

Praise for Colin Campbell

“Very real. And Very good.” - *Lee Child*

The Resurrection Man Series

“A cop with a sharp eye, keen mind, and a lion’s heart.” - *Reed Farrel Coleman*

“Campbell writes smart, rollercoaster tales with unstoppable forward momentum and thrilling authenticity. The Resurrection Man series is a blast.” - *Nick Petrie*

“Grim and gritty and packed with action and crackling dialogue.” – *Kirkus Review (Jamaica Plain)*

“Action packed. Tough-as-nails. The pages fly like the bullets, fistfights and one-liners that make this one of my favourite books of the year. Top stuff!" – *Matt Hilton (Jamaica Plain)*

“Campbell’s wry maverick Grant never fails to entertain.” – *Kirkus Review (Montecito Heights)*

“Harkens back to the gritty action series of the 70s and 80s, with a stylish noir voice.” – *Kirkus Reviews (Adobe Flats)*

“Crackerjack entertainment: taut, gritty and full of devilish twists.” – *Kirkus Reviews (Snake Pass)*

"Campbell's BEACON HILL is a great tale of violence and intrigue, stretching across the Atlantic and back again. In it, Jim Grant proves he is the real deal." – *Reed Farrel Coleman (about Beacon Hill)*

"The Resurrection Man series is a blast, and BEACON HILL tops the list -- until the next one." – *Nick Petrie (about Beacon Hill)*

UK Crime Novels

"This is police procedural close-up and personal. A strong debut with enough gritty realism to make your eyes water, and a few savage laughs along the way." - *Reginald Hill (about Through The Ruins Of Midnight)*

"An excellent story well told. A mixture of The Choirboys meets Harry Bosch." – *Michael Jecks (about Through The Ruins Of Midnight)*

"Campbell's 30 years as a Yorkshire policeman infuse this unusual procedural with grim reality and the harsh humor that helps keep the coppers sane." – *Kirkus Review (Blue Knight White Cross)*

"Every detail feels authentic, and Campbell's dark, muscular prose suggests the best pulp writers of the '50s." – *Kirkus Review (Northern Ex)*

Colin Campbell

Also by Colin Campbell

Resurrection Man

Shelter Cove

Beacon Hill

Snake Pass

Adobe Flats

Montecito Heights

Jamaica Plain

Vince McNulty

Northern Ex

UK Crime

Blue Knight White Cross

Ballad Of The One Legged Man

Through The Ruins Of Midnight

Children

Gargoyles – Skylights And Roofscapes

Horror

Darkwater Towers

Jamaica Plain

For my dad
...enough said

PART ONE

“That’s the job. Shit rolls downhill.

Cops live in the valley.”

- Jim Grant

ONE

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THE FIRST THING JIM Grant did when he landed in Boston was buy a map. The second thing was get laid. The third was almost get himself killed interviewing a prisoner who was into something far bigger than what the detective came to interview him about.

Detective. That sounded good but Grant knew it was only a temporary assignment while his inspector cleaned up the mess he'd left behind in Yorkshire. He was still just a plain old Constable. PC 367 Grant. Maybe while he was visiting the US he should think of himself as a cop. Then again, maybe not. That would be going a bit too Hollywood.

First things first. If he were going to find his way around Boston he'd need a map. Ignoring the other passengers collecting their wheelie cases from the luggage carousel Grant hefted the battered leather holdall in one hand and went in search of the concession stands. That was his first mistake.

Three thousand miles from home and trouble still managed to find him straight away.

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LOGAN INTERNATIONAL WAS BIGGER than Manchester Airport but the basics were the same. Wide open spaces, big windows looking out onto the runways, and dozens of preformed waiting room chairs in rows of four with a low table in between. All connected so if one person sat down all four seats bounced. Grant had lost count of how many cups of coffee he'd spilled because some heavyweight couldn't lower himself into his seat.

The place smelled of plastic and canned air.

There were fewer seats in the arrivals lounge than in departures. Fewer people wanted to sit down after spending a long flight cramped in a seat with no legroom and someone in front leaning back so that what little room you did have was crushed against your knees. At least that was Grant's experience of international travel. At six feet four he'd have troubling stretching out in first class. West Yorkshire Police hadn't paid for first class. Prisoner extradition might have warranted the expense. Getting your bad egg out of the way meant the cheapest seat available and forget the legroom.

Logan had one other thing in common with Manchester. Airports attracted criminals like flies round shit. For some reason Grant was the embodiment of human flypaper. He wasn't looking but his eyes couldn't help roving. It was a reflex action. Any room he entered the first thing he'd do was scan the crowd, quickly followed by a check of the exits and any mirrors that could be used for extra viewing. He never sat

anywhere he couldn't see behind him. He never stood anywhere he couldn't get out of fast if trouble started.

This wasn't trouble. It was two kids dipping pockets and doing it very well.

