



# Rattle

*Fiona Cummins*

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**Rattle** Fiona Cummins

A serial killer to chill your bones

A psychopath more frightening than Hannibal Lecter.

He has planned well. He leads two lives. In one he's just like anyone else. But in the other he is the caretaker of his family's macabre museum.

Now the time has come to add to his collection. He is ready to feed his obsession, and he is on the hunt.

Jakey Frith and Clara Foyle have something in common. They have what he needs.

What begins is a terrifying cat-and-mouse game between the sinister collector, Jakey's father and Etta Fitzroy, a troubled detective investigating a spate of abductions.

Set in London's Blackheath, *Rattle* by Fiona Cummins explores the seam of darkness that runs through us all; the struggle between light and shadow, redemption and revenge.

It is a glimpse into the mind of a sinister psychopath. And it's also a story about not giving up hope when it seems that all hope is already lost.

## Rattle Details

Date : Published January 26th 2017 by Macmillan

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Author : Fiona Cummins

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# From Reader Review Rattle for online ebook

## Chelsea Humphrey says

It's been awhile since I've read something that genuinely terrified me; woot and double woot! While I wouldn't go so far as to say this counts in the horror category, it did have a *The Silence of the Lambs* -esque feel to it. Honestly, the villain in this book makes Hannibal Lector look like a kitty cat prancing on rainbows and butterflies. While this in itself was enough to make it an all-around disturbing read, the author did a fantastic job of playing at every fear and concern I have as a parent toward my children. This went beyond the typical "Dear God-Please Don't let my children ever get kidnapped or murdered" typical fears; no, the author introduced us to a wide array of horrifying disorders that occur in real life to worry about as well.

You should go into this knowing as little as possible. My paperback didn't have a summary on the back, and while I had a very vague idea of the plot, I never looked it up online and went in blind. I highly recommend doing this, therefore I won't be discussing any particular plot points here. Instead I'd like to focus on how this book as a whole made me feel and some of the things that might be triggers for other readers, as this is the type of book that needs to be connected with the right type of person. I'll be honest, I had to put this one down a couple of times to ease my anxiety and quickly chastise myself for googling images of the particular disorders mentioned here. I found certain parts highly disturbing, especially early on with descriptions of what happens to a child with "Stone Man Syndrome" each time they have any type of accident. My heart started aching as I recalled a story last year of a little boy suffering with this and this novel gave me insight into the horrifying life his parents endure each day. None of this is a criticism; in fact, I applaud the author for not only crafting such deep, realistic characters in a serial killer thriller, but also for shedding light and awareness on such disorders that need more funding to desperately find a cure.

There are many triggers found in this book, so if you are one to stay away from violence toward children (more so implied, not graphically described), and are disturbed by bugs and unsettling descriptions of the disorders highlighted here, this may not be for you. If you can handle more disturbing and graphic books, you may really enjoy the depth and extra attention to detail found in this story. It is extremely well-written and done with respect to those who are disabled, while not painting a fluffy, inaccurate picture of what these people go through on a daily basis. I'll be thinking about this book for a long time; I'm also interested in taking what I've learned here and channeling it into helping promote a charity or funding of curing these disorders and providing help to families whom this horror is a daily reality. Fiona Cummins is clearly very talented and I'm waiting on pins and needles to see where she takes us next!

**\*Many thanks to Francesca at MacMillan for providing my copy; it was a pleasure to provide an honest review.**

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## Matt says

Fiona Cummins' debut novel has all the ingredients of a captivating thriller and keeps the reader hooked until the final chapters. After Clara Foyle is abducted outside a sweets shop, the community is swept up in the panic and a search commences. Detective Sergeant Etta Fitzroy is used to this panic, but must work quickly to nail down some leads before the trail goes cold and Clara is all but forgotten by the public. As she pokes around the crime scene, DS Fitzroy comes upon the skeletal remains of some animal, something she

eventually learns is a rabbit. Affixed to the rabbit's foot is a message, some code that might refer to a biblical passage, related to bones. There is surely an abductor out there, but no leads to offer anything concrete. Fitzroy is still haunted by another child abduction on her plate, one that has yet to be solved, though the family remains hopeful. When another young boy disappears, this time from his hospital bed, Fitzroy discovers another set of rabbit bones and is certain there is a connection. Who might have done this and for what reason? The only connection between Clara and Jakey Frith is their age...and that they both suffered from a bone anomaly. Poring over the evidence and family histories, DS Fitzroy concludes that the abductor must have an interest in bones. Meanwhile, lurking in the shadows, the Bone Collector has both children held captive, prepping them to add to his macabre personal museum, passed on to him by a curious father. With Clara and Jakey almost ready for their induction into the bone museum, DS Fitzroy has no time to lose. The smallest clue could crack the case wide open, but one false move and two children may soon become medical specimens. A brilliant novel that exemplifies just how ready Fiona Cummins is to break onto the scene. Fans of a 'bone chilling' thriller will flock to this and stay up late trying to race to the finish.

