



## His Third Victim

*Helen H. Durrant*

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## **His Third Victim** Helen H. Durrant

A man is shot dead and his body is dumped on the moors. His arm is stamped with the Chinese symbol for sorry.

There have been five unsolved murders with the same hallmark. The police can't find any motive or connection between the victims.

Bella Richards was close to the murdered man. She lives with her five-year son and has begun a new life in the local area. But although clearly grief-stricken, she is not telling the police everything she knows.

Detective Talbot Dyson wants his most trusted inspector on the case. But DI Matt Brindle is out of action. He was badly injured and his sergeant was killed in a criminal ambush. He is drawn into the investigation and must decide whether he wants to go back to his old life.

What is the real connection between the victims and who will be next?

## **His Third Victim Details**

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Author : Helen H. Durrant

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## From Reader Review His Third Victim for online ebook

### Dee says

His Third Victim is a slower paced book than I normally read, but in saying that I did enjoy it, although there were some loose ends for me that are not answered in the book.....maybe it may continue in a series? as this is the first book featuring DI Matt Brindle. I warmed to his character and I enjoyed the background on his life, letting us get to know him. I enjoyed the plot and the use of the symbols and I think the story ran really well. I would definitely buy the next one in the series if it ever comes along :)

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### Nicki says

Wow,I absolutely loved this gripping thriller

Blog tour review

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Bella Richards was close to the murdered man.She lives with her five year old son Oliver and has begun a new life in the local area.But although she is clearly grief stricken,she is not telling the police everything she knows.

Detective Talbot Dyson wants his most trusted inspector on the case.But DI Matt Brindle is out of action.He was badly injured and his sergeant was killed in a criminal ambush.Matt is drawn into the investigation and must decide whether he is going to go back to his old life.

What is the connection between the victims and who will be next?

The main characters of this twist packed,gripping thriller are Matt,Bella and the twisted killer.We follow Matt`s return back to work after being away for six months following the attack that has left him with a limp,suffering from panic attacks and post traumatic stress disorder.Matt is unsure whether he wants to return to police work,his mother certainly doesn't want him to but he is intrigued by the case and can't resist contacting his old friend Talbot Dyson to talk about the murders.So he is drawn into the case and returns back to work where he is introduced to his new partner Lily Haines.I was expecting Matt to be reluctant about being partnered with someone new after what happened to his previous partner but him and Lily clicked from the moment they started working together and it was like they had known each other for years.Bella Richards is a very mysterious young lady who has hidden secrets that she will do anything to avoid being uncovered even after her young son Ollie goes missing.As the story unfolded I suspected that any one of a number of characters was the killer and I was genuinely surprised when the person's identity was revealed.The characters in this riveting story are a mixed bag of well developed,believable personalities,the reason behind the killings was very clever and ingenious.There was enough description of places to set the scene but no part of the story dragged or felt like padding.

This is quite a quick read,I read it in just under seven hours,it's well written,fast paced,gripping and packed

with twists. It looks like the mystery of who was behind the attack on Matt and his previous partner is going to be a on going arc that will carry on in the following books. I absolutely loved this book, I really liked Matt and Lily and am looking forward to reading more thrillers featuring them in the future.

Many thanks to Joffe books and Jill Burkinshaw for the opportunity to read and review this book and for the opportunity to take part in the blog tour

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### **Pat Simpson says**

I have enjoyed Helen Durrant's 'Dead' series of books and was looking forward to her new standalone book. I was not disappointed. This book features D I Matt Bridle who was badly injured in a bombing that killed his partner. He is brought back to help solve the complex case. Alan Fisher, an acquaintance of Matt, is murdered. He has been shot dead and the Chinese symbol for sorry stamped on his arm. Matt attends his funeral and meets a close friends of Alan's, Bella. Not long after her five year old son is abducted. Matt has to find the connection between tthe two crimes. He discovers that there have been previous killings where the victims have the Chinese stamp. This book draws you in from the start and keeps you guessing until the end. I am looking forward to reading more about Matt Bridle and his team. Thanks to NetGalley and Joffe Books for giving me the opportunity to read and review this book.

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### **Books n All Jill Burkinshaw says**

Well Helen Durrant has done it again another awesome 5 star book. The suspense starts at the beginning and continues right through to the edge of your seat ending. I am really hoping there will be more books featuring Matt Brindle.

