



A Thousand Cuts

Thomas Mogford

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A thousand cuts ... We may be few, but together we can change the world

When a routine court case takes a sinister turn, defence lawyer Spike Sanguinetti starts asking dangerous questions that nobody seems to want answered. Soon, it's not just the truth that's at stake: it is everything and everyone that Spike holds precious. As the Gibraltar sun beats relentlessly down, crimes of the past and present collide, relationships are tested and long-buried secrets exposed. Who can Spike trust? And where do his own loyalties lie?

A Thousand Cuts Details

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From Reader Review A Thousand Cuts for online ebook

CuteBadger says

I received this book as a Goodreads Giveaway. I'd read the first of this crime series some time ago and enjoyed it a great deal, and while I was a bit worried about picking up the series further on without having read the books in between I needn't have been as they're not vital for enjoyment of this book.

I really liked this novel - loved the Gibraltar setting, the characters, and the "cold case" type element of events which took place many years ago but which still have an impact on today's world. The author has a style which is easy to read and I enjoyed his descriptions of the smells around the characters, which are a fantastic way to pull the reader in. I found this a very satisfying, well-plotted crime novel with a great setting, realistic characters, and an emotional centre. Would recommend.

Liz Barnsley says

Loved A Thousand Cuts. You know when you find a book that has characters you fall for, a setting that lives around you and a story that is addictive, clever and unpredictable – that.

This is the first book I've read in this series (now dammit I have to go back and read the others, you know sometimes you just wish you could hate a book and prevent your tbr pile getting bigger but not in this case. Sigh) but it doesn't really matter, I don't feel I missed anything, the story flows beautifully with enough information about the characters to have an idea where we are – always a good thing for those of us who are always behind with stuff.

Score 10/10 for Spike Sanguinetti as a main protagonist, an honourable man trying to keep things equal in the murky world of law, standing up for his client despite said client being a bit of an ass – then finding himself embroiled in a historical mystery that holds dangerous possibilities for those he holds dear. Loyalties are tested, moral and legal decisions challenging him every day and blimey there is a baby on the way too. Nothing like putting your characters through the wringer is there, to make us readers love them.

Gibraltar as a setting is spot on, beautifully described, I now want to go there, I can see it in my minds eye – another strength of this particular story, putting the people firmly in the places makes for a much more immersive read. I enjoyed the historical aspects, could feel Spike's frustration jumping off the page on occasion it was all really quite terrific. That and the group dynamic, I feel Jessica may become long suffering, I was engaged by Rufus and the father/son relationship and the ending left some personal issues unresolved that means I will inevitably be picking up the next book when it comes out.

Yep. Good. Good crime. We like it. Highly Recommended.

Raven says

There are only a handful of authors that I have followed consistently throughout the course of their writing careers, and particularly following established series. As a reader there is always an equal feeling of excitement and dread when you resume reading a series- excited that there is indeed a new book, but an underlying fear that this one won't be as good as the ones preceding it. Having reviewed the four previous books featuring charismatic Gibraltar based lawyer, Spike Sanguinetti, it was with an angel and a devil on

my shoulder that I started reading A Thousand Cuts...

Opening with a tense incident of military sabotage in 1940's Gibraltar, I knew instantly that my knowledge of Gibraltar's chequered history would be pleasantly expanded again. When I originally embarked on this series there were only three things I confidently knew about Gibraltar:

There's a rock

There are apes.

Spain is a trifle miffed that it's under British jurisdiction.

What I have consistently loved about this series, is how much Mogford has opened up the turbulent history of this area piece by piece so that every book exposes a different slice of its unique history defined by location and politics. He always accomplishes this in a fluid and non-lecturing style, firmly adhering to the universal truth that past history cannot be denied as absolutely defining and reverberating in our current times. By using an incident set further back in history as the lynch-pin, Mogford is given a great opportunity to people this book with an older array of characters, who find themselves in the cross-hairs of a killer seeking revenge for sins of the past. This he accomplishes with aplomb, weaving together the past and the present, rich with interesting historical detail, and providing an equally fascinating study of the very human instinct of avenging wrongful deeds, however long that takes to achieve. Consequently, one simple act of wartime sabotage leads to murder, false accusations and devastating retribution, and you will find your sympathy for one character in particular toyed with consistently throughout.

