



## Babylon Berlin: Book 1 of the Gereon Rath Mystery Series

*Volker Kutscher , Niall Sellar (Translator)*

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“James Ellroy fans will welcome Kutscher’s first novel and series launch, a fast-paced blend of murder and corruption set in 1929 Berlin.”—*Publishers Weekly* (starred review)

**The first book in the international-bestselling series that centers on Detective Gereon Rath caught up in a web of drugs, sex, political intrigue, and murder in Berlin as Germany teeters on the edge of Nazism.**

It’s 1929 and Berlin is the vibrating metropolis of post-war Germany—full of bars and brothels and dissatisfied workers at the point of revolt. Gereon Rath is new in town and new to the police department.

When a dead man without an identity, bearing traces of atrocious torture, is discovered, Rath sees a chance to find his way back into the homicide division. He discovers a connection with a circle of oppositional exiled Russians who try to purchase arms with smuggled gold in order to prepare a coup d’état. But there are other people trying to get hold of the gold and the guns, too. Rath finds himself up against paramilitaries and organized criminals. He falls in love with Charlotte, a typist in the homicide squad, and misuses her insider’s knowledge for his personal investigations. And as he gets further entangled with the case, he never imagined becoming a suspect himself.

“The first in a series that’s been wildly popular in Germany is an excellent police procedural that cleverly captures the dark and dangerous period of the Weimer Republic before it slides into the ultimate evil of Nazism.”—*Kirkus Reviews*

“Conjures up the dangerous decadence of the Weimar years, with blood on the Berlin streets and the Nazis lurking menacingly in the wings.”—*The Sunday Times* (London)

## Babylon Berlin: Book 1 of the Gereon Rath Mystery Series Details

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Kutscher , Niall Sellar (Translator)**

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## From Reader Review Babylon Berlin: Book 1 of the Gereon Rath Mystery Series for online ebook

### Banushka says

her zamanki gibi ke?ke dizisinden önce kitab?n? okusayd?m dedim ama ileti?im yay?nlar? geç kal?p diziden sonra yay?mlad? kitab? ./ babylon berlin dizisinin uyarland??? kitap ?slak bal?k 1929'da geçen bir polisiye. polis te?kilat?, bol?evikler, troçki'nin pe?inde stalin, k?z?llar? silahland?rmaya yarayacak rus aristokratlar?n?n alt?nlar? ve en korkuncu yava? yava? kendini gösteren ss'ler...

1. dünya sava?? sonras? almanya'y? ve ad?m ad?m nasyonal sosyalizme giden yolu çok iyi bir polisiye kurgusuyla yazm?? volker kutscher.

a??r i?leyen, detaylarla dolu bir polisiye.

bu arada dizide konu baya?? de?i?mi?, hiç okumadan da izlenebilir ya da sadece o görsel ?ölen ve müzikler için izlenebilir.

kitap hakk?nda agos'a yazd?m: [http://tembelveyazar.blogspot.com.tr/...](http://tembelveyazar.blogspot.com.tr/)

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### Jeffrey Keeten says

**"When would they return? In the darkness even the smallest noise seemed infernal; the quietest of whispers grew to a roar. Silence itself became an interminable throb in the ears. He had to pull himself together, to ignore the dripping sound of his own blood as it hit the hard, damp floor."**

### Gereon Rath, played by Volker Bruch

Inspector Gereon Rath arrives in Berlin, to a city in turmoil. The underground fleshpots are catering to every bizarre whim or dark desire that a man or woman can envision. Booze is flowing through the tangled web of bars, in quantities large enough to fill the river Spree. The dancing in the nightclubs reflects the frantic and desperate nature of those trying to make a go of it in the German capital. The cabarets are soulful and sad and full of boys dressed as girls and girls dressed as boys.

