Twelve Days of Winter sitting on my Kindle for a couple of years now, and each year around Christmas I tell myself to dive in and give it a read. I constantly find myself caught up in other books, though, and by the time I get around to it Christmas is already over. Thus, I decided I would read it early this year. It may only be the start of November, and I'm very much someone who believes such a date is too early for festivities, but I wanted to make sure I was able to read it this year.

Twelve Days of Winter provides us with twelve short stories that link together to give us a gritty tale told in the days leading up to Christmas. Some of the stories are better than others, but all have the usual Stuart MacBride darkness thrown in to keep us interested in reading more.

If I'm being honest, my ratings for these stories vary. I read them back-to-back and as a whole had an almost four-star experience (so close that I had to round my rating up), but individually we have three-star, three-point-five-star, and four-star ratings. Some were more enjoyable than others, and if you read them alone they are simply decent reads. It's when you read them together that the best effect is had, giving us something that ties together in a great way.

Although Twelve Days of Winter will never be labelled my favourite Stuart MacBride read, it certainly kept me hooked throughout.

Sandy *The world could end while I was reading and I would never notice* says

ABOUT THIS BOOK: On the First Day of Christmas...

Twelve Days, twelve stories

Billy Partridge wasn't really cut out to be a cat burglar, but Dillon hadn't really given him any option. It was either do the job, or come up with thirteen grand by Thursday ... or have both his legs shattered. And the leg thing didn't even write off what he and Twitch owed Dillon, just deferred the interest. Come the 15th of January there'd still be thirteen thousand to pay.

Then there's newbie after-school drug-dealer Brian, who probably shouldn't be taking advantage of the job's fringe benefits; Philippe, a chef with anger-management issues and a lot of very sharp knives; Mr Unwin, the undertaker with the golden touch; and Lord Peter Forsythe-Leven, MSP, learning the hard way that having it all just means you've got so much more to lose...

Twelve short stories, all set in Oldcastle, all taking their twisted inspiration from the classical Christmas song. Murder, betrayal, drugs, sex, and tinsel.

MY THOUGHTS: Although this is definitely not my favorite by Stuart MacBride, it is still well worth reading. It is blackly humorous, seedy Scottish Noir. Not one character has a redeemable feature. It is filled with criminals, pedophiles, and other generally unsavory, detestable characters. Just my sort of Christmas book!

The stories are all linked together, although this is not immediately obvious, by the various characters and their greedy machinations. The first story is by far the best and sets the tone for the following eleven tales.

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THE AUTHOR: Stuart MacBride (that's me) was born in Dumbarton -- which is Glasgow as far as I'm concerned -- moving up to Aberdeen at the tender age of two, when fashions were questionable. Nothing much happened for years and years and years: learned to play the recorder, then forgot how when they changed from little coloured dots to proper musical notes (why the hell couldn't they have taught us the notes in the first bloody place? I could have been performing my earth-shattering rendition of 'Three Blind Mice' at the Albert Hall by now!); appeared in some bizarre World War Two musical production; did my best to avoid eating haggis and generally ran about the place a lot.

Next up was an elongated spell in Westhill -- a small suburb seven miles west of Aberdeen -- where I embarked upon a mediocre academic career, hindered by a complete inability to spell and an attention span the length of a gnat's doodad.

And so to UNIVERSITY, far too young, naive and stupid to be away from the family home, sharing a subterranean flat in one of the seedier bits of Edinburgh with a mad Irishman, and four other bizarre individuals. The highlight of walking to the art school in the mornings (yes: we were students, but we still did mornings) was trying not to tread in the fresh bloodstains outside our front door, and dodging the undercover CID officers trying to buy drugs. Lovely place.

But university and I did not see eye to eye, so off I went to work offshore. Like many all-male environments, working offshore was the intellectual equivalent of Animal House, only without the clever bits. Swearing, smoking, eating, more swearing, pornography, swearing, drinking endless plastic cups of tea... and did I mention the swearing? But it was more money than I'd seen in my life! There's something about being handed a wadge of cash as you clamber off the minibus from the heliport, having spent the last two weeks offshore and the last two hours in an orange, rubber romper suit / body bag, then blowing most of it in the pubs and clubs of Aberdeen. And being young enough to get away without a hangover.

Then came a spell of working for myself as a graphic designer, which went the way of all flesh and into the heady world of studio management for a nation-wide marketing company. Then some more freelance design work, a handful of voiceovers for local radio and video production companies and a bash at being an actor (with a small 'a'), giving it up when it became clear there was no way I was ever going to be good enough to earn a decent living.

It was about this time I fell into bad company -- a blonde from Fife who conned me into marrying her -- and started producing websites for a friend's fledgling Internet company. From there it was a roller coaster ride (in that it made a lot of people feel decidedly unwell) from web designer to web manager, lead programmer, team lead and other assorted technical bollocks with three different companies, eventually ending up as a project manager for a global IT company.

But there was always the writing (well, that's not true, the writing only started two chapters above this one). I fell victim to that most dreadful of things: peer pressure. Two friends were writing novels and I thought, 'why not? I could do that'.

Took a few years though...

DISCLOSURE: I listened to the audiobook of Twelve Days of Winter: Crime at Christmas, by Stuart MacBride, narrated by Ian Hanmore, published by HarperCollins Publishers, via OverDrive. All opinions expressed in this review are entirely my own personal opinions.

Please refer to my Goodreads.com profile page or the about page on sandysbookaday.wordpress.com for an explanation of my rating system. This review and others are also published on my blog sandysbookaday.wordpress.com <https://sandysbookaday.wordpress.com/...>

Lynn Halliday says

Missed the mark for me.

This was an interesting concept for a book but I felt it fell short of what it could have been. I understand that the twelve stories were meant to be interlinked but that was a lot more obvious in some than others. I feel a stronger link between them would have had more of an impact. I also feel that after you've read a couple of the stories you quickly grasp the overall theme i.e. the main character is going to kill or be killed. This caused the subsequent stories to lose their punch.

Either way this was a quick read and doesn't diminish my appreciation of Stuart MacBride and his books. I just hope he releases the next Logan MacRae novel soon as I'm excited to see what Steele has been up to.

Richard Burrage says

I like Stuart MacBride's writing style. In my mind it is reminiscent of a slightly nasty Ian Rankin. The stories were all pretty good and one or two were a little better than that. Easy reading.

FrauMiest says

I bought this for Ian Hanmore's voice and he does a great job.

The stories are rough and brutal, but sometimes funny. I liked how in the end are all linked. But, and that for me is a huge but, it cements "the old ways", a kind of thinking that's as disgusting chauvinistic as possible. Women are absolutely just possible to be sexualized in one way or another, no other way they could act or better be acted on. I can't enjoy such stuff anymore.

Steve says

Okay, so the premise is somewhat original: twelve short stories interwoven, all with titles based on the "Twelve Days of Christmas" song. Plus, Stuart MacBride writing. What could go wrong?

The writing, as expected, is top-notch. I liked how the stories tied together. But this whole anthology left me feeling... grimy. There's nothing at all redeemable or uplifting about the entire venture. There is not one single likeable character; everyone is "bad", out for their own gain at the expense of the people around them. The only thing "Christmas-y" about it is that it's set around Christmas time.

Not at all what I was expecting, and I was really disappointed with this one. Not recommended.

Sarah Baines says

Not my favourite Stuart MacBride but definitely worth a read. 12 stories all linked somehow. My personal favourite was Lords a Leaping and least favourite was Partridge in a Pear Tree although I liked them all.