I always enjoy discovering new authors who seek to push their way onto the psychological thriller scene, perfecting their craft with a few strong novels. Cummins has done so with this single novel, laying the groundwork for a wonderful series with detailed plots and strong characters. Etta Fitzroy is a decent cop who has been trying to come to terms with a work-home balance and failing miserably. However, home is but a distraction as she is elbow-deep trying to trace the path of a serial killer/abductor who has an odd fascination. This drive pushes Fitzroy to break away from the mould her father—also a copper—left her, in a world where female strength is still in its infancy. The Bone Collector, that curious man in the shadows, has an interesting backstory and drive to continue his work. Able to plant himself into society, he has a history that is as detailed as it is horrific. Trying to continue his work, the Collector seeks to find the most interesting cases and display them, though only the most macabre will ever come to view the specimens on offer. The story is strong and flows easily from chapter to chapter, helping the reader to find their footing in short order. Short teaser chapters with time prints bridge the larger and more exploratory ones, all in an effort to keep the reader engaged until the very end. Cummins does a magnificent job and has left things hanging, if only to keep the reader begging for more. Depending on the depth that Cummins wishes to explore, I can see this series developing into something addictive for readers who enjoy the darkest side of police procedurals.

Kudos, Madam Cummins, for introducing fans to your work and showing that you belong in this genre. Your ability to spin such gruesome tales could catapult you shifting to the top, amongst some of the best in the field.

Love/hate the review? An ever-growing collection of others appears at:

<http://pecheyponderings.wordpress.com/>

A Book for All Seasons, a different sort of Book Challenge: <https://www.goodreads.com/group/show/...>

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## **Susan says**

This is a seriously creepy, incredibly well written debut novel. Detective Sergeant Etta Fitzroy is still haunted by the disappearance of a little girl, named Grace, when another child goes missing. Clara Foyle is abducted outside her school playground and, before long, her face is everywhere, while her parents struggle to cope with the guilt and loss. One of those interested in the news story is young Jakey Frith; a child who suffers from a rare condition called Fibrodysplasia Ossificans Progressiva, or 'Stone Man Syndrome.'

Jakey's father, Erdman Frith, has been struggling with his concern over Jakey since he was born; while his wife has turned bitter and resentful. Stuck in a dead end job, with a new boss who views him as a dead weight and a wife who sees him as a failure, he has a tendency to drink too much. However, what he doesn't realise is that his son is in danger. The Bone Man, the Night Man, the man who haunts Jakey's dreams, has a collection of specimens and he has his eye on Erdman's son...

This is a fast paced thriller, which is full of excellent characters. There is Etta Fitzroy, who is driven and motivated, but is haunted by the fact she has no child of her own and by her disintegrating marriage. Indeed, there are many marriages in this book that are in jeopardy. Miles Foyle finds himself viewed as a suspect in his daughter's abduction, while Erdman recalls a time when his marriage was happy and full of hope.

I truly hope that there will be a sequel to this book, as I really feel that these characters have more to offer. I thought the subject matter was difficult to read about in places, especially as a parent myself, but the author does a wonderful job of really making her characters come alive. These are not cardboard cut outs having events happen to them; but real people making decisions, trying to cope with what life throws at them and dealing with their emotions. I loved this and, if you like intelligent and well written crime books, you will hopefully enjoy this too.

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## **Carrie says**

Rattle by Fiona Cummins is the first book in the new The Bone Collector series. The series a dark sort of thriller read featuring a detective on the hunt for a serial killer with an peculiar type of victim.

The Bone Collector is after a certain type of victim in the story which introduces readers to certain medical conditions about bone deformities. A young child in the story suffers from this very rare disease which makes him a perfect target for the killer that Detective Sergeant Etta Fitzroy has linked to other disappearances.

As with most books that feature a killer this one isn't exactly for the faint of heart. I was actually expecting a bit more horrific myself with comparisons to Silence of the Lambs. It's definitely a solid read but I often wondered if you took out the victim type would this turn into any other police procedural/serial killer book out there.

The most compelling parts of the read for me were of little Jakey and learning about his horrific disease. I honestly can't imagine what those diagnosed go through or what the parents go through trying to care for someone with the disease. You can't help but feel for him but when reading the rest I never really felt as pulled in as during the parts with Jakey. Overall though it was a decent start to the series that makes me wonder where it will head next.