That is the nightlife, but the daylight brings more tumultuous chaos. The workers are dissatisfied with low pay and terrible working conditions. They are filling the streets with their protests, and the socialists are taking full advantage of their discontent. In the background, the Nazis are gaining power behind the fiery speeches of this scrawny corporal who is still fuming over his inability to make a go of it as an artist. Failure has bred contempt in him for those he believes are responsible for the downfall of Germany. **"On the wall hung a framed photograph of that Hitler, a strange bird with a Charlie Chaplin moustache."** Yes, in 1929, he is still perceived for whom he really is by most reasonably intelligent people.

Gereon Rath has more than one moment when he wishes he could go back to Cologne, but he would only be stepping back into the fine mess he left there. He is assigned to vice in a city where the philosophy followed by most is anything goes. Hard to make headlines or influential friends by busting up the party. He catches a break of sorts when an unidentified, brutally tortured body of a dead Russian shows up in the middle of a case he is working. He is too ambitious to turn the case over to homicide.

Lana Nikoros, AKA Countess Svetlana Sorokina

Little does he know that he is going to be thrust in the middle of a gangland style battle going on between two factions of Russians and their search for what is being called Sorokin's gold. Not to mention he has to deal with a host of dirty cops, the Nazis, an organized crime boss called Dr. Marlow, and the Countess Svetlana Sorokina, AKA cabaret singer Lana Nikoros, who might be the most dangerous of the lot. Whether they are motivated by greed or a cause, they all want the gold. Rath is also introduced to a powdery substance that proves irresistible.

*"He had reckoned with all sorts of possibilities: with seeing stars, a variety of colors, bright lights, but all he felt as he snorted the white powder was numbness. His whole nose was numb. He wouldn't have noticed if someone cut it off, but when he felt the cocaine taking hold of his brain, all of a sudden he was wide awake. It is as if someone had turned the music up, and yet he could understand the numerous voices talking over one another considerably better than before. He felt himself positively oozing energy and **lust for life.**"*

**"If you want to hang out, you've gotta take her out, cocaine  
If you want to get down, get down on the ground, cocaine  
She don't lie, she don't lie, she don't lie,  
Cocaine  
If you got that lose, you want to kick them blues, cocaine  
When your day is done, and you want to ride on cocaine  
She don't lie, she don't lie, she don't lie,  
Cocaine  
If your day is gone, and you want to ride on, cocaine  
Don't forget this fact, you can't get it back, cocaine  
She don't lie, she don't lie, she don't lie,  
Cocaine  
She don't lie, she don't lie, she don't lie,  
Cocaine"**

### **Charlotte Ritter**

Rath falls in love/lust with the beautiful police stenographer Charlotte Ritter. Just as quickly as he finds love, he mucks it up by using her to further his career. (He also breaks the cardinal rule that one should never, ever shag the landlady.) Rath is a mess on about all levels, saved only by the fact that he is a pretty good detective. To make it in the city of vice, he will have to go beyond just bending the rules; he will have to break them over his knee.

A convoluted mystery, to say the least. Keeping track of all the various, suspected entities that go way beyond what I've mentioned in this review had me wondering at times if I was reading a Russian novel, but I did enjoy the flavor of 1929 in one of the most vice ridden cities in the world at the time.

### **Your pleasure is their pleasure to serve.**

For those who have been watching or want to watch the Netflix series, the character of Charlotte (Charly) Ritter, portrayed in the series by Liv Lisa Fries, is a far cry from the woman depicted in the books. She is much more pedestrian in the books, but in the Netflix series she is frankly frilling awesome. Svetlana

Sorokina, portrayed by Severija Janusauskaite, has a much bigger role on the screen than she had in the book. She is so manipulative, calculating, and as cold as a Siberian storm.

Basically, the writers of the TV series have taken the characters of the women from the book and expanded their roles. This takes the story from being a good story to being one of the more intriguing TV series I've seen in a long time. If I had not seen several episodes of the series before reading the book, I would have been happier with the book. Still, I'm on board to read more of the books and see how the characters develop as Volker Kutscher takes them through more sordid Berlin adventures.

