



The Hanging Tree

Ben Aaronovitch

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The Hanging Tree was the Tyburn gallows which stood where Marble Arch stands today. Oxford Street was the last trip of the condemned. Some things don't change. The place has a bloody and haunted legacy and now blood has returned to the empty Mayfair mansions of the world's super-rich. And blood mixed with magic is a job for Peter Grant.

Peter Grant is back as are Nightingale *et al.* at the Folly and the various river gods, ghosts and spirits who attach themselves to England's last wizard and the Met's reluctant investigator of all things supernatural.

The Hanging Tree Details

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From Reader Review *The Hanging Tree* for online ebook

Hallie says

I ended up getting the print version before it was even on the shelves in town, had pre-ordered the audiobook, and have only myself to blame for it now being *maximum* time before I can read the next one. This was SO GOOD, guys. I read it, listened to the audio as soon as it came out, noticed I'd missed a possible clue so went back and listened to the whole thing again and still regularly return to it at random, just for the pleasure of hearing Peter's voice. (If Kobna Holdbrook-Smith were ever to stop narrating the books, that would be me out of audio. The interview at the end suggests that Aaronovitch values him at least as much as I do though, so that's reassuring!)

It's interesting how *Foxglove Summer* went, both literally and figuratively, on a side journey. No development of the big plot arc dropped on us at the end of *Broken Homes*, but in a way that seems kind of realistic, given the lack of Falcon-trained/Folly/Issacs - practitioners. Though I desperately missed Lesley and Nightingale and want them to find the Faceless Man *now*, I admire Aaronovitch for just not. Or, I admire him one book's worth of that. Kind of a lie. I admire him more but still would have been very cranky had *The Hanging Tree* not given us so much. One of those 'so much' things being the increasing involvement of Guleed in Folly matters. She's another great character, and I love how she and Peter have each other's backs, without her being merely a substitute-Lesley. The Muslim ninja rocks.

There's a lovely scene near the end where they're about to go into some real danger:

[Nightingale] caught Guleed's eye.

'Sahra,' he said, 'things are likely to get somewhat esoteric before the end, and this is not something you're trained for. I can't, in all conscience, ask you to join us.'

'If it's all the same to you, sir, I think I'm going to have to see this through,' she said. *Inshallah.* As God wills it.

'Good show,' said Nightingale.

And the last few pages? Oh yes. (view spoiler) Also (view spoiler)

He can't possibly write fast enough to make the wait bearable...

Caro M. says

So you've already heard that prince Harry is dating some black girl, huh? What can I say - well played, Mama Thames, well played! ;)

On the happy side - this book was SO great!

On less happy side - and now I have to wait for the next one again for another whole year (and I'm being optimistic here).

So our good lad Peter is back in London, cheeky and witty as ever, ready for more adventures and more new... let's say friends. I like how Aaronovitch is adding new characters into every next book and how they're always so well done and well described. Also, he never forgets about the old ones. There's one comeback that you might be surprised with... Not spoiling! I only wish there was more Molly in this story. Our Molly from the Folly definitely deserves more action than a mere baking session. Although I enjoy the idea that she's on Twitter. Who knows, maybe we can befriend her on facebook too? And our good old Nightingale - he's also got some new... friends. I only wish he was up for no good more often!!

As always we get a lot of information on London and it's architecture and a little glimpse into the history of the city, which is just great.

In short - it's good to have you back, Peter Grant, even just for a couple of days! I will definitely do a re-read, starting with book 1, sooner or later.

P.S. Do you guys fancy seeing Peter's adventures as a movie/series? What do you think of the possible cast?

Lindsay says

An excellent addition to a wonderful ongoing urban fantasy series.

If you're not aware of this series, it's set in the modern day London police force if they had a division dealing with "weird bollocks" consisting of a senior police wizard and his constable apprentice. The extremely cool aspect of this is that Peter Grant (the constable apprentice) is a policeman first and a wizard second, and modern day policing is at least as strange as any wizardry.

This installment substantially moves the ongoing plot forward along with the groundwork being laid for an extension of the Folly's base and formalizing even more of their processes. The Faceless Man makes an appearance and we also get to see other magical traditions in this world play out. The Folly is working ever closer with traditional policing, and Peter continues to be a wonderful conduit in both directions.

