



Sacrifice

Paul Finch

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Innocent people are dying. Who will be next? Find out in the second Detective Mark 'Heck' Heckenburg from #1 ebook bestseller Paul Finch.

A vicious serial killer is holding the country to ransom, publicly - and gruesomely - murdering his victims.

When a man is burnt alive on a bonfire, it seems like a tragic Guy Fawkes Night accident. But with the discovery of a young couple on Valentine's Day – each with an arrow through the heart – something more sinister becomes clear. A 'calendar killer' is on the loose.

Detective Mark 'Heck' Heckenburg is up against it. With a rising body count and the public's eyes on him, Heck must find the killer before he executes more victims.

Because this killer has a plan. And nothing will stop him completing it.

A heart-stopping and grisly thriller that will enthrall fans of Stuart MacBride and Katia Lief.

Sacrifice Details

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Author : Paul Finch

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From Reader Review Sacrifice for online ebook

Milla Diaz says

Oh my god. This book has one of the most gruesome and gory crimes scenes I've come across. I still cringe when I think about a few of them. It's so obvious that the author has been in the police. His books are on a different level.

Lorrie says

I am so blown away by this book. Wow. This is one heck of a great thriller! Disturbing, yes, but what an amazing psychological 'ride'!

I received an e-copy of this book from Edelweiss in exchange for an honest review.

Becca says

Quick read, fast pace

Gail says

Stunning, breathtaking and just a very scary, brilliant read. Cannot wait for DS Mark Heckenburg's next case. He's my new hero.

I loved Stalkers and this is no different.

Exceptional stuff

Lejla says

Reading about serial killers is a guilty pleasure of mine. This genre might not be for everyone – and let me tell you, the crimes depicted here were something that even I had my mouth open at when reading. Some were pretty inconceivable even to visualize.

Finch definitely did a great job again. The plot for this book is typical of these kinds of serial killer novels – people disappear only to be found dead and positioned/propped in ways that speaks volumes.

And what a twist at the end. Catching suspects, disappointment when Heck and the team find out they're not their killers, and surprise when they finally reveal the real killers.

Suzi says

uh tko voli jeziva i neobicna ubojstva ovo je prava poslastica brrr :)

Christine says

This is the second in the Heck series written by Paul Finch. It did not match the brilliance of 'Stalkers', mostly because it felt a little too familiar. I must have seen or read too many evil killers using certain religious or pseudo-religious dates to murder before. This time the killer is using Bonfire night, Christmas and Easter as an excuse to brutalize and murder. It was nicely chilling, even if the reveal felt like an anti-climax.

On the positive side, I do love Heck and it was this that kept me going to the end. He is a very sexy, tough lead and his relationship with his boss/ex girlfriend, Gemma, is very entertaining. I hope we get more of this 'will they/won't they' between Gemma and Heck.

I also enjoyed some of the crimes taking place in Bradford and Leeds. I want more northern gritty crime. I look forward to 'The Killing Club' and seeing what is in store next for Heck.

Richard Barber says

Paul Finch knows how to write a great book. His Heck novels are fantastic; intriguing plots with great action sequences. A lot of authors would learn from how he uses pace to drive a story forward. and this book, this is true class. I don't read much crime fiction, but I always read Heck.

Željko Erceg says

Vrlo zanimljiv i pitak pisac. Nepretenciozno, simpatično i dinamično.

Kirsty says

(I received this book for free as part of Goodreads First Reads giveaways)

I feel life's too short to read books that irk me so I tend to ditch them if I still feel that way 100 pages in. I'm at page 105 and much as I want to like this book, I just can't go on.

Perhaps I should not have read that Paul Finch used to be a writer for The Bill because I think that may have set my expectations way too high.

I know his first book and, indeed this book, have received good reviews from readers but to me it just felt

like writing by numbers.

When a major new character is introduced we're given a physical description (more often than not) and it makes it feel clunky and amateurish.

It's also very descriptive in places, unnaturally so. It reminded me of setting a scene on stage or on TV and it doesn't come over well in the written medium.

I feel he's left it too long to return to characters introduced in the very beginning - so much so that I've forgotten what happened 100 pages back. Maybe there's some clever joining of the dots towards the middle and I'll miss out on something fantastic, but that's a chance I'm willing to take.