If you wish to see more of my most recent book and movie reviews, visit <http://www.jeffreykeeten.com>  
I also have a Facebook blogger page at: <https://www.facebook.com/JeffreyKeeten>

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## Justin says

This is a solid read where the greatest strength is its setting, both in time and place. Kutscher does an excellent job of evoking 1929 Berlin, with lots of period detail, and throw in some gruesome murders and it is an excellent setting for a detective novel. The novel reflects the political tensions between right and left, the cultural tensions between liberalism and conservatism, the fallout of the Russian Revolution, and the collective experience of so many First World War veterans a decade on from that war.

The weaker parts of the novel I think are a consequence of its translation. In some ways it seems an accurate translation: the language is often clunky, but German is a clunky language. Some of the phrases also jar in what they say and how they say it, but I can imagine those sounding perfectly natural in German. Aspects of the main character I can also imagine being much more appealing to a German outlook. But that was an interesting insight in itself.

All in all, it was a decent book which I enjoyed, and I plan to read more if more of the series are translated.

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## Vivian says

*"Sometimes I have the impression that A Division devours CID officers like Cronos did his children."*

As a new DCI for the Vice Division, Gereon Rath soon finds that his aspirations have landed him right smack in the middle of a knot of twisted connections and questionable allegiances. Babylon Berlin starts out with Gereon (and us) as the new guy in town. Quickly, things are happening and finding one's balance is soon a rollercoaster ride of pornography, nightclubs, drugs, and dead bodies.

*In Homicide, he had known why he worked for the police. But Vice? Who cared about a bit of pornography every now and then? Self-proclaimed moral apostles perhaps, for they too had found their place in the Republic, but Rath didn't count himself amongst them.*

I can see why this was made into a tv series; it has more happening in it than a lot of books get to in three. This is chockfull, well-plotted, and has enough intrigue to highlight just how political police work really is. The Interwar period is one of my favorites and definitely made this more interesting. The details of Berlin from the architecture, cars, new department stores to the more obvious communist and growing nazi elements in the city are so unobtrusively relayed that you feel enveloped as the reader rather than a distant observer. This is rather gritty and I really really liked it.

*Stephan Jänicke sat on the rear seat with the type of frozen face only an East Prussian could achieve. There wasn't the slightest trace of emotion in it. Rath knew that the rookie hadn't exchanged a single word with the doorman in the last half hour. Not even the East Westphalians with whom Rath worked with in Cologne could manage that.*

It will be interesting to see where the series goes from here. The english translation for the second in the series, *The Silent Death*, is due this winter and I am eager. Please note that it is British English not American English.

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## **James says**

A thoroughly enjoyable crime scamper through that most foreboding of places Weimar Berlin. Quite different from the excellent tv series.

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## **Gram says**

First in a series of crime stories set during the "Weimar Republic" - the unofficial designation for the German state between 1919 and 1933, when it was ended by Hitler and his right wing associates. The main character is Kriminalkommissar Gereon Rath of Berlin's Homicide Squad. Rath has been transferred to Berlin after a shooting incident ended his successful career in the Cologne Homicide Division. First though, he's sent to work with the Vice Squad in Berlin, a job he hates, even though he's been befriended by his boss, Chief Inspector Wolter. Berlin 1929 is a city of violent political unrest with the Commissioner of Police ordering the Vice Squad to join their uniformed colleagues in enforcing a ban on May Day demonstrations. The result is catastrophic with many dead and injured, and a state of emergency declared in the Communist strongholds of Berlin. Meanwhile, Rath has become involved with a murder case after a car - with a mutilated corpse inside - is hauled out of city's Landwehr Canal. Berlin's Police Commissioner decides to use this mystery to divert the attention of press and public from the casualties of the May Day demonstrations. But first, there's one of many problems with the canal murder case - the corpse can't be identified. Working on his own, Gereon Rath uncovers a conspiracy involving a secret cache of gold bullion and weapons deals between Germany's new army - The Reichswehr - and Nazi stormtroopers. Along the way are a spate of murders, some love interest between Rath and a female police officer and a wealth of colourful characters from Berlin's criminal class. Despite the occasional confusion in the plot, I enjoyed this book and hope that more translations of Volker Kutscher's Rath novels follow soon.

