



## Settled Blood

*Mari Hannah*

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When a young girl is found dead at the base of Hadrian's Wall, it's not long before Detective Chief Inspector Kate Daniels realises her death was no ordinary homicide. She was thrown from a great height and was probably alive before she hit the ground. Then a local businessmen reports his daughter missing, has Daniels found the identity of her victim, or is a killer playing a sickening game? As the murder investigation team delve deeper into the case, half truths are told, secrets exposed, and while Daniels makes her way through a mountain of obstacles time is running out for one terrified girl.

## Settled Blood Details

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Author : Mari Hannah

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## From Reader Review Settled Blood for online ebook

### Rebecca Bradley says

This book is the second in the series for the protagonist Detective Chief Inspector Kate Daniels. After a strong start and gripping end to the first novel, *The Murder Wall*, I wondered how you could come back and beat that, but this novel does just that, it comes back stronger and a lot more sure of itself. The characters really have their place in this book and I really love Kate Daniels Sergeant Hank Gormley. For me, he was just a brilliantly down to earth guy. The rest of the supporting characters were strong, all carrying their own stories and were well fleshed out. The plot was incredible and the sense of place was just stunning. What a beautiful and cold place Hannah weaved.

The finale brought Kate Daniels into her own when she was pushed into a situation she couldn't have foreseen and see needed to make a decision on facing it or not. Very real emotions that any of us would feel were considered. Brilliantly written. It had me hooked.

I can't wait for book three now.

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### Andy Walker says

Having just read Mari Hannah's debut novel, *The Murder Wall* (which was fantastic), I swiftly moved on to her second (I do like to read books in order), *Settled Blood*. I read it inside two days and the reason for that was that I simply could not put it down. It's a brilliant, ingeniously constructed mystery, centring on the abduction of a local businessman's daughter and the desperate search to find her before it's too late. As with her previous book, Hannah drops in a few red herrings and false trails to keep the reader guessing and along the way reveals more about her central character, DCI Kate Daniels, her workmates and her estranged ex Jo Soulsby.

Hannah keeps the plot racing along (short chapters help with that) and it's fascinating what she packs into her story. *Settled Blood* has as its backdrop the north Pennine moors and the search for the missing girl seems all the more bleak given the area she is believed to be missing in. It's not all rolling hills and bleak countryside, Newcastle and Durham (and even Teesside) all get a look in as Daniels's team battle the odds - and time - to try and find their missing person. This book had it all - a great plot, plausible and believable characters that you care about, tension, thrills and a brilliant ending. It really is unputdownable. Is that a word? Well, I've just looked it up in the dictionary and there's a picture of the cover of this book.

I've already ordered the third Kate Daniels novel, *Deadly Deceit*, from my local library and I can't wait for it to arrive. In the meantime, I'm starting 'The Seductions of Lucy Foster', the first novel by Tony Garnett, who produced the seminal 90s police corruption drama, *Between the Lines*. You see, I'm such an addict for anything to do with crime fiction . . .

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### Jane Shambler says

**It's true!**

We as humans inflict pain on others sometimes without thought. You would think we were more evolved than that. This book is excellent. A little too true unfortunately. Well written, characters are realistic and you can feel a connection with them both in their anger and frustration. Great book, great author. Look forward to the next one.

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### **Keyleigh says**

**\*\*2.5 Stars\*\***

I don't usually read crime or mystery books, but *Settled Blood* by Mari Hannah looked like a good place to start. I absolutely loved the protagonist, Kate Daniels, who was feisty and enjoyable. The back-story was rich and entertaining to read about, although I got the feeling there may have been another book relating to Kate and her team which I missed. The dynamic within the characters relationships to one another was exciting, and I enjoyed being able to relate to everyone in the novel. The writing style was very clean, and I found myself hooked from the beginning. I enjoyed the plot, although it felt a little jumpy at times. It appeared that the characters would arrive at conclusions with almost no insight or explanation. Having said that; it may just be my own inexperience with detective novels showing. For a first read, this book was fantastic and I hope to learn to appreciate a good crime novel in future.

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### **Kay says**

The plot is interesting, as is the Northumbria and Durham setting. Nevertheless, the character development and writing had a perfunctory quality compared to my other favorite British police procedurals set in northern England. Not in the same league with Reginald Hill and Peter Robinson. An unfair comparison, I know, but Kindle makes it so easy to revisit these contemporary masters.k

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### **Louise says**

Book Two in the Kate Daniels series, set in the North East. It was just OK for me, the premise to start seemed interesting and gripping but it got long winded and slightly boring half way through, not to mention some of the things that happened in this book are scientifically "Impossible" and when that happens it makes me unable to take any of the plot/book seriously or enjoy it. I don't know if I will read the Third book but maybe a break from Mari Hannah and I may come back to this series in the future.