Distraction was the main technique for most crimes apart from blatant armed robbery. Thieves didn't want to get caught so it was better if nobody saw what they were stealing. Burglars usually broke in at night. Thieves usually stole when nobody was looking. Only complete idiots or hardened criminals stuck a gun in your face and demanded your money. The victims would remember you for the rest of their lives. Some might even shoot you. If nobody saw you take their wallet then who was going to be a witness in court? Nobody.

Movement and noise were the best distractions. An airport arrivals lounge had plenty of both. Everyone was in a rush. Suitcases were being wheeled around. Visitors were looking for their relatives. Airport transfer drivers were milling around with name cards written in thick black letters. People were buying coffee, magazines, and maps.

Grant was paying for the Boston street map at Hudson News when he spotted the teenage tag team. Their target was an attractive woman in a business suit he'd seen at the luggage carousels. Tidy figure. Tight trousers. Nice arse. He focussed on that for a while but his peripheral vision saw the hunters circling. Part of his brain wanted to chat to the businesswoman. Part of him wanted to arrest the pickpockets. The rest of him remembered his inspector giving a stern warning before setting off.

"Keep out of trouble. Don't get involved. You're off duty."

That wasn't strictly true. This was a holiday assignment, yes. Interview the prisoner. Eliminate him from the enquiry. Release him and come home. He'd been sent on it to keep him

out of the way while Discipline and Complaints investigated the mess at Snake Pass. But he'd be on duty during the interview and technically you were on duty while travelling to and from work for the purposes of injury on duty claims. Have an accident on the way to work and it was classed as an injury on duty. So if he spotted a crime on his way to work.

"Keep out of trouble. Don't get involved."

That part went against the grain. If there was one thing Jim Grant found hard to do it was ignore a crime right in front of his face. Bad guys did bad things. It was up to the good guys to stop them. Grant was one of the good guys. Always had been. Keeping out of trouble should be easy with a pair of teenagers. Maybe thirteen or fourteen. It just required a bit of tact.

He paid for the map and watched.

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THE TEENAGE BOY WAS very good. The girl was even better. What they had going for them was how innocent they both looked. Butter wouldn't melt in their mouths, you'd think. Grant watched them hanging around outside the magazine stand. They appeared to be waiting for their parents only they weren't watching for someone joining them they were scouring the shoppers for easy marks.

The businesswoman wheeled her suitcase into the shop, an expensive shoulder bag hanging open round her back. The boy nodded. The girl split off and held position ten feet away. The dance began.

The woman bought a pack of breath mints and an orange juice. The boy stayed a few feet behind her. The girl kept station ten feet away. When the woman left the shop the boy followed. The girl never let the distance alter. Ten feet. Until the boy nodded again. The girl moved in front and bumped into the woman. The boy's hand was so fast Grant hardly saw it. In and out of the bag in a flash. He broke left and the girl apologised, going right. A quick half circle and they crossed paths. A dull brown shape was switched and now it was the girl, all cute and innocent, with the stolen goods. The woman didn't even know she'd been targeted.

"Don't get involved."

Not an option. Grant moved quick before the boy and girl separated too far. Without being obvious he grabbed the boy's arm and guided him towards the girl. He identified himself as police and told the girl to follow them. She did. Fear shone in her eyes. Caught in the act. It was the look every kid he'd ever arrested had the first time. He didn't squeeze. There was no need. The threesome gathered by a water fountain against the wall. "Okay kids. I haven't got time for this. Hand it over."

The girl's eyes darted at the boy and then over his shoulder. The boy had no resistance. The girl gave Grant the wallet. He kept half an eye on the teenagers and the other half on the businesswoman. She had stopped to take a drink of orange juice and drop the mints in her bag. Grant towered over the teenagers. "Now beat it. You won't be so lucky next time."

Without waiting for an answer he set off across the concourse. The woman was on her second swig of juice when he held the wallet out. "I think you dropped this."

Her first reaction was to look him in the eyes. A hard straight look that sized him up in an instant. Big guy in worn

jeans and a faded orange windcheater. Then she reverted to victim mode. She swung the shoulder bag round front and rummaged inside. Grant handed the wallet over. Gratitude feathered a smile across her lips. A twinkle in her eyes. “What sharp little eyes you’ve got.”

“Not so little.”

“No you aren’t are you?”

This was interesting. Grant was about to explore the possibilities when he saw the teenagers over the woman’s shoulder. The fear in the girl’s eyes had multiplied tenfold. The angry man herding them away didn’t look like their father.

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“*KEEP OUT OF TROUBLE.*”

That didn’t look like an option now either. The man was big in a lumpy fat man sort of way. There was bulk and muscle but he was out of shape. That didn’t matter when it came to intimidating kids. The kids looked plenty intimidated. The girl looked terrified.

“Excuse me.”

Grant dodged around the woman and set off after Fagin. The man looked angry they’d missed picking the latest pocket or two. The grip he exerted on the boy was harder than Grant’s had been. He didn’t need to grip the girl. She’d go wherever the boy went. Loyalty. An admirable quality. Grant was glad he’d let them go. He wasn’t glad he’d steered them into this spot of bother.