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## **Jim says**

I enjoyed this new entry into the interwar Berlin crime sweepstakes. However, it is not as good as others such as the early Bernie Gunther novels or the pre-War John Russell novels, that put more focus on the deterioration of German society. I hope Detective Rath has a second outing. I will read it.

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## **Lee says**

I started reading Volker Kutscher's Gereon Rath books about a year ago, and I'm hooked. *Der nasse Fisch* is

the first in what is currently a four-book series.

Gereon Rath is a police officer in Berlin in the 1920's. Rath's life is complicated. He shot the wrong person in his hometown and was forced to leave with his tail between his legs. He murdered someone in Berlin. He does business with gangsters. He has to deal with Nazis and communists, all while trying to actually solve multiple murders.

In this book, Rath has few friends, many enemies, and a questionable future. He is always looking over his shoulder. He drinks too much, he thinks too much, and he sleeps too little.

Berlin in this time between two World Wars is a brutal and uncertain place. The city is as much of a character in these books as Rath himself. There are glimpses of the coming apocalypse, and even a glimpse or two of what survives.

If you enjoy Krimis, I recommend *Der nasse Fisch*.

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### **Al Maki says**

I got the book because I was enthralled by the television series but there were things about it that weren't clear to me. The book is much better developed. It's weirdly different than the series, or rather the series is different than the original book. The book is an intriguing police procedural with a strong emphasis on politics - both national and office; the show is stylish and sexy and almost Dickensianly sentimental. The characters in the book are in the series, although the reverse is not true and the plot framework is the same, but the relationships of the characters and the plot itself are different enough that I kept reading to find out how it would end. It's also interesting as a German perspective on the Weimar period.

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### **Nancy Oakes says**

like a 3.7 rounded up

*Babylon Berlin* is a book I didn't even know existed until I watched the Netflix series with this title a few weeks back. When I saw that it came from a book, I knew I had to read it. I also have the second one, *The Silent Death*, sitting here but it will have to wait until I return from vacation. Speaking of the Netflix series, anyone planning to read this book should know right up front that the book is not the series -- they are two very different entities, so a word of warning: don't expect the novel to be a mirror to the television show.

very teeny bits of plot are here with no spoilers:

<http://www.crimesegments.com/2018/03/...>

First novels in a series are generally the weakest, but this one is actually quite good. I mean, the reality is that there is a book two and beyond so we know things are going to work out, but I swear, I was on pins and needles throughout, wondering how the main character, Gideon Rath, was going to fare. But there's also the element of the here and now in this city that captured my attention; there are brief mentions of Hitler and of Nazis but this is a very "in this moment" sort of book that doesn't really give any clue as to where Germany will go in the next few years.

One reader noted that this book reminded her of the novels of Marek Krajewski, but I'm not sure I agree with that assessment -- Krajewski's work gets down into the deepest decadence of this period in ways that this book and author never do. I've also seen more than one comparison of Babylon Berlin to the work of Philip Kerr, but again, I don't think that's exactly accurate either. And good news for those readers who found this book "too long" and "tedious" -- there's also a graphic novel available.

If you can divorce yourself while reading this book from the stunning Netflix series, it turns into a very good read. Otherwise, you may be setting yourself up for disappointment since aside from people and a couple of plot elements that carry from page to screen, the two are very, very different.

Do not miss the series though; unexpected twists in every episode will keep you glued and wanting to binge.

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## Rinnerl says

Gleich vorweg, ich hab das Buch nur deshalb gelesen, weil X5-494 es total unterirdisch fand (jedenfalls die 60 Seiten die sie geschafft hat :) und das hat mich dann doch neugierig gemacht :D

Ich wollte wissen, ob wir (wie so oft) einer Meinung sind oder (was tatsächlich auch manchmal vorkommt) eher nicht.