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### **Linda B says**

Settled Blood is the second in the DCI Kate Daniels series. The book seemed to be a little too much of an attempt to be an all inclusive genre. This mystery, thriller, suspense, police procedure and lesbian romance instead ended up a little muddled. There are very descriptive crime scenes, and the high suspense tension lasts until the end of the story.

I usually enjoy a methodical police procedure, but in this book, it seemed the details were too repetitive.

How many reports does the DCI Kate Daniels need to receive ( and seem surprised about) stating the fall victim was alive when she hit the ground. It did nothing to add to the horror of the crime. Also, the pining over her ex-girlfriend seemed out of place in the middle of a tense drama.

This is a British author so there were quite a few terms and British slang that I was not familiar with, but that was not a big drawback because it just took a quick search online to find definitions. It did break up the flow of the story though.

A copy of this e-book was provided by Edelweiss, Above the Treeline.

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### **Monica says**

One co-ed is dead and another is missing. Both bear a striking resemblance to each other. Can the missing girl be found in time?

A plot with multiple focuses does not detract or distract from the main story line. In fact, some parts add to the growth of the characters. Vivid scenes and an action packed narrative help to drive this somewhat serpentine narrative.

Some portions of characters' home lives were only partially explored, but to explore in full detail would have added much length, and changed the direction of, the book.

The dialogue is crisp, aids in character and plot development while adding humor at times.

Overall, a thrilling read!

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### **Christine says**

In *The Murder Wall*, we met police detectives Kate Daniels, a brilliantly interesting character and her sidekick, Hank Gormley. Once again, we are back in the North East, with the delightful Kate investigating the murder of a student dropped from a height onto the picturesque Hadrien's Wall.

I really LOVE this series and how the characters have matured and developed. It is the sign of a great book, when you grow very fond of a set of characters (Kate, Jo and Hank in particular) and want to know more about them. In the first book, I found Kate rather puzzling at times, with her secrecy. I feel in *Settled Blood* that the characters are much more established and I know Kate enough to understand her reasoning and her behaviours.

An excellent series worth reading! I'm starting book three now.

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### **Rachel Hall says**

After being thoroughly impressed by Mari Hannah's recent thriller, *The Silent Room*, I have belatedly arrived at her highly acclaimed police procedural series featuring DCI Kate Daniels and the Murder Investigation Team of Northumbria Police. Starting with the second novel in the series may be seen as sub-optimal but for

any decent long running series, despite an overarching storyline following the main character's lives, each novel effectively works in isolation and this is very much the case here and hence reading the first in the series is by no means a necessity.

Settled Blood gets off to a flying start and throws a recently back to work, DCI Kate Daniels, straight back into her demanding role heading up the murder investigation team in Northumbria. The harrowing discovery of a young woman's body lying at the base of Hadrian's Wall dressed up for a night on the town and wearing five-inch heels is Daniels first priority and the post-mortem confirms her worst fears; that the girl has been tossed from a great height and sickeningly died on impact. The remote surroundings, lack of forensics and obvious futility of conducting a house-to-house in such a location leave Daniels and her team facing an uphill struggle to make headway. Before she can even get a handle on mounting the investigation, her superior, Detective Chief Superintendent Bright calls in a favour for one of his golfing pals. Wealthy entrepreneur and aforementioned golf crony, Adam Finch, has received a poisonous missive threatening his daughter, Jessica, a medical student at Durham University and he has subsequently been unable to locate her. Suspecting that this is her victim and on the basis of the description, Daniels takes Finch to identify the girl. However she is shocked by his declaration that it is not Jessica's body, but that the girl is wearing Jessica's precious Cartier necklace and the clothes that Jessica was last seen in... and it is the uncanny likeness of this girl to Jessica that chills the team to the very core and forces them to reassess just what a depraved predator they are faced with.

