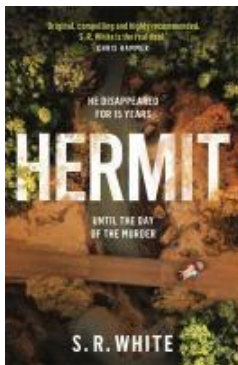


Hermit by S.R.White

Reviewed by Donna



It is always exciting to find a new Australian author and while SR White is UK born but now living in Queensland, I think we can claim his as one of our own. Hermit is set in a rural Australian town. When police officers are called to the scene of a murder they find a man leaning over the body, knife in hand. That man is Nathan Whittler, a man who for the past fifteen years has lived totally isolated from all human contact. He appears to be deeply traumatised and completely withdrawn.

Detective Dana Russo has been tasked with interviewing Nathan, but has only twelve hours to do so. Dana herself is psychologically scarred from a previous event which threatens to overwhelm her. Two damaged persons, one crime to solve, a ticking clock and a horrific sequence of events to unravel.

This is very much a “slow-burn” of a novel. The crime itself is not the main focus rather it is the stories behind the characters and their damaged pasts that draw you in. This is a very intense and at times breathtaking read but worth it.

Usually in police procedurals there is a background of politics and dysfunctional police officers working in an environment of apathy, alcohol abuse and corruption. Hermit is unusual in that the police team work well together, in a supportive and collegial way that is very refreshing.

Hermit has some similarities to the writings of Jane Harper and Chris Hammer, so if you are after a character-driven mystery, this is perfect. No big thrills and spills, but a great addition to the Australian rural crime genre

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