For long running urban fantasy series there's few things better than being able to say "moves the plot forward". There's a tendency to tread water while exploring niche interesting details of the overall world, cynically speaking to drag things out and sell more books. There's an element of both here. While the plot moves forward, the Faceless Man situation is not resolved here.

Algernon says

[9/10]

His mates on the Metropolitan Police Force are having a raffle about which architectural landmark of London

will be blown to smithereens next by PC Peter Grant, junior member on the Force and rookie practitioner of magic. It's not like he deliberately sets out to rearrange the metropolis skyline, but trouble follows Peter around like groupies chasing rock stars. Peter is the main attraction of Ben Aaronovich supernatural police procedural series, a geeky young man full of vim and curiosity about the world around him. His favorite subjects include architecture, history, exotic cooking, fast cars, jazz, electronic gadgets, magic experiments and fae creatures living among the rivers and brooks of London. He has a great sense of humour, a strong belief in a multicultural and multi-species society and a great future in the Met, if he can avoid blowing things up.

Unfortunately, in this sixth episode of the series, Peter exceeds his quota of damaged real-estate by unleashing magical havoc inside malls, high-rise luxury apartments and million dollar mansions in Mayfair or Hampstead Heath. I guess his promotion is off for the foreseeable future. Anybody else would be long gone from the Force, but Peter is the only understudy of the only surviving magician in England, his boss Nightingale.

"The Hanging Tree" is my favorite in the series so far because it does something few multi-volume popular series do : instead of following the usual self-contained criminal case with minimal character development, it actually picks up the scattered plot threads from the previous episodes and brings everything and everybody together in a spectacular battle against the shadowy arch-enemy of Nightingale et Co. (view spoiler) . Because this sixth novel relies so much on previous events and character arcs, I would not recommend starting the lecture here, but going back and reading the series in chronological order.

So .. what's going on? Last time I checked, Peter was vacationing in rural Herefordshire and smooching with his hot goddess girlfriend and the series was headed for a twenty+ run. He's still smooching with Beverley but they are now in his London flat when Peter gets a midnight call from the girl's aunt, Lady Tyburn, cashing in some past favours and asking PC Grant to cover up naughty activities of her teenage daughter. Torn between duty and nepotism (you don't want to anger a river goddess), Peter joins the investigation into the death of a rich socialite girl at an illicit party in the number 1 high-rise in London. It looks like the girl and her jet-set friends broke into one of the empty apartments for a drug and alcohol party, a party that turned lethal when the black market drugs turned out to be too strong. The investigation soon gains a magical double angle when members of the group show signs of magic residue and when the drug money apparently came from trying to sell a priceless book : a unique compendium of spells penned by none other than Isaac Newton, the founder of the Folly and of its various affiliates and competitors.

I'm trying to streamline the plot, but really, the complications are the best spice for this police procedural curry, and being clueless is part of the game:

Our operational posture could be summarized as 'confused' and 'ready to spring into action' - just as soon as we had the faintest idea where to spring. quips Peter when quizzed on progress by his superiors. To make matters worse, more than one agency is trying to get their mitts on the valuable McGuffin : a feminist coven of unlicensed magical practitioners that felt excluded by the all-male Victorian Folly; an off-the-records CIA splinter cell; Lady Tyburn and the other godlike river avatars; the Faceless Man and his cronies; Nightingale and his sole apprentice. The key to the case may be in the hands of a shifty creature half human - half fox with the appropriate name of Monsieur Reynard. The title may be another clue, since it refers to a London gruesome landmark that has become in recent years a meeting place for the 'demi-monde', as Peter refers to people aware of the existence of magic and faeries.

Condemned prisoners were loaded onto tumbrils at Newgate Gaol, and would wind their way through the streets of London, past the rookeries at St. Giles, before hitting the long straight road into the open

countryside and the Tyburn Tree.

I liked the plot well enough, especially the hints that the author is not interested in prolonging the central mystery indefinitely and that he can deftly combine 'boring' stakeout, interview and database searching with 'flashy' spellcasting. The reason I look forward to each new episode though is the personality of the main narrator. I am glad I am finishing the year on a positive note - reading about a young man promoting critical thinking, tolerance, prudence, scientific skepticism, curiosity and good old-fashioned common sense - as a counterweight to the rise of fake news, mass hysteria and xenophobia that has marked most of the year 2016.