The killer is clever, very clever, nobody will ever catch him but he reckoned without Matt Brindle. Matt was badly injured and has retired from the Police Force (or has he?). Struggling with PTSD and guilt about the death of his partner he is struggling to pick up the pieces of his life. When a friend is murdered Matt is persuaded to return to work on a trial basis. The case is very complex and is split between 2 teams as everyone struggles with dead ends and false leads plus what appears to be a total lack of motive a young boy is abducted and the race is on to find the killer before anyone else dies.

The characters build through the book into well developed, realistic characters. I love Matt, he is struggling with his personal life and career and is traumatised by past events. His temporary partner is his opposite but it is obvious from very early on that the 2 are going to make a very effective team.

The plot is very intriguing and the reader is left guessing right to the end. When the killer is identified it is a real shocker leaving the reader going WOW.

A well deserved 5 stars from me and a big thank you to Joffe Books for the advance copy

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### **Sarah says**

As a fan of Helen Durrant's other two series of crime novels I was intrigued to hear a new detective was featuring in this one.

I have to confess it took a little while to get a feel for the police team, probably because I'm used to the other two established teams she writes so this was all new. However I loved the complex plot that twisted and turned in order to keep you guessing.

Though the police team were a slow build for me by half way I didn't want to put this down and I'm now

very much looking forward to Matt Brindle's return with the lovely sidekick Lily. It will be interesting to see how family background, old cases and new crimes alike continue in Matt's new team. I am looking forward to seeing background characters from this case develop as they join Brindle in future cases.

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## **Sue says**

HIS THIRD VICTIM is a brand new standalone detective mystery from best-selling author Helen H. Durrant. I have read and enjoyed all her Calladine & Bayliss, and Greco books so I was intrigued to see she had started another series, with the introduction of DI Matthew Brindle and his team. Another winner that will keep you guessing right to the end.

A man is shot dead and his body is dumped on the moors. His arm is stamped with the Chinese symbol for sorry.

There have been five unsolved murders with the same hallmark. The police can't find any motive or connection between the victims.

Bella Richards was close to the murdered man. She lives with her five-year son and has begun a new life in the local area. But Bella is holding back information...she is not telling the police everything she knows.

Detective Talbot Dyson wants his most trusted inspector on the case...DI Matt Brindle. But Matt is out of action after being badly injured and his sergeant was killed in a criminal ambush. He is pulled into the investigation and must decide whether he wants to go to back to his old job.

This is a fast-paced detective mystery novel with believable characters. I predict this is going to be another winning series.

Many thanks to Helen H. Durrant, Joffe Books and Netgalley for the ARC.

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## **Linda Strong says**

He watches her very closely as he has for quite a while now. First he kills her lover, then he kills a family member. The bodies are left with an ink stamp ... the Chinese symbol for sorry. Now there is no one close to her who will question her disappearance when he grabs her.

This is not the first time he has done this. There are five unsolved crimes .... each with the same ink stamp, only in different colors.

When the police can't find any connection with the missing and the dead, DI Matt Brindle is called in despite his being determined to not go back after his partner was killed and he was severely injured. But at heart, all he's ever wanted to do is chase the bad guys.

Bella Richards was the lover of one of the victims. She also has a 5-year-old son. Bella has secrets... and

she's not willing to share them with law enforcement.... not even when her son disappears.

It takes Brindle and a new team to spot things that have been overlooked .... things like Bella doesn't seem to have existed before 2 years ago. Why does she have two phones? Why won't she work with the police. Where did a smooth talking solicitor come from? Who is the man who follows her wherever she goes?

This author has fast become one of my favorites. She has some terrific series on her side of the board. HIS THIRD VICTIM is a stand-alone, not associated with a series. If you have never read her, this is the place to start. I guarantee you will want to gather up all her other books.

As always, this is a well written crime thriller full of mystery and suspense with both big and little twists and surprises along the way. All the characters are well defined and I'm eager to learn more about them . Brindle is a man's man, but he does have his issues. His previous injuries have left him with PTSD. Lily is young, and fairly inexperienced, but there's nothing she won't do to prove her worth as a law enforcement officer. I even liked Brindle's mom and sister .. they lend a lot of credibility to her character.