Womit wohl bewiesen wäre, dass eine „negative“ Rezension andere Leute nicht zwangsläufig davon abhält ein Buch zu lesen, sondern wie in meinem Fall, genau das Gegenteil bewirkt.

Hätte X5-494 geurteilt das Buch wäre ganz okay, hätte mich die Story nicht so interessiert, dass ich mich zum lesen veranlasst gefühlt hätte.

Jetzt zum Buch. „Der Nasse Fisch“ von Volker Kutscher ist ein Kriminalroman, der im Berlin der späten zwanziger Jahre spielt. Hauptfigur ist der Kölner Kriminalkommissar Gereon Rath, der mehr oder weniger strafversetzt jetzt im Berliner Sittendezernat seinen Dienst verrichten darf / muß.

Ohne zuviel zu verraten, Korruption, Verrat, Vetternwirtschaft und Mord sind nur einige der Dinge, mit denen sich der „Neuling“ in seinem ersten Berliner Fall herumschlagen muss.

Historisch gesehen habe ich von den zwanziger Jahren absolut keine Ahnung, von daher kann ich nicht beurteilen, ob das was im Buch dargestellt wird tatsächlich dem damaligen Zeitgeist entspricht und ob die Personen sich „in echt“ wirklich so verhalten hätten wie sie es im Buch tun. Von der politischen Lage damals habe ich sogar noch weniger Ahnung, da war ich in Geschichte krank. Für mich persönlich spielte das beim lesen keine übergroße Rolle. Das was mir an diesem Buch gefallen hat, hätte mir auch dann gefallen würde das Buch 2013 spielen, das was mir nicht gefallen hat, hätte mir egal in welcher Zeit nicht gefallen.

So etwa ab der Hälfte des Buches war ich mir ziemlich sicher dass ich a) wusste wer der Bööööööösewicht war und b) wie sich der Fall im Groben weiterentwickeln würde. So war es dann auch, trotzdem fand ich das Buch nicht langweilig und habe es zügig durchgelesen.

Ich könnte mir auch durchaus vorstellen, dass der Fall für geschichtlich interessierte Personen ein ganzes Stück spannender und ausgereifter daherkommt als für jemanden der ihn als reinen Krimi liest und von der politischen und gesellschaftlichen Situation damals keine Ahnung hat.

Als jemand der sich in Berlin einigermaßen auskennt und zurechtfindet fand ich es schön „alten Bekannten“ wie Karstadt, dem Ku-Damm, der Friedrichstraße usw. zu begegnen. Hatte was von „Ach guck, da war ich auch schon“ :)

So richtige Sympathien konnte ich eigentlich für keine der Figuren entwickeln, am ehesten für einen Unterweltboss (ich frag mich, was das über mich aussagt) und dass ich trotzdem weiter gelesen habe spricht irgendwie für das Buch.

Gestört hat mich an manchen Stellen die in meinen Augen etwas zu sehr gewollt wirkende Vulgärsprache, aber vielleicht war der Umgangston nach dem Krieg ja wirklich so und das ist wohl auch einfach Geschmacksache.

Gefühlt auf (spätestens) jeder dritten Seite hat sich irgendjemand eine Zigarette angesteckt. Auch das kann durchaus so gewesen sein, aber irgendwann hatte die Leserin, also ich, dann echt kapiert dass wirklich JEDER geraucht hat und zwar quasi STÄNDIG, ohne dass es alle paar Seiten explizit erwähnt werden müsste.

Zu guter letzt, hat eine Lovestory was in einem Krimi zu suchen? Ich schätze bei dieser Frage gibt es so viele Meinungen wie Bücher. In diesem Fall könnte man so argumentieren, dass es ja irgendwie den Fall vorangetrieben hat. Richtig. Und genau deswegen hat mich auch weniger die Lovestory an sich gestört, sondern das leider weit verbreitete Hin-und-Her-Getue.