I'd love to claim that I'd had a gut feeling about the owners, but really it was following routine. In policing, your gut might point the way - but it's the shoe leather that catches criminals.

It's mostly about Peter Grant for me, but I marked down a reply from his partner Guleed, a statement that echoes my own beliefs about trying to take the right to choose away from people in order to satisfy an extremely vocal and intransigent minority:

Hijabs, Guleed once told me, were like T-shirts - you could choose ones that uniquely expressed your personality.

Whether the young police woman chooses to wear or not a hijab, it is her own decision and not something to be ruled by the government.

If I try very hard to find something to complain about in this episode, it is the presence of some not very subtle product placements, but most of it is done in a humorous tone, so I will give Peter Grant the benefit of the doubt (I blame another author for souring me on the practice - Craig Johnson. Now I see paid advertisements everywhere)

Most statements are taken by hand, and it pays to be picky about your writing implements and cultivate an easy flowing style - I use a Mitsubishi Uni-Ball, in case you were wondering.

[This is actually my own favorite brand, violet and wine-red colours preferably, but I still don't see the need to be that specific in fiction] Other examples are more fun and underline Peter's geek credentials - like having a huge screen flat TV, eating Pret a Manger sandwiches, playing 'Shadow of Mordor' on his PS4 or "Angry Birds" on a friend's phone.

When he's not catching criminals or learning new spells, Peter likes to regal his readers with funny tidbits of information about history, architecture and trans-atlantic differences [burn, baby, burn!]. I think I would love to read a non-fiction book written by his character. It could surpass Bill Bryson in sarcastic commentaries:

Now, personally, I'd have been happier driving an armoured personal carrier in through the front door. But since we're the Met, and not the police department of a small town in Missouri, we didn't have one.

Have you heard about Ada Lovelace, Byron's daughter? *She was a famously gifted mathematician. Who I mostly knew about from reading Steam-punk, but I wasn't going to mention that. Generally considered to have written the first true computer program.*

... or about early alarm signals for policemen?

A Peeler could summon aid by shaking his rattle while in hot pursuit of a felon and hoping that people would stop laughing long enough to help. The rattle was soon superseded by the whistle, whose principal advantage was that, not only could you have a number of prearranged signals for a variety of situations, but you didn't look like a total tit using it.

Once the telephone had been invented, it was only a matter of time before the police got in on the new technology and, first in Glasgow and then in London, the police box was born. Here a police officer in need of assistance could find a telephone link to Scotland Yard, a dry space to do 'paperwork' and, in certain extreme cases, a life of adventure through space and time.

Needless to say, I look forward to the next episode and I hope it will not be delayed.

Paul E. Morph says

Another fantastic Peter Grant novel. Sadly, this is the last one until the next book is released... I'll have to tide myself over with reading the comicbook stories until then...

Orient says

My playdate with Peter Grant is over and I already miss our great time together <3 He's always a charmer in his way of dealing with difficulties :)

Well, we all have our ways of dealing with difficulties – mine is to ask stupid questions.

Mr. Aaronovitch once again charmed me with his fab skill combining detective genre, police work, mythology and wit with UF. The book is well paced as well as entertaining to read. Mr Aaronovichs combined humor with serious content in an endearing and gripping way that made me giggle almost all the time. There is easy-flowing and sometimes dark wit in the writing which suited me well as it's not my first date with Peter Grant and the ongoing tone of the series has the sharp hook and characters I root for.

"The Hanging Tree" answered some questions that kept bugging me about Peter Grant's world (who's the big bad villain, what's his intentions, what happened to some of the characters from earlier book and ect.) and (to my joy) added some new questions and made me hungry to know more about the Rivers of London and the magical world around them. That means that Peter Grant is not going to stop charming me and won't end his adventure quickly <3 (Please Mr. Aaronovitch, make it 10 books at least!!! :))

Like elite brandy, the story together with the amazing writing skill of the writer, bloomed with good quality and it's definitely improving as the series continue. Magical London with enchanting Goddesses and charming mixed race characters is what I need to be totally sucked in :)

I was so happy to have more of Guleed, the shiny new Peter's partner in dealing with magical crimes. She's definitely worth to be my favorite kickass heroine as *nobody sneaks up on the Muslim ninja*. I even find her more likable than Lesley. Maybe Guleed will have he permanent role in Peter Grant series <3

...the first draft of Procedures Relating to Serious Falcon Incidents a.k.a. How to Deal with Weird Bollocks

was currently sitting as a half-finished Word document on my hard drive back at the Folly. I called Nightingale, who said he was fifteen minutes away and asked him to authorise a little look. 'Yes,' he said immediately. 'But carefully, Peter.'