Many thanks to the author and Joffe Books for the advance digital copy. Opinions expressed here are unbiased and entirely my own.

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### **Nicola Parkinson says**

Helen Durrant does it again with another 5? review from me and she is fast becoming one of my favourite authors.

Her newest book, His Third Victim had me gripped from page one! It's action packed from the get go. With bodies piling up, no new clues, the police and myself are stumped..... this all makes for gripping reading!

I loved the main character, Matt Brindle, although suffering from his own demons that happened only 6 months ago he really throws himself into the case. I liked seeing the two sides of his character, the victim of his own attack and the professional DI side.

This book is action packed, with twists and turns a plenty.... I also liked the fact it was set in places that I know and recognise, this made the story all the more real for me.

This is the second book I have read of Helens, and like the last I didn't work out the killer until it was revealed and my shouting "NO WAY!" hats off again Helen!

A very easy 5? rating from me..... roll on the next book!

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### **Fictionophile says**

*"All she had to do was make him happy. It wasn't much to ask, but his chosen ones always seemed to fail him in one way or another."*

A serial murderer is at work in Huddersfield, Yorkshire. His 'perfect' crimes have gone unnoticed, as he has made sure that the women his victims are not even reported missing. How? He also kills everyone that would be likely to do so... The police are confused as the victims seem random - the only thing connecting them is that the victims have all had a stamp on their body with the Chinese calligraphy for the word 'sorry'.

The East Pennine Police have the murders on their books. They are puzzled by the fact that the stamps on the bodies are different colours. There are three green, two red, and now... a blue. Chief Inspector Dyson is unsatisfied with the DI and DC that are currently working the case. His best man, DI Matthew Brindle is on sick leave after suffering from an ambush the previous year. A grenade ripped into DI Brindle and left his sergeant, Paula Wright, dead.

When Chief Inspector Dyson goes to Brindle's home to enlist his help with the case, the temptation is just too great for Brindle, who acquiesces, and returns to work, much to his mother's disgust.

*"He'd sworn he would never return, that nothing and no one could tempt him. But he'd been wrong. It was in his blood and wouldn't let him be."*

We meet Bella Richards. Bella is the single mother of a young son. When her lover is murdered and found with a blue stamp on his body, she is devastated. Then, shortly thereafter, her Aunt is also found murdered with the very same stamp on her body...

Bella is somewhat of a mystery to the police. It would seem that she has no personal history older than two years. Before that time she does not seem to have existed. And now... Bella's young son has been abducted! How could all of these events possibly be related??? Why is Bella lying to the police who are trying to help her?

As with most police procedurals, I admit I enjoy the policeman's 'back story' as much, if not more, than the crime case itself. In the case of Detective Inspector Matt Brindle, this proves true once again. He is an interesting character. In his mid-thirties, badly injured - and traumatized by the death of his partner, he lives in 'Brindle Hall', the large Georgian manor house owned by his family for generations. His mother, lady of the manor, does not want him to return to work as she fears for his well-being. While he was off work, he had decided to open his rather grand home and the surrounding grounds to the public. Though everyone thinks the family to be wealthy, the upkeep of the manor has decimated their finances and they really need some cash to fend off imminent bankruptcy.

When Matt returns to work with the CID, he is paired with Lily, a new, very young, female sergeant. I enjoyed reading about how they are adjusting to their partnership and how they work.

As far as the case went, there was no shortage of possible suspects to leave the reader guessing. The pacing perfectly kept up the suspense, and the characters seemed genuine and believable. Then there is the surprise when the reader learns the identity of the murderer. I had my suspicions, but once again, I was wrong. The climax of the novel occurs in memorable scenes at a remote Yorkshire farmhouse.

So far, Helen H. Durrant has never disappointed me and I highly recommend this mystery to anyone who likes character-rich police procedurals. The publisher's website states that this is a stand-alone mystery, but I am fervently hoping that we will meet D.I. Matt Brindle in further novels...

I received a digital copy of this novel from Joffe Books via NetGalley.  
4.5 stars rounded up to 5 for GoodReads.

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## Cheryl says

This is a 4.5 star read.

I have read quite a lot of Helen H. Durant's novels but none of them quite resonated with me like this new

standalone novel "His Third Victim".

