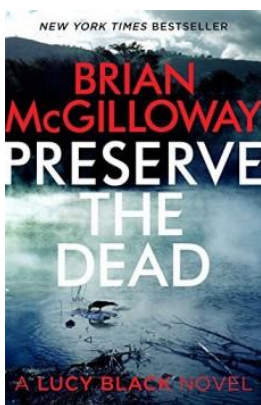


Preserve the dead by Brian McGilloway

Review by Pat



Detective Sergeant Lucy Black is visiting her father, a patient in a secure unit in Gransha Hospital on the banks of the River Foyle. He's been hurt badly in an altercation with another patient, and Lucy is shocked to discover him chained to the bed for safety. But she barely has time to take it all in, before an orderly raises the alarm - a body has been spotted floating in the river below...

The body of an elderly man in a grey suit is hauled ashore: he is cold dead. He has been dead for several days. In fact, a closer examination reveals that he has already been embalmed. A full scale investigation is launched - could this really be the suicide they at first assumed, or is this some kind of sick joke?

Troubled and exhausted, Lucy goes back to her father's shell of a house to get some sleep; but there'll be no rest for her tonight. She's barely in the front door when a neighbour knocks, in total distress - his wife's sister has turned up badly beaten. Can she help?

There are the multilayers that add colour and tone to this story and it is why I enjoy the writing so much. Within the novel this rich blend is supported by fine language and gentle plot development in what is basically a police procedural.

The ability of the author to weave his plot between human interest to criminal depravity means the thrills are exciting and the reality chilling. Above all he takes us on a journey to Derry and fills his book with wonderful descriptions and a hope of renewal for both the place and his character Lucy Black.

A great story of exploitation and corruption; from the con of an old lady to the fraud of public money. I loved it and highly recommend you read it.

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