



This Thing of Darkness

Harry Bingham

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A hanged man, a stolen painting, an impossible crime

A marine engineer is found hanged in a locked apartment. Some artwork is stolen, then mysteriously returned. A security guard is found dead at the base of a Welsh cliff.

When Fiona Griffiths is tasked to look through a stackload of cold cases, her bosses don't expect her to find anything of interest. But then she finds that an impossible robbery really happened. That a nailed-on suicide was anything but. That the dead security guard was almost certainly murdered.

Before long, Fiona is embroiled in what will become the toughest case of her career so far - one that forces her to enter the heart of darkness, and a journey that will test her mental toughness to its very limits.

This international smash hit murder mystery series is ideal for fans of Stieg Larsson, Gillian Flynn, Tana French ... and for anyone at all who loves their crime noir and their female protagonists strong, brave and smart.

Watch out for more titles in the Fiona Griffiths mysteries series

When Fiona is called out to attend an incident in a remote country churchyard, she finds the corpse of a young woman, reverentially laid out in a howling October night. She suspects murder . . . but the truth turns out to be far worse. **THE DEAD HOUSE**. Coming 2016. Don't miss it!

What people are saying about the Fiona Griffiths crime thrillers series

"Exceptional . . . Absorbing . . . **Fiona's narrative sears the pages.**"—*Kirkus Reviews*

"The most gripping crime novel I have read, maybe ever. DON'T read The Strange Death if you have a weak heart, unless you are bent on suicide by thriller."—*Peter J Earle*

"Gritty, compelling . . . a [police] procedural unlike any other you are likely to read this year."—*USA Today*

"With Detective Constable Fiona 'Fi' Griffiths, Harry Bingham . . . finds a sweet spot in crime fiction . . . think Stieg Larsson's Lisbeth Salander . . . Denise Mina's 'Paddy' Meehan [or] Lee Child's Jack Reacher . . . The writing is terrific."—*Boston Globe*

"Fiona Griffiths may be **the most fascinating protagonist in fiction**. She is similar to Lisbeth Salander, an intelligent but profoundly damaged young woman, but Fiona is less hostile and more curious, sort of a good guy sociopath. I couldn't put it down. This is definitely one of my very favorite thriller series. I love this character and I hope I have the chance to read many more. Harry Bingham is a genius and one hell of a writer."—*Audrey, Top 500 Reviewer*

"A stunner with precision plotting, an unusual setting, and a deeply complex protagonist . . . We have the welcome promise of more books to come."—*The Seattle Times*

"A dark delight, and I look forward to Fiona's future struggles with criminals, her demons and the mysteries

of her past.”—*Washington Post*

"The easiest five stars I've ever awarded a book. Fiona Griffiths is by far the most original fictional detective I've come across . . . [the book] made me feel breathless with worry, concern and eventually fear for Fiona.

This Thing of Darkness Details

Date : Published July 2nd 2015 by Orion (first published January 1st 2015)

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Author : Harry Bingham

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From Reader Review This Thing of Darkness for online ebook

Karen Mossman says

Difficult to get into at first, but by halfway I was totally hooked.

Maybe not as good as the previous one, but enjoyable not the less. Book 5 now downloaded.

Michael says

I recently reviewed the Jeffery Deaver novel, The Cutting Edge. In my review I noted how a Deaver novel was like a text book because you learned so much.

Deaver has nothing on Harry Bingham. I don't know that Bingham is better at that than is Deaver but I would say they both offer great opportunities for learning. I know for sure there was much to learn in this novel and that's been true of all of the Fiona Griffiths novels I've read.

Oh, one thing I learned reading the author's notes at the end of the book, Bingham reads reviews both on Amazon and Goodreads. But I will not be intimidated. I will give what I feel is an honest review and just because I'm prepared to heap praise on this book doesn't mean I'm bothered by Bingham's review of my review one bit. So HA! Harry Bingham, just Ha!

(Scurry's to the door to make sure the locks are thrown just in case Harry is on the prowl.)

So what subjects did we learn about from this book? Rock climbing of course, and how an adept climber of rocks can also be an adept climber of buildings. (Thankfully my house is a single story so I don't have to worry about a climber getting into the third story and stealing my fabulously expensive cobwebs that have taken years to build up.)

We learn a bit about trans Atlantic cables. And like Fiona, I thought all of that data was done via satellite! We learned that time is money and when I say time we are talking milliseconds. I had no idea how those things worked but Bingham, having done his research taught us how that is so.