I absolutely LOVE DI Matt Brindle - a man's man with softer, polished edges, who is consumed by the fight to solve investigations and bring justice to the victims. His previous case ending with the death of his sergeant and his own threatening injuries reveals a damaged man but one who is all the more life-like for it.

At the start of the investigation he is simply a "civvy" attending a funeral for a friend, one that has been murdered. It is here that Matt meets the victim's partner Bella and where his interest is piqued. But no ..... he can't interfere ..... he has resigned as a Detective. Besides he has big plans for a new business venture to be built around the family Manor that's going to take up a lot of his time, especially convincing his titled, loving but manipulative mother that it's the right thing to do.

But Matt's old boss, Detective Superintendent Talbot Dyson, has other plans in store for him, drawing him back into the investigation by using his natural inquisitiveness and revealing a pleasant surprise to his much regarded DI. As the case progresses Matt finds that the killing is linked to old cold cases and also to Bella directly. But Bella has big secrets ..... ones she is not going to reveal.

This novel is a fastly paced and tightly woven serial killer story that held me engaged until the surprising reveal of the killer in the finale. Packed with secrets, twists and life-like characters that draw you in, this is a must read for fans of Helen H. Durrant and those that love serial killer thrillers.

I received an ARC of this novel directly from the author and publisher Joffe Books. I have voluntarily chosen to review the book, and the gifting in no way determines my review/rating, which reflects my honest opinion.

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## Joyce says

5 stars

DI George Bennett responds to a body in a tent in a remote locale. Detective Superintendent Talbot Dyson shows up to claim the scene. He says the body is his because it rest on the line between counties – and they already have five more bodies killed in the same manner and with the same markings on them in their morgue. The latest victim is named Alan Fisher. He was a popular lecturer at a local university.

The pathologist confirms that Alan Fisher is the sixth victim. He was shot with a .22 and has the Chinese character for “sorry” stamped on his arm. The police have a serial killer on their hands. Further, they don't have any connections between the victims.

Bella Richards was romantically involved with the married Alan Fisher. Now her five year old son Olly has gone missing. On top of Alan's murder, this is almost more than she can bear.

Retired DI Matt Brindle is recovering from the explosion that left him slightly disabled and his DS dead. He experiences nightmares and a sense of guilt at the death of his sergeant. He swore he'd never go back to the force again, but he calls his old boss Superintendent Dyson and asks about the case. When his Superintendent Dyson visits him and tells him about the case, he pulls out Matt's resignation letter and tells him he never turned it in. Matt goes back to the force on a two week trial basis and gets assigned to lead the missing Olly Richards case. Immediately he finds more clues and learns that Bella, Olly's mom, has not been truthful with the story she told. She appears not to have existed before two years earlier, and the father of her child cannot be found either. What is she hiding? Is she is witness protection?

Then a woman named Agnes is killed. She has the same mark and was also shot with a .22. Bella claims not to know her. After Matt and his DC named Lily Haines leave the house the reader learns that she did know the murdered woman.

As the investigation continues, DI Matt learns that Bella is indeed in the witness protection program. She testified against her then husband, Ronnie Chalker. He is now in prison. Olly is still missing and then Bella goes missing as well.

The name of the murderer is a revelation, but getting there is more than half the fun. This novel is brilliantly written and plotted like the other Helen Durrant novels I've read. The suspense starts out immediately in our story and continues at a high level until the denouement of the story. The main characters are very likeable and engaging. I appreciate the way in which the team got on with one another. Sufficient background material was given on Matt to flesh him out a bit but not so much that it intruded on the story line. Ms. Durrant is truly a creative gem in my book. I anxiously look forward to more of her books.

I want to thank NetGalley and Joffe Books for forwarding to me a copy of this most engaging book to read and enjoy.

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### Joann says

I love the author's novels and this one was right up there with the rest of her novels. I believe this is a stand-alone though I hope not as there were a lot of ends that needed to be tied up so I'm hoping for a #2 in this series. What amazed me was the fact that there wasn't one swear word in this book so you that are offended by rough language will find this one refreshing. Oops, just noticed that this is book #1 YEH, so I'll be eagerly awaiting for #2 to surface.

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### Megan says

This book is available on the kindle unlimited scheme but I received this on netgalley, this doesn't change my opinion on this book, this is also my first review of a book from the netgalley.