As to Spike Sanguinetti himself, the central lead of the series, who is still torn between his two lawyerly hats- corporate and criminal- his story has moved on apace. The normal rescinder applies that joining the series at this later point is not a problem for the reader, as Spike's former adventures are neatly inserted. This particular story gives Spike the opportunity to don his preferred criminal lawyer guise, and to delve deeper into the circumstances of a perplexing series of murders and to navigate the shadowy world of military intelligence and cover-ups. He is still proving himself a tad ham-fisted in the field of personal relationships, with his partner and police detective, Jessica, on the cusp of maternity leave, and their relationship experiencing a few troubled waters due to this investigation. I liked the way that Mogford homed in on Jessica's own insecurity at having to give up her career and her determination to keep working until the critical point, and will be interested to see how much motherhood affects her in terms of her staunch loyalty to her career. Also, this book puts Spike sharply at odds with former friends and allies, and with the whiff of illegal practices in his own place of work, Mogford sets these teasers up nicely for the next book. As usual I loved the interactions between Spike and Rufus, his curmudgeonly father, and the way that Rufus is investing emotionally in the care of Spike and Jessica's adopted son Charlie, which has added another lively dynamic to Spike's personal life.

So all my initial fears were quickly assuaged, once again fully embracing Mogford's talent for good storytelling underscored by relevant and interesting historical period detail of this unique location.

Thoroughly enjoyed A Thousand Cuts and suitably intrigued as to what the next instalment will reveal in this superlative international crime series. Highly recommended.

John Carter says

I received a copy of this book from a goodreads giveaway.

This is the first book I've read from Thomas Mogford, and the first I've encountered of Spike Sanguinetti but I can say I will be going back to the start to read the previous novels due to how much I enjoyed A Thousand Cuts. Not only does it have a good story, but the characters are also well written and clear in their actions. I've never step foot in Gibraltar either, but reading A Thousand Cuts made me feel as if I know it already.

I don't have any complaints whatsoever, it was an incredibly enjoyable book which contained smart and realistic crime solving. The only thing I felt was that I didn't know some of the characters as well as I could

have due to not having read previous books in the series, although that doesn't change much as *A Thousand Cuts* is a very good standalone book as well.

Cathy says

I don't typically read mysteries, but I spotted this one on the New shelf at my local library. I found Spike and his mystery-adventures an intriguing change from the usual mostly due to his well, likableness, and the cultural elements of Gibraltar--his mixed ethnic background being a plus.

After reading this book, the latest of the Spike Sanguinetti mysteries, I delved into the first four in the series. To this reader, the first books fell below par compared with the latest, although the locales are always well done. Spike has come a long ways from the James Bond type wannabe he appeared to be in the first novels of this series--with more clumsiness than Bond. I was also not convinced of Spikes 'love' for Zahra, his love interest that carries into three of those books. It just didn't ring true--being that Zahra wasn't well crafted as a character to me. Beautiful is a standard for handsome men like Spike. Zahra didn't show enough character to make him fall in love.

I do recommend Spike though for ardent mystery fans looking for an interesting change.

Overall, I look forward to Mogford's next Spike Sanguinetti mystery. May there be many more.

CriminalRepurcussions says

Another terrific mystery story from this wonderful author set in exotic Gibraltar.

Having read the previous books in the Sanguinetti series I was more than entertained, amused, and kept guessing by the developments and surprises in the plot and characters' lives.

I hope the series continues.

I really recommend you discover this series if you have not yet done so.

You'll be able to follow the story if you haven't read the previous, it's able to stand alone, but you'd probably like to read the previous in this unusual and clever series.

Wendy says

The present day meets the dark and murky past as friends, politics and a cryptic mystery from World War II become finely tuned to the cry for justice. The title, *A Thousand Cuts*, is more profound than I first imagined with its meaning becoming significantly clearer as the novel moves forward.

The location itself is superb, such a change to the usual urban crime thrillers I tend to stick with for safeties sake. Gibraltar's oppressive heat, its ancient facades, and the culture and relationships forged on the island all play a role in unravelling the history itself; it may be haven for most, but for others it's a life sentence of memories they'd rather forget.

Being burdened by the need to do the right thing often presents a dilemma for Spike Sanguinetti at the cost of his own personal relationships. He's a contradictory character with equally irritating and redeeming features. In the quest for the truth this lawyer often puts his client's needs above the ones he cares about most. On one hand Spike is compelled to follow the story of a client, an unreliable alcoholic by the name of Christopher Massetti whose father was executed in the 1940's for a crime Massetti believes he is innocent of. On the other hand his fiancée Jessica and his family are regularly treated to Spike's impromptu absences, all

for the cause he's pursuing at the time. I wanted to give him a good shake at times if only to remind him of what he has to lose.