We learned a bit about trawlers out on the Irish Sea but not nearly as much as those two subject previously mentioned.

But we also learned a bit about Fi.

In the vernacular of our British friends, Fiona Griffiths is a nutter. Oh we knew that before but in this novel that nuttiness comes out even more. But that shouldn't be used to denigrate Fi because she's also a genius at times. As dumb as she can be at times she has moments of brilliance and thus the basis of the stories Bingham weaves for us.

Fiona lives and works in Wales, for the most part that is. She does traipse off to other parts of the UK from time to time and even to foreign countries. Well they are all foreign to me ensconced as I am in the U.S. but I mean foreign to Fi. Specifically in this novel we are talking about Spain, Portugal and France.

So what is this novel about? It's about 2 cold cases that Fi is given by Jackson, her uber boss in order to keep her mind going in the right direction. One was a break in and theft of a third story (second story in British terms if I'm not mistaken), a seemingly impossible feat that could be performed only by, say, Peter Pan. The other is the death of a night watchman, not as he made his rounds but after he partook of a couple of pints and feel off of a cliff while walking home.

But Fi, in her screwed up but insightful way doesn't see it that way, neither of them. She doesn't believe it was Peter Pan that broke into the third (or second) story nor does she feel that the night watchman fell to his death but rather was dead or close to it on his way down the cliff.

So what do those unrelated events have to do with trawler's on the Irish Sea and trans Atlantic cable? Oh ye who have read my reviews; you know this is coming. . . READ THE BOOK!

Along with those crimes which set off a massive investigation, we have a kidnapping and torturing of a young female Detective Constable (Fi herself). We have the suicide which isn't a suicide of a marine engineer who, it turns out, was also tortured. We have a world class climber of rock and, as we learn, buildings. We have insurance fraud. And we have a young female Detective Constable (yes, our beloved Fiona again) taking the exam for Sergeant. Does she pass? Yes, you guessed it; READ THE BOOK!

Watkins, Jackson, Penry, Ed and even Buzz plus Mike all play excellent supporting roles and they read their lines quite well and never miss their marks. Add Lev to that mix and you have. . . well, quite a mix.

In the past I have given the Bingham novels I've read 4 stars. Not this time. No, this time Bingham got that 5th star. He earned it, and no I'm not intimidated that he might read this review. Well, not much at least.

I loved the prose of this book and, as Harry himself points out in the afterward, he doesn't Americanize his books but keeps them true to the UK and even more precisely, to Wales at times. The spelling wasn't a problem at all. I mean if you can't figure out that colour and color are the same thing then you probably should be listening to an audio book. There are times when I had to look something up, usually on Wikipedia or in the dictionary and I seldom have to do that with most books written for the American audience. I don't mind that. Remember, earlier on I said this was text book and that is part of the learning.

So OK Mr. Bingham, can I take my catcher's mask off, the one that I've been wearing in case you don't like my review and want to punch me in the nose? Did I do OK?

Guess what? I don't really have a catcher's mask and I didn't write this for Harry Bingham, I wrote it for me, and for anyone of our Goodreads readers who want to know what this book is about and if they should read it. I've given you hints as to the former and the answer to the latter is, if you like suspense, action, if you like delving into the mind of a young lady who has problems but also has lots of answers, then not just yes but HELL YES! Read this book.

Clover White says

It has been two and a half years since I read a Fiona Griffiths novel, and I can't really remember what made me think of it last night. Once I downloaded the Kindle edition of this one, though, I could not stop reading. I bitterly resented work, sleep, people talking to me—Did they not see I was READING ANOTHER FIONA GRIFFITHS? ?. Anyway, home from work, and settled into a chair beside an outlet to keep my phone from

dying during this extremely crucial time. WHY were my kids insisting on supper?! Despite these hold-ups, I managed to blaze through the entire scintillating read. I love the finely articulated personality of Fiona, the intricacy of the plotting, the whole thing. Now, I have to force myself to save the next book for Thanksgiving break, so I don't risk getting fired for reading on the job.

Kathleen (QueenKatieMae) says

I absolutely love the quirky DI Fiona Griffith and the uncontrolled running commentary that constantly races through her head. Her past: mental illness and mobster father. Her present: feels more connection with the dead than the living, medicates the disquiet with weed, eats only because she is supposed to, doesn't recognize emotions, and has trouble following rules. All this makes for a rather unorthodox detective. But the rub is, she is an effective one; her idiosyncratic mind allows her to think outside the box and see through the jumble of clues that stump the other detectives. All these aspects of Fiona Griffith make her one of the most enjoyable reads.

