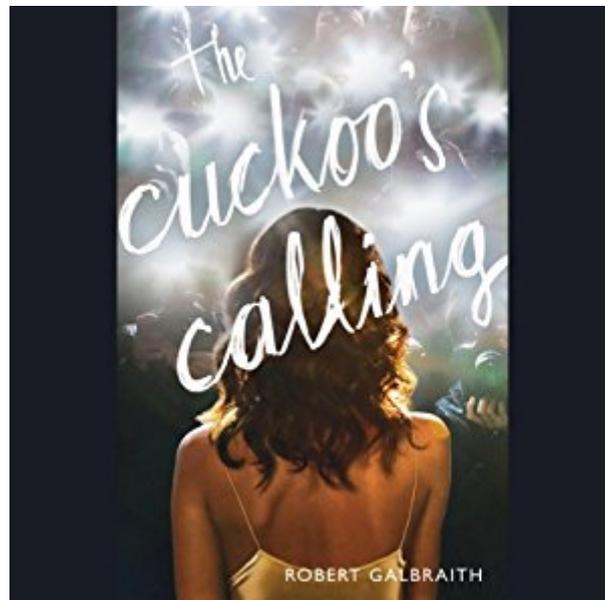


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The Cuckoo's Calling



Synopsis

The Cuckoo's Calling is a 2013 crime fiction novel by J. K. Rowling, published under the pseudonym Robert Galbraith. A brilliant mystery in a classic vein: Detective Cormoran Strike investigates a supermodel's suicide. After losing his leg to a land mine in Afghanistan, Cormoran Strike is barely scraping by as a private investigator. Strike is down to one client, and creditors are calling. He has also just broken up with his longtime girlfriend and is living in his office. Then John Bristow walks through his door with an amazing story: his sister, the legendary supermodel Lula Landry, known to her friends as the Cuckoo, famously fell to her death a few months earlier. The police ruled it a suicide, but John refuses to believe that. The case plunges Strike into the world of multimillionaire beauties, rock-star boyfriends, and desperate designers, and it introduces him to every variety of pleasure, enticement, seduction, and delusion known to man. You may think you know detectives, but you've never met one quite like Strike. You may think you know about the wealthy and famous, but you've never seen them under an investigation like this.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book is so well written that I suspect that some years down the road we will hear the author's name is a pseudonym of some famous writer. Lots of description made one feel like another occupant in the scene. You could feel the weather, the tension, the pain, the atmosphere in the gatherings. The Audible version had great accents. It is a wonderful mystery with a surprise ending, and I look forward to more by the same author.

Ok, so I bought this book never having read a word of J.K Rowling in my life. I bought it because I love the detective genre. I have read almost all of Raymond Chandler, and Earl Stanley Gardner and I was skeptical about what she could do. Well, I quickly found that she had selected a standard plot—a suicide that was being investigated as a murder. There were clichés, but even the best rely on the cops being dumb and the detective being smart. She was not trying to turn the genre on its head, just put a new example out there. Based on that, I was deeply impressed. Here was a well written meticulous work that built the pieces of the puzzle into a complex maze. I thought I had the ending, but I was wrong—and surprised. The way the details were developed was masterful. The characters were interesting and likable. As for the book being "slow", I suggest that if you want to read slow books read J. R.R. Martin. They are 5 slow books. This book moved right along and had none of the filler I have found in some of the more modern novels I have recently read. For those who complain about this being one cliché after another, that's like saying all landscapes are alike. It is not the framework of the plot that matters it is what the author does with that framework—and she has done a magnificent job with it! The work is often—but the people she is portraying are often vulgar. Even though the ending was somewhat predictable (not the solution to the murder but what happens after the solution is delivered), it was good to have a happy ending—and at least the author knows how to end a story...unlike the aforementioned Mr. Martin.....All around a great read. I want to read more from her in this genre.

It's hard to put your finger on exactly what it is that makes *The Cuckoo's Calling* such a terrific new Private Investigator crime fiction debut. On the surface it seems straightforward, unexceptional and unambitious, everything fits the established conventions, there's nothing immediately new that stands out, and yet it's an utterly compelling read with strong characters that wraps you up completely and thrillingly into the investigation. There's certainly nothing significantly new in the nature of the Private Detective at the centre of the book and series. Yes, the circumstances are a little different and the family background a little more colourful than most, but at heart, Cormoran Strike doesn't stray too far from the template - ex-army rather than ex-police, with a complicated personal life, a detective business that is on its last legs (no pun intended on Strike's service injury), clients are drying up, the loan that has set him up in London's Denmark Street is being called in and he's in the middle of a messy break-up with his fiancée. Nothing particularly noteworthy so far, not even the fact that the temp agency has just landed him with a new partner - sorry, a new secretary, Robin, who is only supposed to be around for a few weeks, but of course ends up making herself quite useful, not to say even indispensable, creating the obligatory mismatched team in the

process. There's nothing particularly exceptional either about the high profile case - the death of a supermodel - that lands in his lap and keeps the wolves away from the door just that little bit longer. Falling to her death from her third-floor Mayfair apartment, the verdict of suicide is obviously not accepted by the distraught brother of the family that had adopted her, even though she clearly had problems in the run up to her death, much of it stemming from a troubled relationship with her boyfriend, a Pete Doherty-style musician. For some reason there is particular emphasis made of the setting and the timing of the case, setting it specifically in London in 2010, in the last days of the Brown Labour government, without there seeming to be any particular social or political point to be drawn from this. Or perhaps there is some significance in the Amy Winehouse/Kate Moss celebrity lifestyle issues and pre-press hacking revelations that is worth exploring or considering. Even so, it hardly seems to be a subject that is going to make any major revelations. And yet, *The Cuckoo's Calling* does indeed prove to be utterly compelling in its depiction of every aspect of this world that the investigation delves into. Like the main investigator team, the various colourful characters that they come into contact with during the investigation do often appear to fit standard types - film producers, fashion designers and big business corporate types on one side, contrasted that with ordinary working class security guards, chauffeurs, hangers-on and wannabes from the other side of London. Every bit of behaviour and every line of dialogue however is well-chosen, precise, accurate and revealing of the nature of the characters, and all the social content that is dredged up seemingly in passing proves to be in some way relevant to the questions of identity and background that the case raises. If it's hard to pick out anything particularly striking or original about *The Cuckoo's Calling*, there is however this feeling of it being of a whole. The Private Investigator and his secretary Robin are not outsiders looking in on the lives of the people in their case, but they are as much a part of the whole fabric of the work, their involvement giving an authentic dynamic that interacts with the specific case and the people involved here and gets to the heart of the matter in a surprisingly effective and realistic manner. Undoubtedly, the strength of any great new series of detective fiction lies in establishing a firm connection between the PI and the world they operate in, and Robert Galbraith's creation of Strike and Robin in the contrasts of London life is subtly masterful, but just as importantly, the case is also brought to a good resolution. This is a very fine start to what looks like being a richly rewarding new crime series.

I am a mystery book addict, so I am seldom wrong about an ending- many writers, Patterson in particular, have resulted in formula writing- predictable characters and plots- so I welcome a new writer with a new character and a great ending. Pull up a chair, turn off the TV and enjoy.

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