I told Guleed that it was standard procedure for a second officer to stay outside the immediate Zone of Potential Magical Effect (ZPME) in order to facilitate communications should my Airwave and personal phones be compromised. Guleed was rightly suspicious.

'Is that true?' she asked.

Just as soon as I get back to the Folly and add it to the Word document, I thought.

'Just make sure nobody rushes in,' I said. 'Especially you'

I felt at home in the Folly once more. Also I got more of Mr. Witcher and it was great to watch him doing his magic in the battle field. Thought, I think, Molly still has to wait for her star-hour. I would eagerly wait for that! :)

It was great to see the mouthy duo of Seawoll and Stephanopoulos having fun in more episodes :D

'No offence, Peter,' she said. 'But we were kind of relying on you to provide that information. Us just being normal run of the mill coppers none of who are versed in the mystic arts or currently shagging a supernatural creature.'

Olivia and Phoebe had been watching Brooklyn Nine-Nine on that TV when the attack started and had only avoided serious injury because they'd both happened to be lying prone on the sofa.

'Saved by snogging,' had been Seawoll's verdict. 'Let that be a lesson to you.'

I like when the bad villain is not easily defeated and the one in this book (and the series too) is a long-term one. He has a great acolyte to help in making an even bigger mess. Their team is cruel, shrewd and witty – a dangerous and charming combination to make them a perfect rival for Peter and his friends :) There's a hint that one more terrible evil force from the earlier books is going to make a grand show in the future books! Can't wait to dive into another adventure with Peter Grant!

This book was a really alluring and entertaining ride with my beloved characters from the earlier books and the new likable ones :)

Carol. says

Possibly perfect.

The more I love a book, the harder it becomes to review, because I don't want to move out of my state of enjoyment to one of analysis. That said, this was quite possibly my favorite installment of Peter Grant's story yet. The characterization is interesting, there are developments in Peter's personal life, and the overall arc of the series takes a satisfying and solid step forward.

I love the variety of characters and backgrounds, although this particular edition spends more time with the upper crust. Particularly for a mystery, one needs a wide enough cast for there to avoid obvious red herrings

or red shirts. The broad number is appropriate for Peter balancing between his more magical life in the Folly, his personal life and his investigations. For the most part, I usually get the feeling that the diversity of characters is merely a representation of the city and not a checkbox; it is a part of who they are, but not the only important trait. DC Guleed, a female who wears a hijab, was introduced as a minor character in *Whispers Under Ground*, but is starting to play a significant role. Most of this seemed to be developed in the graphic novel *Rivers of London: Body Work, #1*, but for the most part one needn't have read it as she starts to come into her own as the logical and level counterpoint to Peter's leaps of logic and daredevil spirit. I particularly love her diplomatic skill on the phone:

"I heard Guleed pass this on and some grumbled swearing from Seawoll. 'Tell him to get his arse down here pronto,' he said. 'He wants you to come in,' said Guleed and gave me the address."

Plotting remains pleasantly unpredictable for me. While the stories ostensibly have a main investigation, Peter leads a busy life. There are opportunities to learn more about magic and its practitioners, Peter's family, the ongoing investigation into Leslie, side investigations such as hunting down the Little Crocodiles, learning about the history of the Folly and so forth. Because of it, both the plots and the pacing often surprise me. I also enjoy that it is very much a 'police procedural.' Peter occasionally goes to a desk, he works a computer, he explains to the reader the structure of a murder investigation within the London police. He frequently has asides to explain the approach and legality of police actions: **"Guleed circled around the names and the timeline for twenty minutes, twenty minutes being about the amount of time it takes your average suspect--sorry, I mean witness--to forget the details of the lies they've just told you, before asking about the drugs."**