Ich liebe dich. Ja, ich dich auch. Nee, doch nicht. Ach eigentlich doch. Oh du gemeiner Lügner, ich lieb dich jetzt doch nicht mehr. Ach Schatz, ich lächle dich an und wir lieben uns doch. Ja wenn das so ist, dann lieb ich dich halt jetzt doch wieder.

Ich kann das einfach nicht ab. Sei es in Bücher-, Film- oder sonstiger Form, es geht mir auf den Sack. Punkt.

Mit ziemlich viel Gelaber bin ich damit alles in allem bei 3 Sternen angekommen.

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## Ines says

(German review below)

Although I don't think it's supposed to be, this is basically a cheesy romance novel for men, completely with:

1. Long and repetitive descriptions of people's appearances - when they are of the other sex than the main character. Usually starting with their breasts or legs.
2. Every female character wants the main character, even those who already have a man. Well, except for the ones described as "fat". That would be just gross, of course. (sarcasm)
3. The main character is supposed to be very clever, but mostly things just happen to him without him doing anything significant.
4. Wooden and cheesy dialogue.
5. A plot that could have been interesting, but is presented very straightforward to make room for a cheesy and boring romance will-they-won't-they plot and resolved too easily.
6. The characters are all very clever and capable, except when they need to not be.
7. The main character is not very consistent and thus not very likeable, although he is supposed to be... 'deep'.
8. The other characters are flat and cliché.

The book is very, very long. There are a lot of repetitions and unnecessary descriptions. The story could easily have been told in about half the pages.

I give it a second star because, although there are some inaccuracies, the author clearly did a lot of research.

I would have loved to read this book if he had provided the historical context and another author had done the actual writing.

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Auch wenn es das vermutlich nicht sein möchte, ist das Buch ein Groschenroman für Männer. Komplett mit:

1. Langen und ständig wiederholten Beschreibungen von Charakteren des anderen Geschlechts (als der Hauptcharakter). Diese beginnen für gewöhnlich mit ihren "wölbenden" Brüsten oder ihren langen Beinen.
2. Jeder weibliche Charakter will natürlich mit dem Hauptcharakter ins Bett, auch die eigentlich vergebenen. Außer natürlich diejenigen, die als "fett" beschrieben werden. Das wäre ja eklig. (Sarkasmus)
3. Der Hauptcharakter wird als schlau und clever beschrieben, meistens tut er selbst aber eher wenig und Dinge passieren ihm einfach.
4. Hölzerne Dialoge. (Ich bezweifle, dass Frauen in den 20ern mit vollem Ernst Dinge gesagt haben wie "Oh, du hast ja \_noch\_ eine Waffe dabei. Lass uns die doch mal rausholen.")
5. Ein Plot der interessant hätte sein können, sich aber sehr einfach entwickelt, um Platz für die langweilige Standard-Romanze zu lassen.
6. Die Charaktere sind schlau und fähig, außer wenn es notwendig ist, dass sie es nicht sind.
7. Das wirkt sich auch auf den Hauptcharakter aus, der nicht sehr konsistent präsentiert wird und damit leider nicht meine Sympathie wecken kann.
8. Die anderen Charaktere sind flach und Klischee-beladen.

Das Buch ist sehr, sehr lang, mit vielen Wiederholungen und unnötigen Beschreibungen. Die Geschichte hätte vermutlich auf ca. der Hälfte der Seiten erzählt werden können.

Ich vergebe einen zweiten Stern, weil der Autor offensichtlich seine Hausaufgaben gemacht hat. Es gibt ein paar Ungenauigkeiten, aber die gibt es immer. Davon abgesehen ist der hohe Rechercheaufwand zu erkennen.

Ich würde das Buch sehr gern lesen, wenn der Autor sein historisches Wissen beisteuert und eine andere Person die eigentliche Schreibe übernimmt.