Somehow I missed This Thing of Darkness (Book 4) and went straight to The Dead House (Book 5). So I had to retrace Fiona's steps back to the days that followed her breakup with Buzz, her undercover gig, her newly discovered penchant for cleaning and found a rather depressed Fiona. In book 4, her fragilely pieced together sanity had started to unravel and the blackness of her mental illness crept allowing shards of suicidal ideation and self-harm to invade her thoughts. Her new job in the basement evidence cave with a monosyllabic coworker does not help either.

Given cold cases to keep her busy, she picks the impossible ones: a second floor robbery that turns out is no longer a robbery and a fatal fall that seems rather cut and dried. With her brain in high gear (pun intended as she continues to smoke her wacky weed even on the job) and using her bottomless barrel of energy she discovers these two seemingly unrelated cases are clues to an amazingly complex criminal scheme that is worth billions.

The first third of the book was d-e-p-r-e-s-s-i-n-g. I missed the eccentric Fiona and her unethical impulsiveness. I cringed when she wondered how it would feel if she burned her arm with a cigarette. I grew just as bored as she does with day after day of entering evidence into the computer. And, worse, page after page, I felt myself go into a Fiona-like fugue state. To fully explain the monotony of the first third, the book was, in her words, less "corpsier" than usual. Just like Fiona, I needed a dead body.

Finally, the book grew corpsier, and darker, and weirder. There is a barn scene that will test the readers' fortitude. There is a denouement that will test the readers' plausibility meter. But, it is finally Fiona: the woman with lopsided relationships with live humans and an unreliable ability to recognize or even feel emotion. It is the Fiona who somehow is able to think five steps ahead of her co-workers to avoid getting into trouble. The Fiona who puts hand lotion and a pencil jar on her desk, not because she uses any of these things, but because that's what normal people do. The Fiona who hires convicts and hangs out with former Russian spies and constantly smokes weed.

She may wish she could be normal or even live on the same planet as other humans, but I sure like her just the way she is.

Kathy says

I'm exhausted. Fiona is at risk so many times in so many ways in her own undercover operations without police knowledge/support that I am just gasping. This book includes a good deal of climbing information as well as some wonderfully descriptive scenes at sea where Fiona engineers the sinking of the ship she is on. Right. Tiny little Fiona. Always the one to see the big picture no one else can guess at by connecting deaths that don't feel right with wealthy Welsh businessmen who don't seem right and using every trick she can come up with to defeat their plans to interfere with undersea cables.

This book could lead a person to believe that it is ok to break all the rules to catch the bad guys. Fiona breaks the laws of nature now and then as well.

Happy to report she is still alive against all reason, is now DS after passing test and is in good shape reporting to Jackson.

Ellen says

Fiona Griffiths is a wonderful, weird character. Excellent humor, truly strange psychology. I love this series.

Lynn says

I enjoy Fiona's declarative/disjointed narration. Her efforts at becoming (not just appearing) normal and following the official rules of policing continue. I like seeing her struggle less with Cotard's and make a life for herself, and happily she's managing to keep her weirdness as she develops. The investigations and research in this series are connected, so reading them in order is important.

Cathy Cole says

Whenever I see those "all-time favorite" book lists, I avoid them like the plague. I just don't feel like putting all the books that have touched me deeply into an organized and rated row. (Yes, it is a lot like asking a mother to name her favorite child.) However, if someone asked me to name the best mystery series being written today, without hesitation I would say Harry Bingham's Fiona Griffiths. To date, there are four books, and I have given all four the highest possible rating. I can't say that about any other author I've read.

Yes, the setting of Wales adds texture and richness to the books. Yes, the mysteries are some of the most intriguing you'll ever come across. Yes, the pacing draws you inevitably forward, faster and faster. You have to know what happens, and you have to know now. But the best and brightest thing about Harry Bingham's superb series is the main character, Fiona Griffiths.

At one time Fiona suffered from Cotard's syndrome, a rare mental illness in which an afflicted person holds the delusion that they are dead, either figuratively or literally. Fiona is one of the brightest people you'll ever run across, but Cotard's syndrome has colored every aspect of her life, and most especially in the way she interacts with other people. As can be seen in *This Thing of Darkness*, Fiona now has two superior officers who--though they may not really understand her-- can see her almost limitless potential as an investigator. To the best of their ability, they are now trying to groom her for bigger and better things. Will Fiona

cooperate? Your guess is as good as mine.