One other small, entirely personal point, is the protagonist's shortened name - Heck.

It irritated me and I can't decide why. Maybe a small part of it was that I kept wanting to say (being a northerner) "Oh heck, Heck" :-D

Best Crime Books & More says

I read the first book by Paul Finch in this series entitled 'Stalkers' and absolutely LOVED it! I was really looking forward to reading the second in this series. Detective Mark Heckenburg is a bloody brilliant character. He is (well in my head anyway) very attractive in that 'just got out of bed way' and has a very defiant nature (what more could a woman ask for?). Mark Heckenburg is known simply as Heck and in this latest offering is part of a team tracking down a vicious serial killer. This particular serial killer is a little different as he likes his kills to be shared with the public.

As ever the scenes described are brutally descriptive and totally engaging! The story certainly has the pace and drama but for some reason I felt that a couple of parts in the book were hard going, it just seemed a little too scripted, but that certainly didn't deter from the overall enjoyment of the book. I really like some of the recurring characters in this series such as Gemma Piper who Heck happens to have been in a brief relationship with in the past. I must say one thing I like about Paul Finch book is that I get the feeling nobody is safe. I think he may well be a writer that will like to take major chances with characters so I am always on guard when reading wondering who he is going to kill off next?

The only other thing I didn't like about this book was the last scene involving the serial killer felt a little too 'convenient' but other than that small factor I was kept pretty much on the edge of my seat right up until the end. Although I didn't like this as much as I did Stalkers, I am absolutely ready for book 3. Mr Finch appears to be challenging my latest fictional crush (currently Sean Black's character Ryan Lock) and reeling me in to maybe feel the same about Heck. Mmmmmm, book 3 may well make my mind up!

Book Addict Shaun says

Last year I read Paul Finch's Stalkers and absolutely loved it. I finished it with that happy feeling of having discovered a brilliant new talent in the crime genre. I got Sacrifice from the library on release but didn't get to round to actually reading it so when I received a review copy of The Killing Club (out May 22nd) I immediately got hold of Sacrifice to read beforehand. I have been reading it on and off over the last few days and it was an amazing read. Paul can definitely tell a story and hold a reader, I was reading this long into the night.

The book opens with two Leeds police officers being called to an abandoned warehouse on Christmas morning where they are told they will find something 'interesting'. What they find is a dead old man done up

like Santa Clause and left to die inside a chimney. We then follow Heck chasing after two suspects he believes to be the M1 Maniac(s). Well, he kind of apprehends the two suspects but the aftermath of what happens leads the public to lose all confidence in the Serial Crime Unit. So, when more killings take place and the police are led to assume a calendar killer is at work, Heck's boss and ex-lover Gemma Piper believes it's time for the squad to restore public confidence and apprehend the killer as quickly as possible. Except it's Heck's belief that they are looking for more than one person. And so the hunt begins...

Paul is a fantastic writer and you just lose yourself in the book. It's quite a long book but unlike some crime books it doesn't feel long and it never felt like a chore to read. I absolutely love the character of Heck. I love policemen who go off the rails and break all the rules etc but what we have here is a policeman doing his job as he feels it's his calling. He has a book full of photos of all the victims he attempts to find justice for, as a reminder of why he does the job he does. That's not to say he doesn't break the rules occasionally he definitely does but it's more in a believable and realistic way. I love the character of Heck. There is serious chemistry between him and Gemma and I love reading about the two of them.

Paul doesn't hold back with the graphicness of some of the scenes either. I particularly liked the scene where two young lovers drive to their usual spot only to be creeped out by some strange goings on. This part of the book felt almost like the start of a horror movie! It was very atmospheric and I was alone in the house at the time so was a bit wary reading it! I love crime fiction like this though, the more gruesome the better. Paul's writing reminds me a little of Chris Carter who is one of my favourite crime authors, and another author who isn't afraid to write at the more gruesome end of the spectrum.