But at the end of the day, it's always the writing that hooks me. Aaronovitch does a lovely job of giving us a scene, or Peter's thoughts about how he is approaching something, but he rarely tells us how we are supposed to feel about it. That ability to show without telling seems particularly rare in UF. The suspect's eyes may "glance at" something, but they usually don't "furtive" anything. I don't precisely know how Peter feels about Inspector Seawoll, for instance, although my best guess is that it is a complex combination of respect, fear, and a tiny bit of appreciation. It's a technique I first recognized in Agatha Christie, where people are presented, implications perhaps drawn, but it's left to the reader to draw the conclusions, and they may be different. For instance: **"Lady Ty... asked the question again in a tone I recognized from my own mum. The one that says: Yes there's going to be trouble, but that is as nothing to the trouble you are going to be in if you continue to cross me."** I had a crystal clear visual/audio on that one, but mine is likely going to be different from yours. There's no "icily," "stonily" or "scathingly" or any other of the hundred routine descriptives I feel pepper the average UF.

Ben Aaronovitch's Peter Grant series has become one of the most satisfying urban fantasy detective novels in the field. Read it, and then listen to Kobna Holdbrook-Smith's audio version. You can thank me later.

Speaking of thanks, I owe some to Orient, Caro, Milda and Mimi for allowing me to crash their buddy read. It extra fun to read with other people as enthusiastic as they are for Grant.

Caro M. says

You guys are so awesome - you gave me more than 30 likes before I've even started reading the book!!! <3
:D

Lyn says

Now we are in the springtime of our discontent, when I must wait until JUNE!! for the next installment in this freakin' great series!

Ben Aaronovitch has created one of the best urban / contemporary fantasy series of recent date, or HELL for that matter EVER, with his Peter Grant series. Grant is the protagonist, a police constable in the Metropolitan police force of London who, a few books back, saw a ghost and then was approached by a dapper Detective Chief Inspector Thomas Nightingale who introduced him to a very small section of the Met whose job it was to investigate and sort out crimes of the ... eh, um ... magical sort.

Grant soon learned that using the "M" word was generally frowned upon, that the existence of this branch of the service was known to the higher ups, mostly accepted, though grudgingly and with not a small touch of standoffishness and HEY PRESTO! Nightingale settled Peter in as his next apprentice – wizard.

Or practitioner as they say in the Folly, the name of the HQ of this mysterious department.

And so we come to Aaronovitch's brilliant sixth book in the series (though there are a few short stories and some graphic novels – of which I am ravenously reading). Published in 2016 we are now in the desperate wait for the next in the series, 2018's(!) *Lies Sleeping*.

Up to now we've seen plenty of the "M" word as Peter learns to make spells and to get better at his new craft. All the while he is also maintaining and getting better at being a proper copper in the old London sense. We've learned of magical creatures, Fae, underworld characters of vague origin and, of course, the Rivers.

Unlike some other urban fantasies with your garden variety vampires and werewolves, Aaronovitch has only given us hints of such folks, or when he does it's in a new style, with new rules, and only subtly hinted at. And unlike resurrecting the old Celtic and Norse (and Greek, Egyptian, Slavic, etc. etc.) pantheons, our writer describes Genius loci – or gods of the rivers. These are incarnations of the rivers themselves with godlike powers. We meet Father Thames, up near the source, and Mother Thames in the city and then all the tributaries as lesser gods and goddesses.

And there is a recurring mysterious villain called the Faceless Man, whose nefarious machinations keep creeping up to endanger Peter and lure Nightingale into a magical duel.

And it's FUN, FUN, FUN!

The Hanging Tree finds Peter and the Met allies of the Folly investigating a possible overdose that involved one of the daughters of Tyburn, the most powerful of Mother Thames children. This search leads to more clues about the Faceless Man and more magic tomfooleries than you can shake a whomping willow at.

Bradley says

These books have steadily been getting better and better and better, or perhaps it's just me getting so far invested in the stories that I can't even tell the difference anymore.

Either way, this says very great things about the books. :)

I am invested as hell.