I will warn you that this book does contain scenes of torture, and they do involve Fiona. They are tough to deal with but not impossible because we see these scenes through Fiona's eyes... those eyes that do not see the world as we do. There are also scenes of humor that bring needed warmth and laughter to the book, as when Fiona and Inspector Watkins conduct an interview together.

As different as Fiona is, she can also be very familiar. When she says, "Just when I see a barrier saying Do Not Cross, I have an almost overwhelming impulse to cross it," I understand because I've felt the same way many times.

Harry Bingham is the first writer who's been able to write scenes that take place on board ship that made me seasick, so be forewarned. He also made me nervous about a purchase Fiona made-- an uneasy foreshadowing of what's to come in book five, *The Dead House*? Unfortunately I'll just have to wait and see.

If you haven't read any of the books in this series, I urge you to do so, and you need to start with the very first book, *Talking to the Dead*. If you do that, Fiona will make sense-- and then you will be as hopelessly hooked as I am. Fiona Griffiths is as wild and wonderful in her own way as Stieg Larsson's Lisbeth Salander is in hers. I can't recommend Fiona-- or this entire series-- highly enough.

Novel Destination says

I rarely advocate reading a series in perfect order and, admittedly, I did not read Harry Bingham's initial books in this series in order. That said, this is book 4 in the Fiona Griffiths Mysteries and I believe that most readers would prefer to watch Fiona and the other characters develop rather than just drop in on this installment. Fiona is a Welsh detective who suffers, adapts, and tries to thrive in spite of her mental illness (Cotard's Syndrome). Her mind is brilliant and what she lacks in physical size, she more than makes up for in doggedness and feisty behavior. This one character makes the story into much more than a police procedural and mystery. I gained stronger positive feelings about her bosses, Jackson and Watkins, and their management styles in this novel.

While I agree that this is a bit slower going at times, it grows in momentum and segues into a grand ending that makes it clear the author has future plans for this series. My concern about the characters and the cases they are involved in kept me interested while the author's writing style carried me along. As I read, I learned a bit about rock climbing, how data being shared via fast cable connections can be a financial drain/boost in its own right, and that I should never seek employment on a fishing vessel.

Looking forward to the next installment!

Ingrid says

A slow start and less thrilling than the former books in the series, but only slightly so.
4,5 stars.

Gail Humphrey says

I'm completely taken with this series.

Gary Van Cott says

While I don't think this book is as good as the previous book in this series (few reach that level) it was very good. The early portions of the book were on the slow side (perhaps the author wanted us to share some of Fiona's boredom) but eventually it picked up steam with an especially exciting climax. Some mysteries/police procedurals have an abrupt ending. This one was the opposite. First we have a recap of the major climax, then go over Fiona's continuing concerns, and finally a mini climax at the very end.

I have read these books as they came out which makes it hard for me to retain details about the continuing story which is very much in the background. I may have to reread these books before number 5.

Bill Kupersmith says

Fiona Griffiths excels contemporary police detectives, even such high-maintenance items as Tana French's Cassie Maddox & Sharon Bolton's Lacey Flint, in psychological complexity. When young she suffered from a mental illness called Cotard's Syndrome, characterized by the delusion that she was actually dead. This has left her conscious of being able to get directly in touch with murder victims, an appropriate affinity for a criminal investigator that gives her a more than routine desire to see the victims' killers brought to justice. With the help of a psychological counselor who was also her first love, Fiona was able to overcome her affliction sufficiently to lead a more-or-less regular life & took a degree in philosophy @ Cambridge. Her career with the South Wales police force seems a deliberately contrarian choice to go against the grain - she was reared in the wealthy family of a successfully retired Cardiff crime lord (who provides Fiona with not only private means but her own personal unarmed combat instructor, a veteran of the Russian special forces). Like Cassie and Lacey, Fiona combines a strong independent streak that makes her instantly ready to cast her police career to the winds with a strong desire to prove trustworthy & to see justice done, whatever it takes, whatever the risks.