I like a good mystery but I don't read them very often mostly because I have so many romances at home trying to get through more books is impossible. That being said I fancied a nice thriller mystery and this definitely fulfilled that need or rather want. I'm not 100% convinced its different to other books in this genre, its not massively twisty but it also isn't very obvious who it was. You end up with 3 suspects and 2 are quite good red herrings I was torn between 2 but one was pretty obvious it was **too** obvious for me. I'm pretty darn good at guessing the who did it, I can almost always tell in a murder TV program who did it. Its just an annoying gift, and I suspect its obvious to everyone that frequently watches those programmes. This book kept me guessing kept me on my toes.

So this book is basically picking up during the creepy murderers 3rd victim, this is a double meaning. I'm not going to ruin how its a double meaning but quite simply this is taken as he has only killed 3 people which is a little bit misleading. Lets say the author has created a real monster and that should be applauded.

Good points:

- The murderer is fully evil
- The victims are not perfect. (they have flaws and this includes his latest victim, she is hiding so much from

the police and you start to dislike her a little)

- The characters are very well written,
- I enjoyed the world building

Bad points:

- Stereotypical red herring
  - A dog is killed, and its spoken about for more than one sentence and it drove me nuts. Don't kill dogs. Evil person.
- 

## **Donna Maguire says**

<https://donnasbookblog.wordpress.com/...>

Anyone who follows my blog or reviews will know that I am a huge fan of Helen H. Durrant's books - so when I saw that she had released a brand new stand alone book (this one - His Third Victim) I jumped at the chance to get a copy of the book and did it without reading any of the blurb, I was that keen to get started!

Well I can honestly say that I loved the book - I loved the writing style which was excellent as normal, the pace was absolutely spot on and the plot was well thought out - I really, really enjoyed it. I liked the main characters a lot - Bella was really complex with a lot of hidden baggage and DI Brindle also had his own issues that he brought to the tale having returned to work following a horrific injury and the loss of a colleague, very sad but it is a great back story to give added depth to the character.

There was plenty of suspense and lot of twists and turns and you really don't find out who the killer is until the very end, and for me it was really unexpected!! No hesitation in giving the book 5 stars and I'm already eagerly waiting for Helen's next release!!

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## **Lou says**

**A BRAND NEW STANDALONE DETECTIVE MYSTERY FROM #1 BEST-SELLING AUTHOR  
HELEN H. DURRANT**

A man is shot dead and his body is dumped on the moors. His arm is stamped with the Chinese symbol for sorry. There have been five unsolved murders with the same hallmark. The police can't find any motive or connection between the victims. Bella Richards was close to the murdered man. She lives with her five-year son and has begun a new life in the local area. But although clearly grief-stricken, she is not telling the police everything she knows. Detective Talbot Dyson wants his most trusted inspector on the case. But DI Matt Brindle is out of action. He was badly injured and his sergeant was killed in a criminal ambush. He is drawn into the investigation and must decide whether he wants to go to back to his old life.

What is the real connection between the victims and who will be next?

This is a detective mystery full of twists and turns, with a stunning edge-of-your-seat ending.

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This is my first time reading a Helen H. Durrant book but I know I will be reading many more in future. I want to catch up on all the other books she has written because I enjoyed this one immensely.

What originally drew me to reading the title was the synopsis, in particular, the Chinese symbology hallmarks stamped on each of the victims when they were discovered. This is the part that intrigued me the most.

Well written and immaculately paced, Ms. Durrant clearly knows how to write interesting and easy to read crime fiction. There were plenty of plot twists and turns and some great red herrings thrown in there. Full of suspense and managed to keep me enthralled the whole way through. Excellent.

I also enjoyed the characters very much. The killer is an intelligent and ruthless individual and I do hope that this is the beginning of a new series that will feature DI Matthew Brindle in the (hopefully) upcoming instalments as I would like to learn more about him and see his character developed more. It hasn't been announced whether this will be the first book in a series or not yet as far as I know. Although, in the description it does say standalone and that concerns me that this is a one off only but we shall see. Either way I will read more of Durrant's writing in the future!

Joffe books tend to have some fantastic authors and titles in their catalogue and I would urge other thriller readers to give Joffe books a go, you won't be disappointed!

I would like to thank Helen H. Durrant/Joffe Books and NetGalley for providing me with an ARC in exchange for an honest, unbiased review.

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