The body is identified that of Amy Grainger, another Durham student who seems to have paid a high price for simply bearing a likeness to Jessica Finch, although that is naturally of little consolation to her shattered parents. With no ransom demand arriving and Daniels suspecting that the matter is not financially motivated but centred around someone intent on destroying Finch, she is forced to look at his connections to her boss. With few leads of consequence the report of a third lookalike girl disappearing really ups the ante, but a simultaneous investigation into a prostitution ring tempting hard-up Durham students on the game muddies the waters and makes separating the two lines of enquiry difficult and pinpointing the motivation behind the murder of Amy and the disappearance of Jessica even harder. Set against a backdrop of the breathtaking Northumbrian landscape, the unremitting rain and winds combine to make searching the landscape treacherous. Daniels is a leader who wears her heart on her sleeve and displays a resilient attitude to her work, even when her own personal life is falling apart at the seams. Throughout the course of this case unfolding, readers will quickly gather that the first book in this series, *The Murder Wall*, saw Kate tackle a serial killer and her right shoulder still bears the ravages, but it is the breakdown of her relationship with lover and criminal profiler, Jo Soulsby that has left the worst scars.

Central protagonist DCI Kate Daniels is a fascinating character with an uncompromising attitude to her job and she leads by example. She is hugely compassionate and works hard to motivate and energise her team as new information is uncovered. It would be doing a major disservice to the character to simply sum her up on the basis of her sexuality, and whilst Daniels may have relationships with other females that is of secondary importance to her capabilities as a wily detective. As a detective above else she has simply taken the most sensible course of action for a woman with a passion for her job and an eye to moving up the ranks in not publicly disclosing her sexuality. Whilst her erstwhile second in command and genuine ally, DS Hank Gormley and her superior, DCS Bright are aware, it remains very much a non-issue amongst the rest of her team whose priority is cracking the case, finding the murderer of a young woman and rescuing another. However, Northumbria MIT isn't just a one man show and the genuine camaraderie and spirit of the team is well explored and provides an excellent overview of a team working together well. Alongside the good humoured and genuine Hank Gormley, industrious and green DC Lisa Carmichael earns her spurs and DS Robson repays Daniels faith in him and shows why she is such a respected team leader amongst her loyal team.

Hard-hitting and gritty, *Settled Blood* is undoubtedly one of the most authentic police procedural novels that I have read and not only is the case itself complex but the searing pace and rigorous eye for procedure makes

this an absolute winner. A three-dimensional plot allows Mari Hannah to demonstrate her talents as theories are thrashed out, scenarios tested, mistakes made and blind alleys closed down. Not only is this the real deal in terms of showing how such an investigation is tackled, it also provides an understanding of the conflicting demands of resources that a Senior Investigating Officer has to contend with. A thoughtful conclusion sees Kate Daniels pause for breath and take stock of the toll that this investigation has taken and provides a poignant wrap-up to the case. Sensitive and convincing, DCI Kate Daniels eye for the bigger picture and the ensuing loss of Amy Grainger's life is ever present in her mind. Tightly-plotted with well-realised characters, this is a series that I shall undoubtedly read more of comes highly recommended for readers who enjoy the Sarah Hilary's edgy realism and Lin Anderson's eye for detail. Settled Blood is an emotive and involving police procedural and Mari Hannah writes with real depth and credibility and this novel comes highly recommend.

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### **Fiona says**

I agree that the characters in this series are now well established. I liked most of the book but I struggled at the end. I didn't believe that someone can survive for 9 days standing in water underground without food or heat without dying of hypothermia (or something else).

I also found the resuscitation scene completely unbelievable. Firstly, nobody would put their mouth anywhere near the mouth of someone suspected of taking poison, with or without a mouth shield. Secondly, are we really to believe that Kate Daniels single handedly carried out CPR on the suspect for 15 minutes while her team apparently watched? Why was an ambulance not called? It is also usual practice to have one person to do rescue breathing (if done) and another to do compressions. It is also standard for helpers to take turns with chest compressions as CPR is so exhausting.

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### **Robin Richmond says**

I could not put this book down. The book is well written and the story line very believable

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### **Gillian De'Ath says**

The story was well formed and kept me guessing but I didn't find the style of writing appealing. I think this book reads like it was written with a television version in mind and didn't leave much room for reader interpretation.

That said I enjoyed the story and the ending and I did like Kate Daniels as a character.

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### **Louisa says**

Oh, I enjoyed this book a bit more, it was a bit better, and yeah.

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## **Margaret says**

A young woman is found dead at Hadrian's Wall and another is missing. Are they two separate cases or one.

DCI Kate Daniels and her team are about to find out.

It become a race against time to find the missing girl and track a killer.

Fast paced, well written, and interesting.

Highly recommended.

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