Aaronovitch's UF writing is rather unique in that his mystery writing is unparalleled, the magic system is firmly grounded, explored, and interesting, and the MC in Peter is just a lovable nerd. Never mind that he's an apprentice wizard working for the London police force or a small subsidiary called the Folley, this is really just a fantastic police procedural full of unpredictable mysteries and grabbing reveals.

This book, however, takes everything that has been building up in the previous five books and focuses yet again on the Faceless Man and poor Leslie. In my opinion, this was a squee-worthy move on the author's part. At least, I was practically slathering with all the great reveals and directions it took.

Dealing with the rich and the issue of the other mystery was well enough and a nice departure, to be sure, but getting back into the grand arc story was simply delicious.

And now I'm stuck in the unenviable position of pining away for book seven. Who knows how long it will take? Alas!

Do I recommend this UF? HELL YES. It's one of the very best. :)

Lois Bujold says

No spoilers...

4 stars for the book in general, 5 for the parent-and-child themes running throughout, weaving in and out beneath, and ultimately driving, the action plot. Protagonist-narrator Peter Grant's trademark voice and dry humor remain in fine form.

I'd meant to review this ages ago, then thought it needed another reading first (not a suffering), then it got pushed down my queue. Just reread it in preparation for the next book in the series, *Lies Sleeping*, coming up in November 2018 from DAW here in the US, in the certainty that the events of it will follow hard on the heels of this one, and be closely intertwined.

The Hanging Tree reread very well, in that second-time-through-a-mystery way where one gets to watch how the writer is playing, or palming, all the cards. Contains major developments in what has grown into the central plot arc of the series, the pursuit of the Faceless Man, a rival in magics to the marvelous Thomas Nightingale, formerly last wizard in Britain, who I presume is continuing to age backward. I have the dimmest recollection of that being one of Merlin's tricks, in one of his many versions, and I continue to wonder if there will eventually be some connection made between the two, although London and Wales do not seem very mythically congruent. There are hints at the end that the Faceless Man himself may be more

played than player, by a higher power still; I'll be on the alert for developments of that idea in the next exciting episode.

I still need to catch up on all the graphic novel side-stories, any of which could be a novella in its own right.

Again, this is a series that has enough continuing plot and character development to be best read in order. Start with *Rivers of London*, retitled in the US *Midnight Riot*, and go on till you come to the end. In the US, the series suffered a publisher jump between Volumes 3 and 4, which is not usually good for coordinating promotion, but e-book availability may mitigate that hazard.

Ta, L.

Carolyn says

I'm happy to report that this sixth episode of this terrific UF series is definitely as good as the rest, if not better. I feel that we're really getting to know the characters well. Peter Grant is developing in both his magic skills and his policing skills, making new gadgets and spells to fight crime. Nightingale as ever if there to support Peter and pull him out of trouble by dealing with the heavy stuff when required. Peter's relationship with the river Goddess, Beverley Brook is looking happy and settled and Lady Ty, Goddess of the River Tyburn also features as much of the activity is on her turf and some of the younger river folk have got themselves into trouble.

What starts out as a suspicious drug overdose at a party involving Lady Ty's daughter soon turns into a hunt for some missing stolen magical books and artefacts. Peter and Nightingale are not the only ones who'd like to find them and very soon they find themselves entangled with some old enemies.

What makes this series so good are not only the inventive and unexpected directions in the narrative but also the humour injected into the situations as well as the geographical descriptions and feel of London, past and present. I'm so glad there are more books in this series to read!

Carol. says

I know, I know: I'm always waxing enthusiastic over Kobna's reading of this series, but the audio version of a story set in London, filled with a wide variety of characters, brings a whole new level of appreciation to the story. Kobna's work on the London stage since 2003 would seem to be ideal preparation for the range of accents, voices and emotions used in the Peter Grant series. One official site lists a dizzying array of accent skills, along with fluency in English, Fanti and Ghanaian, (site: <https://www.spotlight.com/interactive...>) put to good use on the occasions Peter's mum makes an appearance.