I received an advance copy from the publisher via NetGalley.

For more reviews please visit <https://carriesbookreviews.com/>

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## **Miriam Smith says**

"Rattle" by Fiona Cummins is a decent enough serial killer/psychopath thriller, written well for a debut author, but unfortunately for me it did not live up to the hype of all the rave reviews I've read about. I wasn't scared at all and in no way did this compare to 'Silence of the Lambs' and I've read all the books in that series and was definitely spooked out with them. The premise of the story was fine and it had a really original concept to the plot line, it was just for me there was too much about the families of the children involved and I just didn't take to DS Etta Fitzroy and throughout the book I started skipping chapters. I'm sure this will still be a really popular book - based on other readers reviews I actually bought a signed copy of "Rattle" from Goldsboro Books - so I'm sure other readers will be tempted to read it, and no doubt will probably enjoy it but alas it was not for me.

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## **Bianca Coppens says**

Gruwel ten top...geweldig.

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## **Gary says**

This is the debut novel by author Fiona Cummins. The Bone Collector is a serial killer with an obsession of collecting rare skeletal deformities from both humans and animals. This is the opening book to a series that I am sure will get better but sadly for me it did not connect.

I would like to thank Net Galley and Kensington books for supplying a copy of this novel in exchange for an honest review.

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## **Kendall says**

This books deserves a raw and rave review. After all the books that you can read... sometimes one just sticks with you and this one definitely did for me. 5 big BEAUTIFUL STARS!!! :) :)

What a fantastic debut novel by Fionna Cummins! Beautifully well written and engaging from start to finish! WHAT a ride my friends!!

I didn't want this to end... I was so sad. I NEED a sequel to this and want a series! Come on Fiona!!!

What a new fresh and unique disturbing serial killer called the Bone Collector. Shoot my bones wanted to lunge at him as I was reading... sick and evil man.

"He croons to his beetles, called them home. In one undulating mass, they warm up his arms, round his neck, down the back of his jacket. He enjoys the sensation of thousands of insects crawling over his skin, prefers it to the touch of human hands."

OK.... WTF I was thinking.....EWWWW.

That's just the little hair on the camel's back into the mind of this deranged killer... he enjoys special people

that he stalks. Children that have a special medical diagnosis (in this case Stone Man Syndrome or Fibrodysplasia Ossificans Progressive). Little Jakey has this diagnosis and just broke my heart to watch a family's horror in taking care of child with this (basically a rare disease that causes people to grow a second skeleton). SO our lovely Bone Collector has an obsession with collecting these different types of bones.

This novel is dark and disturbing but somehow just keeps pulling you in. I definitely cringed and turned my head more than once reading this but swooped this one up in days!! Definitely has climbed my list for top reads of 2017. Emotional and amazing debut! I cannot wait to see what Fiona has in store of us next!!! :) Highly recommended!!!

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### **Lisa says**

every once in a while a book comes along that takes your breath away & send chills to your every being, Rattle by Fiona Cummins is that book it creeped me out The bone collector was the creepiest character I've read about his presence chilled me to my inner core.

If you like creepy novels that takes one into the inner sanctum of a deranged serial killer this is for you BUT if you have a problem with beetles & deformed bones of children then DO NOT READ!!

I wont give to much away, lets just say Hannibal Lector WATCH OUT!! THE BONE COLLECTER could take your place as the most deranged serial killer of this genre.

Kudos to miss Cummins for writing a compelling serial killer thriller that I want to read about more, did not want this to end.

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### **Britta says**

\*DNF\* - I really wanted to like this book and read more than half of it but I just couldn't relate to any of the characters and wasn't captivated by the story. I guess it just wasn't my cup of tea ... :(

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### **Chloe says**

Rattle is one scary, creepy extremely well written novel by debut author Fiona Cummins.

The Bone Collector is a serial killer who likes to collect skeletons of victims with rare form of bone disorders for his display museum. He kidnaps 5-year-old Clara Foyle who has cleft hand from her nursery school. The parents are torn apart and then the Bone Collector sets his eyes on Jackey who has Stone Man Syndrome that causes a second skeleton to be formed. While Jackey and his family are in danger Detective Etta Fitzroy starts investigating Clara Foyle's disappearance at the expense of her own personal life.

The characters in this book are very well developed and the story keeps on your toes. The author portrays the strain that Jackey's disease has on his parents and the effect of a disappearance of a child on a marriage skillfully. It is a disturbing read due to the violence against children but a very well written book and a Must Read for all psychological thriller lovers .

