



8-22 August 2019

Dear Reader,

It is a great honour for me that my novel, *Cedar Valley*, has been chosen for OverDrive's fantastic initiative, 'Together We Read'. Libraries have always been a special place for me – somewhere to get lost for hours among books of all kinds. In fact, my whole family relies heavily on our local library and our visits are always a long and rambling pleasure. It is wonderful to know that *Cedar Valley* will be included in OverDrive's Digital Book Club.

*Cedar Valley* is the story of a young woman called Benny Miller, who arrives in a small NSW town in 1993, in search of information about her mother. Benny's mother, Vivian Moon, has recently died – but even in life she was something of a mystery. So when Vivian's old friend, Odette, invites Benny to stay in a little cottage she owns in town, Benny – sad and curious – accepts.

On the same day that Benny arrives, a man arrives too. Dressed in a brown vintage suit, he sits down on the footpath outside Cedar Valley Curios and Old Wares and leans his back against the glass. By that evening, due to some rather unexpected events, this man becomes the subject of great fascination for the townsfolk.

*Cedar Valley* is told from the perspective of three people: Benny Miller; Cora Franks, who owns the antique store; and Detective Sergeant Anthony Simmons, a local policeman who soon becomes involved, in more ways than one. I see the book as a kind of dual mystery. There's a crimey kind of mystery at the centre of the story, and there's a more personal, family mystery that weaves its way around it. It is a book about identity and memory, desire and loss. It asks questions such as: How well can we really know another person? What is the meaning of family? Why are some people so stuck by their trauma, while others can transcend it? I could go on, but I hope that readers will read the book and be left with questions of their own, to discuss and ponder. In fact, there are two rival book clubs in the town of Cedar Valley, so I guess I had book clubs in mind when I was writing it.

Thanks to OverDrive, to libraries everywhere, and happy reading.

Holly Throsby