I definitely got caught up in wondering who the killer was, and why they were killing at specific times of the year. Bonfire Night, Christmas, Valentine's, Easter.. The police are left wondering when the next murder will be but there's just too many dates for them to choose from. The last few chapters especially were particularly gripping and I couldn't read quick enough trying to find out how it would all end. Overall I'd say this book is even better than Stalkers and I'm going to be starting The Killing Club ASAP. Paul's books feel very authentic and this is no surprise given his background in police work and television work. There is also a wonderful Acknowledgement at the end to his father which was very touching. An absolutely fantastic read which puts Paul Finch in my top five crime authors. I think his books would work really well on TV. I'm not sure there's many crime fiction fans who haven't heard of Paul Finch but for those that haven't I urge you to read his books ASAP.

Ravi says

The writing is brilliant but the plot spoils the book.. so whats a thriller book with great writing but no proper plot?

A great book with no plot.. i assume.

Dont think will followup with any more of Mr Finch's books.

If you are a fan of blood and gore,then this book is for you. If you want a plot then you reading the wrong book.

Nev Murray says

By Heck this is good again. Good characters, good story, good plots. Gritty, fast moving. Heckenberg is a

character I hope to read a lot more of.

This review was written before I started to take my reviewing seriously. I would need to re-read the book to give it a serious and fair review so the above review was what I posted at the time.

Gary Fry says

SACRIFICE by Paul Finch

Review by Gary Fry

For all his sterling work in the horror genre, I think the Heck series of police procedurals / detective novels are Paul Finch's ideal milieu. As a former cop, his narratives have an air of authority, of events lived rather than just researched, and this is perhaps the key to the books' success.

Paul is an unassuming guy, a native of Wigan, who talks straight and wouldn't know a "pretension" if it danced in front of him. This second characteristic – the "man of the world" tone of his fiction – is perhaps the second reason why the books fly. The prose is half-chatty / half-lyrical, the storytelling headlong and headstrong.

I loved this book from the first page – it hooks at once, with its appealing premise concerning a calendar killer. But this is just a front for some pretty trenchant and satisfying commentary about the spiritual vacuity of modern life, how even folk promising fulfilment are as bereft as those against whom they pitch their homespun policy. All this stuff is delivered without a single "lecture", simply woven into the tale in a seamless fashion, to be taken or left by the reader according to preference. That's quite a trick, and leaves the book both thrilling on the surface and slightly deeper beneath it.

Heck is a great character, too. At first, you think there's not a great deal to him other than car chases and good hunches, but after the book is done, you think back and realise that the author has done another great job. The characterisation is revealed in situ, rather than in reflexive info dumps, and that renders it greatly satisfying. Hooked on Heck? the page following the last one asks, and you know what? I think I am.

The dialogue is great throughout – we should expect nothing less from a seasoned screenwriter – but Paul's many descriptions of settings shine, too. He writes that effortless prose that's a joy to read, both colourful and rhythmic. In many other authors, I have a real problem with stock phrases ("...that had knocked her for six," for example) but they kind of work here. Paul's prose style has the right tone for these many well-trodden terms; they suit the workaday characters. There's an unfortunate transposition of words on page 233 – "Keep your eyes to the ground and your ears open," – but that's just me trying to show how observant I am. No other typos or stylistic infelicities I could see.

The plot is brilliant, a really clever and cunning idea, properly exploited. I did think that – SPOILER HERE, FOLKS!!! – the final calendar killing strained credulity a bit. That is to say, bringing it forwards 26 days (however much the villain makes a spoken concession to this), robs the story of a little of its symmetry, but that's only a minor thing. It couldn't have worked in any other way. [SPOILER OVER]

The novel has a few "LOL" moments, including a great character called Mick the Muppet who, the author tells me, is based on a real person. There's also a dig at horror editors, which, speaking as one myself, I found absolutely hilarious. This intermittently playful tone lends the grisly proceedings an authentic atmosphere. I grow increasingly impatient with fiction that's unrelenting grim; it misses half of life. Here we get both the laughs and the horrors that characterise everyday modern existence.

All in all, Sacrifice is an absolute triumph of a novel: well-written well-paced, exciting (yes, that unfashionable quality), unpretentious, informative, fun, and genuine.

Well done, Finchy. You done good, my son. Long may it continue.
