



1-15 September, 2021

Hello!

Hello to all the wonderful readers participating in the OverDrive's Together We Read program.

I am so thrilled that my crime fiction novel *Scrublands* has been chosen for this! I love a good book club and I love libraries, so this sounds like heaven!

*Scrublands* starts dramatically, when the local priest - a popular and charismatic young man named Byron Swift - inexplicably shoots dead five of his parishioners in an isolated town named Riversend.

The narrative proper starts almost a year later, when damaged journalist Martin Scarsden arrives in town for what should be a straight forward assignment - to write a newspaper feature on how the townspeople are coping as the anniversary of the shooting approaches.

But nothing in the town is as it first appears, and soon Martin is questioning the accepted version of events.

One of the first people he meets is the beautiful and enigmatic Mandalay Blonde. But is she telling him all she knows? Soon Martin is swept away by events and finds himself fighting for his life.

*Scrublands* is the first of a series of three crime fiction novels, all featuring Martin and Mandalay. *Silver* sees Martin return to his childhood home, while *Trust* sees Mandalay confront her own demons.

Since the publication of *Scrublands*, I've been amazed by the kind and generous feedback of readers. Some like the book for the writing, some for the characters, some for the plot and yet others for the setting. I wonder, which characteristic you will find the most entertaining and rewarding?

At any rate, I really do hope you enjoy *Scrublands*.

All the best and thanks for participating!

Chris Hammer  
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