Why has this case presented itself now and why do the facts matter to Spike so much? The further he travels into the past the road grows rockier and at times impassable. The whole sordid affair leads him to question the motives of the people that have affected the outcome of his life and how far he will go to protect them.

The book is separated into seven parts and its clipped chapters make the brooding intrigue incredibly easy to absorb. I was especially interested to read the aged evidence in the form of short transcripts of personal accounts from the 1940s. These were presented in the format they were recorded and made the historical facts appear all that more 'real' allowing the emotions, reasoning, and hints of personalities of those being quizzed to break through.

Events conspire throughout to both conceal and reveal the truth, and as a result the strong mystery element and imminent threat dodge and dive with stealthy skill. Very nicely done.

Confession time: when I picked up this book I had absolutely no idea it was part of a series (I know, I know. I will go straight back to my cave after writing this review). Well, it is. A series, that is. Yet it made absolutely no difference that I hadn't read the previous 'Spike Sanguinetti Mysteries' as I thoroughly enjoyed reading *A Thousand Cuts* as a standalone.

(My thanks to Bloomsbury for providing a surprise copy of this title for which I am delighted to offer an unbiased review.)

Angela says

I received this book as a Goodreads Giveaway. Thank you.

I really enjoyed the book. I thought it was a fast paced page turner with great twists and turns and rich historical detail.

Thomas Mogford is a new author for me but I will definitely be looking for his other books.

Sharon says

I loved the book. Had a great story. The story went back to the time of war as well as the present day. It had me wanting to keep turning the pages to see what was happening next.

A great thriller.

Jackie Law says

A Thousand Cuts, by Thomas Mogford, is the fifth book in the author's Spike Sanguinetti Mystery series. Set in Gibraltar it focuses on the eponymous defense lawyer who in this instalment agrees to take on a tricky client – a volatile alcoholic named Massetti – at a colleague's request. The case takes an unexpected turn and Sanguinette is drawn into a tragedy that unfolded during the Second World War and led to his client's father being sentenced by the courts to death by hanging.

Sanguinetti has plenty on his mind. He is making a home for his newly adopted toddler son, Charlie, and his fiancée, Jenny who is pregnant with their child. They are living with his father in the house he grew up in, an arrangement that seems to suit all given the amount of childcare the old man is expected to provide. Jenny wishes to find somewhere more appealing to live but with tax exiles requiring residency little decent housing is available within their price range.

The tax status of Gibraltar affects much that goes on including the pressure Sanguinetti finds himself under to service lucrative clients from around the world. His family have lived locally for generations so have many contacts, including the wealthy Stanfords who he has been close to since childhood. Drew Stanford is also a lawyer and Sanguinetti's opponent on the Massetti case. When Drew announces that he intends to run for political office Sanguinetti is expected to offer his unquestioning support. His personal moral compass puts a strain on loyalties from all sides.

As with any good mystery there is a varied cast of characters whose history draws them together in unexpected ways. The plot is deftly presented in short chapters that keep the reader engaged.

I enjoyed the descriptions of the people, for example in a restaurant where Sanguinetti glances at the clientele:

“tax lawyers, liquoring up non-doms, their raucous laughter failing to conceal that telltale sharpness behind the eye. The insurance brokers – yesterday's boom industry – in their sensible suits with a touch of the idiosyncratic thrown in: the spotted bow-tie, the statement jewellery. There was even the odd bored-looking Russian or Italian, ignoring his surgically enhanced wife, here under suffereance to see out his required period of tax residency.”

The reader quickly gets a feel for the challenges of living in such a place, the resentments that can fester and the history some would take risks to keep buried. When the death toll starts to rise Sanguinetti finds himself questioning how much he truly knows about long term acquaintances.

This is an engaging and entertaining read that deals well with the very human sides of the cast. As I knew nothing of Gibraltar, the evocation of the setting also added interest.

My copy of this book was provided gratis by the publisher, Bloomsbury.

Gregory Totman says

First book I've read of Mogfords . A complex yarn yet plotted well . Delving into the history of Gibraltar in world war 2 brings brings some latter day realities to light . Lawyer spike is as straight and honest as they come yet some of his associates aren't. A good read .

Alison Eden says

I was so hooked by this book that I read it in less than 24 hours. Just couldn't put it down. This is billed as Spike Sanguinetti number 5 but the fact that I hadn't read 1 to 4 didn't seem to matter, it was easy to read as a stand alone. Great plot with lots of twists and turns and great characters. Will definitely read more of this series.

Kathy E says

Excellent view into Gibraltar life and a wonderful mix of characters. This is the first Spike Sanguinetti novel I've read and it didn't disappoint.