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## Meg - A Bookish Affair says

3.5 stars. "Babylon Berlin" is the first book in a series about Gereon Rath, a man who finds himself in the big city of Berlin after coming from a smaller city where he had to leave the police department in disgrace. He's looking to turn around his life in a new place: Berlin. There is so much going on in Berlin at this time (late 1920s). It's the time of the Weimar Republic and the crimes that take place there threaten to wrap up even those fighting for justice like Gereon. Will Gereon end up disgraced again?

I have been thoroughly enjoying watching "Babylon Berlin" on Netflix. It's an exciting show with a lot of gorgeous detail that transports you to Berlin. I was excited to see how the book stacked up with the miniseries. While there are some differences, the feeling between the miniseries and the book are the same. The miniseries is a little more glitzy, while still capturing the grittiness that weaves its way throughout the book. There are other differences in the story lines but I don't want to give anything away!

Gereon Rath is a great character. He is the kind of fallen hero that we all like to root for but he also has a lot of demons. He is flawed but you still want things to turn out okay for him. He goes through so much throughout the book and really grows and changes. It will be interesting to see where the future books take him.

I loved the setting! I don't know very much about the Weimar Republic years as they seem to largely set up for some of the later chaos wrought on Germany by the Nazis in the 1930s and 1940s. I thought that the author did a great job of capturing everything that was going on.

The writing was good. It did get bogged down in a few places and I can't tell if it was the story or the way

things were translated. The plot moves fairly well for the most part though. Overall, this was a pretty good story!

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## Steve J. says

Being a fan of the Philip Kerr Bernie Gunther series, this book looked tailor made for me.

It was really interesting, reading the experiences of a different character with almost the same role as Gunther has in (many of) the novels about him - a homicide detective in the Berlin Police force in the 1920s/1930s.

The story could quite easily be a Gunther novel but the main character Gereon Rath is a different kettle of fish. Gunther might be cynical and hard-bitten but he is passionate and full of life. Rath I find to be a cold fish, possibly almost "psychopathic" in the sense of not being fully engaged with his fellow men. At one point he kills a man and buries him in concrete and there never seems to be a point where the dead man actually deserved it. Rath killed him accidentally, admittedly, but he simply buried the body because it made his life easier.

Having said all that, and that the main character is not massively sympathetic, the atmosphere of the 1920s is incredibly well evoked and the characters are all well drawn, well rounded and interesting.

The plot is interesting, too, from a historical viewpoint, all bound up with the Communists and Nazis of early 1930s Germany.

Googling around, I read that a high profile TV series is being made in Germany and will air in the UK towards the end of the year. Should be good.

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## Meike says

"Babylon Berlin" (the English title of both the book and the series) is already causing an enormous buzz in Germany: Kutscher's hardboiled crime novel has been turned into the most expensive German series ever, produced and partly directed by none other than Tom Tykwer ("Cloud Atlas", "Perfume" etc.), an orgy of decors and costumes bringing to life the Berlin of the Weimar Republic (between WW I and II). If you're German, having "Variety" repeatedly reporting about a series produced in your country is quite a novelty, plus the series raises interest as it features both well-established stars (Brandt, Eidinger, Herzprung) and popular newcomers (Bruch, Fries).

Kutscher's book is telling the story of Gereon Rath who, unlike his classical counterparts Sam Spade and Philip Marlowe, is not a private, but a police detective. Rath is the new guy in town and gets involved in a case that has links to many historical circumstances: The "Bloody May" (Blutmai) of 1929 in which the police killed and injured people who took part in an unauthorized rally organized by the Communist Party (KPD), the growing strength of the paramilitary Nazi "brownshirts", and the sparkling Berlin night life of the time with its famous cabarets and vibrant cultural scene – a world that collapsed with the Wall Street Crash and Hitler's rise to power.

The book lives from its setting and its strong main character, and though the text is clearly a little too long, it is pretty entertaining. I am curious to see what Tykwer managed to make out of it.

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