The ongoing background: as with many series police detectives, with Fi there are several mysteries unfolding simultaneously. Her father-the-crime-lord is apparently her foster father; she was 1st discovered @ age two sitting in the backseat of his Jaguar. There are also her relationships, with Ed the ex-counselor whom she pops in on when she needs a little steadying, Lev her combat trainer, who's one of those boring characters who speaks English with Russian grammar, & the annoyingly named Buzz(!), an ex-Parachute Regiment policeman with whom Fi came to close to settling down in the second (& to my mind weakest) book in the series, but fortunately has been effectively written out of the story in this one. I think the author has realised that as a totally unstable personality, Fi ought to have but transitory affairs. (Also, readers like me who fall for her get jealous of lovers who hang around too long.) Additionally, Fi has a list of shady Cardiff businessmen (I think all men so far) and councilors whom she keeps on Google alert & provide the author with new villainous schemes that generate crimes for Fi to investigate & solve. In the first of the series it was sex trafficking, the second was arms dealing, I've forgot what was behind the third in which Fi went undercover as an office cleaner ` something to do with payrolls, I think. In this one it's Transatlantic cables, which allows Fi to go undercover as well, for what I found the most exciting thriller ending in the series yet.

There is also usually a gimmick in which Fiona (& the reader) are taught a new skill. In *Talking to the Dead* it was unarmed & armed combat, in *Love Story with Murders* it was how to blow up a motor car (I now carry one of those gas grille igniters in the VW just in case I should need to get the attention of a search helicopter), in *The Strange Death of Fiona Griffiths* how to assume another identity (definitely my favourite), & here in *This Thing of Darkness* it's rock climbing. (Never appealed to me, but then I've succeeded in breaking my neck in my living room so why bother?)

In comparison to other young police detectives, Fi ranks for me in the top echelon & Cotard's gives her a paranormal or psychological (depending on whether you regard communicating with the dead as a gift - like me - or a delusion) dimension absent in her peers. But you don't feel, as with Cassie or Lacey, that Fi is so real that she's somebody you wish you could have as a friend, even tho' it would be a very difficult friendship indeed. But I'd rank Fi above the impressive newcomers Angela Marson's Kim Stone & Elizabeth Haynes's Louisa Smith, who are still a little too flat, even tho' as a literary artist Haynes excels all contemporaries besides French & Bolton. Another rising star police detective (this one in the Southern Cross) - whom I had the good fortune to encounter with another reading group is Candice Fox's Eden Archer, who like Fi is also the foster daughter of a crime lord. Unlike Haynes, & of course French & Bolton, Bingham fails to portray really memorable minor characters & his villains are there just to commit crimes & ultimately get caught - nothing tragic about them & they are totally forgettable. But that quality makes the members of the series stand alone very well. Could you read a Harry Bingham for a 2nd time? Not sure, but I'd consider *Strange Death* for another go - what I learnt about undercover work made me appreciate *Dead Scared* & *The Likeness* even more. Should *This Thing of Darkness* be your first outing, you might like to go back & pick up *Talking to the Dead* for more of Fi's back story. This one tho' I cannot imagine wanting to read again, so I'll hold @ four stars - but they're very bright stars.

Brenda says

This is the fourth Fiona Griffiths novel, and they really need to be read in order. That way the reader will "know" Fi and her history, both personally and professionally.

Fiona was put into a much darker place in this book than previous. With help from unconventional sources, she recovers slowly. In the midst of this, crimes are realized and investigated. She *tries* to stay within police procedures this time. The thing that happens with Fiona is she's far ahead of the curve in the investigation. From reading the previous books, I know how her mind works, and she does things for reasons I might not yet see. I'll understand when she reveals the bigger picture.

I really want to give this 5 stars, but I feel some reservation. First, there was not a lot of tension. Second, I had trouble keeping track of who was who on the ship. Third, in some places, the book bounced between descriptive paragraphs and then suddenly into short, choppy, incomplete sentences and then back to longer paragraphs again. I found this jarring and disruptive. I did enjoy the repartee between Fiona and her supervisors, including the thoughts in Fi's head that weren't said. It was an enjoyable read, but in my opinion, not the high quality of the previous books.

Hobart says

This originally appeared at The Irresponsible Reader.

I think police rules matter and I'll try to abide by them. But the dead matter more. Their rules are sacred and they last for ever.

For a change, Fiona Griffiths is making a serious, concerted effort to act the way that a Detective Constable is supposed to -- crossing Ts, dotting Is, using warrants, court orders, rules of evidence, and so on -- I'm not saying she's successful at it, but she made an effort. Sure, she had to set the rules to the side in the beginning, and she had to put them in the dustbin towards the end -- but during that middle part? She came awfully close to being a proper DC from Planet Normal.