In this particular book, much of it takes place in the world of the 'posh' elite, giving us a chance to appreciate a range of upper-class/highly educated accents. Somehow, Kobna is able to give us the sassy tones of Bev, the clipped tone of Lady Ty controlling her temper, Nightingales' measured and articulate speech along with the working-class, foul-mouthed drawl of Inspector Seawoll and the swamy, entendre-laden tones of Reynard the Fox and make me believe each character. That, to me, is flipping ah-maz-ing. For comparison, one of the first audiobooks I listened to was a female reader for Stephanie Plum book, and her voicing of the males in the books felt so false, so awkward, that I was thrown out of the story every time they spoke. Not so here. The only misstep to me is the brief appearance of American Kim Reynolds. Other Americans fair

better. I'd also like to remember that one dangerous moment for Peter (oh, shush; there's many in every book) where Kobna drops his voice nearly to a whisper to read, sending chills up my spine. Just perfect.

To my delight, there's an interview at the end between Aaronovitch, Holdbrook-Smith and one of the marketers from Gollancz that answers many wonderings. For instance, it seems Ben can't avoid Kobna's voice either, and sometimes when he writes he thinks of how the words will sound when read, particularly because Peter is prone to long chunks of distracted thought 'missing a full stop.' And, somewhat reassuringly, other listeners would agree with me that the only voice not done wonderfully is the American. Kobna's mock-outrage at the charge is endearing.

In the interview, Ben mentions that he doesn't have a 'meta' plot all worked out for the series, that his philosophy is 'take care of the story and the meta will work itself out.' I think that explains a great deal about the immediate and meta plotting of the books, which might prove unsatisfying for those who look for an explicitly "progressing" arc rather than episodes in the adventures of life (Note: I too wish my own meta-life would make more progress, but my approach to my own life must be something like Ben's writing). At any rate, my take-away is that Kobna and the series are reassuringly linked. Thank the urban-fantasy audio gods. Or the river ones.

Paromjit says

I did not realise when I chose this bewitching and beguiling book to read that it was the 6th in a established series. A lot of world building has been done by this stage. As a result, there was a lot I had to catch up on and make sense of, but I didn't care, I was just loving what I was reading. I slowly began to understand more and more. There is a great sense of location in its setting of London. Peter Grant, is a black police detective attached to the Folly, a unit set aside to look at crime in the magical underworld with his extraordinary boss, Nightingale. It all begins with Lady Ty, a major river god of the Thames, demanding that Peter keep her daughter, Olivia, out of an investigation where Christina Chorley appears to have died of a drug overdose in a exclusive flat in Mayfair. A request that Peter is not able to comply with.

Peter is smart, in a relationship with Beverly Brook, who is a river god, is constantly developing experimental magical gadgets and weapons to aid crime fighting, which given the prowess of his magical opponents, come in useful. He is constantly working to improve and add to his spellmaking. He is partnered with DC Sahra Guleed, a force to be reckoned with herself. The case turns out to be significantly more complex and bigger than expected. There is the return of their foes, the Faceless Man and Lesley, the ex-cop who turned to the dark side. A number of parties want to get their hands on Jonathan Wild's Ledger, including a shady bunch of American operatives which Special Agent Kim Reynolds of the FBI warns Peter about. The Hanging Tree is the Tyburn gallows located where the Marble Arch is now. There are phenomenal magical battles, violence, a trail of destruction and demolition with Peter and DC Guleed fighting for their lives.

This is a story with plenty of comic touches and humour. The world building is just fabulous, spellbinding and the writing is impressive. The characters are complex, diverse and superb and include spirits and ghosts. I became particularly fond of Sahra Guleed when she administered a well executed Glasgow kiss. I really did not want the book to end. It is a series that gets the reader hooked almost immediately. Loved it, and needless to say, will be reading others in the series. Brilliant novel that I cannot recommend highly enough. Thanks to Orion for an ARC.

Kirsty 📚📖♥? says

About 4 years ago at one of the World Book Night Events I was given a free copy of Rivers of London. In the time since I bought all the books and am on my second read through of them. Aaronovitch has fast become one of my top 3 authors.

The Hanging Tree may be my favourite of the books so far (I still need to get the comics). The characters are really well established by now and I really enjoyed the introduction of others that will hopefully pop up at least now and again.

With this one we're back to the story of the Faceless Man (who now has a name and real identity) and Lesley May and after the gallivanting around in the last book it's great to see that story line again and be back on London ground.

If you haven't read this series I highly recommend them