Fagin took the pair round the corner into an alcove between the left luggage office and the restrooms. As soon as he was out of sight he slapped the boy round the back of the head. Bad move.

Grant heard the slap before he came round corner. Heard the boy's muted cry and the girl's whimper. He switched the holdall into his right hand freeing up his stronger left. He was a lefty. Conflict was unavoidable and his instincts took over. Calmness settled over him. It was his combat preparation. A technique that had served him well in the army and worked just fine as a frontline cop. Most people tensed up in the line of fire. Grant did the opposite. He relaxed. His muscles became loose. His mind smoothed out any wrinkles. Nothing obstructed the flow of action. Nothing deflected his point of focus.

His point of focus now was a fat man picking on a couple of kids.

Grant came round the corner like a force of nature. He swung the holdall and let go. It sailed out and upwards catching Fagin by surprise. Fagin instinctively turned and caught it in both arms. That left no hands free and Grant with two. He only needed one. The strong left hand grabbed Fagin by the scruff of the neck and pushed him backwards. The right hand stayed loose just in case. Momentum and the heavy bag propelled Fagin towards the restrooms. Grant guided him through the door into the gents.

The door swung shut behind them.

“What the fuck?”

Fagin found his tongue and rediscovered some of his bravado. He held the holdall across his chest like a shield, flexing his shoulders and giving his head a little nudge forwards like a boxer ducking and diving. He wasn't any

boxer. Tension etched itself on his face. Surprise factor had won the first round.

“Fuck you think you’re doin’?”

Grant surged forward and shoved the holdall hard. The bag was heavy. The left hand was heavier. Height and weight and muscle were all in Grant’s favour. The blow transferred through the bag and thumped Fagin in the chest like a sledgehammer. He stumbled backwards and came up against the washbasins. Grant stood in front of him and slightly off center to avoid being kicked in the gonads. “I know just what I’m doing.”

He stepped to one side and raised one leg slightly. He stamped on the outside edge of Fagin’s left leg below the knee and the overweight bully collapsed like a broken twig. “And that’s my bag you’ve got there.”

He snatched the holdall left-handed and swung it in a short underarm arc. The weight of it multiplied on the back swing. It grew even more on the follow through. Grant leaned into the swing, staying relaxed but with his feet apart for a solid base, and brought the bag forward hard and fast. It caught Fagin under the chin and snapped his head back against the built-in marble-topped washbasins.

He flopped like a boned fish. No spine. All wet.

Three men using the basins down the row quickly collected their bags and dashed out of the restroom. The hot-air hand dryer one of them had been using kept working for a few seconds. An automatic faucet dribbled cold water. The door flip-flapped shut like the swing doors of a western saloon. The water stopped. The hand dryer switched itself off. Hot metal ticked as it cooled.

Grant nudged Fagin awake with his foot then dragged him into a sitting position by the collar. He instinctively reached for the handcuffs on his hip before realising he was in plain clothes. No protective equipment. No handcuffs. Off duty.

He stood up and to one side. The most dangerous beast is a cornered animal. Fighting arc didn't just mean a swinging fist. A well-aimed kick could bring down even the strongest man. Grant kept out of kicking range even though Fagin didn't look like he had a good kick left in him. He switched the bag to his right hand, freeing up his left. "That's theft. Now why do you want to take stuff that don't belong to you?"

"I don't take stuff that's not mine."

Grant dropped the holdall onto Fagin's outstretched legs and knelt down on it fast and heavy. Pinning the fat man and bringing Grant's face right into Fagin's personal space. Grant's strong left hand came up and Fagin flinched. Grant didn't hit him. He grabbed his nose between thumb and forefinger and twisted. Blood and snot oozed like a squeezed tube of toothpaste. "No you don't do you? You get kids to take it for you."

Fagin moaned in pain.

Grant twisted harder. "They your kids?"

"No."

The word came out all mashed but just about intelligible.

"Whose?"

Fagin tried to speak and flapped a hand towards his nose. Grant let go. "City orphanage."

"Wrong. They're my kids now. See what happens if you touch them again."

He didn't finish. Instead he stood up and washed his hands. The hand dryer was still hot. He dried his hands. There wasn't even a hint of post-action adrenaline shakes. Another benefit of Grant's relaxation technique. He picked the bag up and went to the door. "You're lucky I'm on vacation. That's what you call a holiday over here isn't it?"

He pushed the swing door and re-entered the world of noise and movement. Keep out of trouble. Don't get involved. One out of two wasn't so bad. He wasn't surprised that the kids had gone. What did surprise him was who had stayed.

"You're not that small at all are you?"

The businesswoman smirked. Grant smiled. He looked down at her from a great height and flexed the muscles of his neck. Bones cracked like firecrackers. He lowered his voice. "You know what I could do with right now?"

"I think I do. Welcome to Boston."