So, Fiona is assigned to help out in Evidence Collection -- going through all the gathered evidence, cataloging, tracking, documenting the chain of custody, etc. for a major sexual assault case. She has no use for the lead investigator -- and the feeling is mutual -- but she's quite skilled at this sort of thing, so she has to stay on the case. Meanwhile, she's also studying for the Detective Sergeant's exam (or she's supposed to be) - - her superiors have very high expectations for her. Oh, and she's been given a stack of cold cases to leaf through to keep her mind engaged. Two of this stack of cases catch her eye -- and because she's Fiona Griffiths, it turns out that her curiosity was piqued by cases that turn out to be more than anyone expected.

In one case, some very valuable art was stolen from the second floor of a home -- all the security was located on the first floor, and there's absolutely no indication that the first floor was accessed at all. Yet (with no obvious sign of break in), the second floor was picked pretty clean. There's also an accidental death as the result of a fall from a rocky path near a cliff where a man who'd been drinking was walking at night. It's not long before she's able to demonstrate one solid explanation for the break-in, why it happened the way it did; she's able to demonstrate that the accidental death wasn't one, and is able to identify similar crimes. From there...well, things get complicated.

On the one hand, what Fiona and her colleagues uncovers is one of the most outlandish, hard to believe schemes I can remember in crime fiction. On the other hand, I just know that there are probably actual crimes that make this look pedestrian, and it wouldn't surprise me if there are real life analogues to the crimes in this book. Also, when Fiona starts putting pieces together and explaining things to her superiors, it all makes sense in a way that you can't believe you didn't figure it out a dozen pages before her.

Naturally, this book puts Fiona in a couple of very difficult situations -- and both make what she's gone through before seem somewhat tame. Part of this takes place on a fishing boat in the Atlantic -- I make no bones about it, I need to be on land. I cannot handle being on anything in the ocean for longer than...4 minutes. Reading those portions of this book were pure horror for me. I'm not going to slap a Trigger Warning on this or anything, but you might want to consider popping a Dramamine. Watching Fiona endure these extremes, while keeping her wits (mostly?) about her, planning her way out of them, *and* dealing with her mental health issues -- it makes for great reading. Pure and simple.

Meanwhile, Fiona is making strides in her personal life, growing as a person -- finding her relationships with her exes evolve and mature. Forging new relationships, realizing how to recognize attraction to someone, forging friendships, etc. She is getting closer to her goal (whether or not she'll ever reach it, I don't know, but she's closer) of a "normal" life. Also, thanks to the mentorship and guidance (frequently firm) of her

superiors, she's advancing at work. Sure, she spends a lot of time stuck processing evidence -- but that just adds fuel to her creative fire when she is investigating and coming up against brick walls. Also, the last chapter features some of the most overtly "fun" writing in the series -- and that's due to the relationships with her superiors developing the way they do.

It would've been very easy for Bingham to crank out a few books about the quirky and charmingly unbalanced Fiona acting like a maverick cop, investigating on her own and finding ways to justify everything for the brass. Instead, we see Fiona wrestling with her condition, making progress (and then regressing) with it -- yet finding ways to integrate professionally and personally with others.

Not only that, but Fiona makes significant progress on the two ongoing investigations she's been handling on her own since the first book -- there's been some incremental progress when it comes to tracing her personal history, and her campaign to learn more about those who were tied to the ringleader in **Talking to the Dead** in the last couple of books -- but she makes strides greater than I really ever wondered if she would in this book -- and I know she's not done yet.

That reminds me -- this novel revisits (in at least some small way) the victims and perpetrators of the cases in the first three books in the series. Not many mysteries do that, but Bingham makes sure that Fiona can't shake the ghosts of the cases she's worked -- no matter how they resolved.

There's really very little that Bingham and Fiona don't do well in this layered novel -- whether we're dealing with one of the many criminal investigations, her personal growth, or just understanding herself better, this book does a great job with everything. I am always forgetting how much I like these books, and just how good Bingham is -- I'm not sure why it's something I need reminding of. The balance of mystery, thriller, and character study is really outstanding. Obviously, if you watch Fiona's growth from the get go, you will appreciate what happens in these pages better. But this would work as a jumping on point, too. Definitely recommended.