Many thanks to the publisher & NetGalley for this advance reader copy in exchange for my honest and fair review.

This and more reviews at <https://chloesbooksblog.wordpress.com/>

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## Maxine (Booklover Catlady) says

**This book deserves a rave review. Out of hundreds and hundreds of books read in the last two years sometimes a few come along that just really stick with you. These are the ones that you know you will remember in great detail and have impacted you on a deep level as a reader. Rattle is one such book.**

For a debut novel this book is exceptionally well-written, it flows beautifully, you don't stumble and stand on the words as you read, you grab on and the story takes you on it's journey and you hold on really tight until the book generously eventually lets you go. I wanted more, I wanted so much more, I was sad when it ended, I wanted an immediate sequel, a series. I want more from this author.

*A psychopath more frightening than Hannibal Lecter.*

*He has planned well. He leads two lives. In one he's just like anyone else. But in the other he is the caretaker of his family's macabre museum.*

*Now the time has come to add to his collection. He is ready to feed his obsession, and he is on the hunt.*

*Jakey Frith and Clara Foyle have something in common. They have what he needs.*

*What begins is a terrifying cat-and-mouse game between the sinister collector, Jakey's father and Etta Fitzroy, a troubled detective investigating a spate of abductions.*

Make no mistake, this book has a serial killer that will stick with you for a long time in your memory, possibly your nightmares. **The Bone Collector.** He was so tangibly evil and messed up I felt I could almost reach through the book and touch his cold, dry and wrinkled skin. I pulled my hand back because I knew if I touched him I would never come back. I would be a new specimen for his collection.

The Bone Collector collects very special people. The book is well researched into a rare medical bone condition called **Fibrodysplasia Ossificans Progressiva (FOP)**. This is a very rare inherited connective tissue disorder characterized by the abnormal development of bone in areas of the body where bone is not normally present (heterotopic ossification), such as the ligaments, tendons, and skeletal muscles. Specifically, this disorder causes the body's skeletal muscles and soft connective tissues to undergo a metamorphosis, essentially a transformation into bone, progressively locking joints in place and making movement difficult or impossible. FOP is characterized by malformed big toes that are present at birth (congenital). Other skeletal malformations of the cervical spine and ribs and the abnormal development of



bone at multiple soft tissue sites may lead episodically to stiffness in affected areas, limited movement, and eventual ankylosis of affected joints (neck, shoulders, elbows, hips knees, wrists, ankles, jaw, often in that order).

Young Jakey suffers with this terrible condition, his bones grow extra bones until eventually he will be encaged within all this extra bone. This is of great interest to The Bone Collector, great interest indeed. The Bone Collector has a taste for unusual bones, and noting will stand in the way of him adding what he wants to his collection. As a young boy he was taught the skills required by his father, this generational evil is passed down the line.

Other children are missing, really awful and at first obscure "calling cards" are left at the abduction sites. Policewoman Etta Fitzroy is on the case and will not let go until she has caught the evil that is taking these precious children and not returning them home to their mummies and daddies. I loved Etta - she is very flawed and very real. She likes to buck the rules if she thinks it will get results, she really does put herself on the line a lot. She is tenacious and determined and I loved her as one of my new female police characters. I can't wait for more books hopefully from Fiona Cummins featuring Etta.

**There is a dark and sinister undercurrent through this entire novel that had me on edge. The atmosphere is built up so you are not quite comfortable reading it, moments really did disturb me and I am fairly bomb-proof and I do believe I cringed and turned my head more than once. That is very clever writing, I felt the evil of The Bone Collector, the terror of the children, the distress of the parents and the anger, frustration and determination of Etta on the case. An emotional read.**

There was nothing not to love. **This has leaped already into not just my longest of top books of 2017 but into the shortlist already.** It might only be November but if this is an indicator of the quality of books being released in 2017 then it's going to be a very good year! I highly recommend this book. It will appeal to readers of crime, psychological thrillers even those that like mild horror and dark fiction. It's got something just a bit special about it. I hope to God I never cross paths with The Bone Collector ever. **5 huge whopping well deserved stars from me.**

*I read an ARC of this novel from the publisher via NetGalley, all review opinions are entirely my own and completely unbiased.*

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## **The Book Review Café says**

All my reviews can be found at <http://thebookreviewcafe.com>

If you only read one book next year here's a piece of advice, make sure it's *Rattle* by Fiona Cummins, I'm sure this book is going to be Huge in 2017. When ever I pick up a new book by an unknown author (to me) I always have a few reservations, will I like their style of writing, characters and plot? But any qualms I had disappeared after reading the first chapter of this highly engaging novel. This is the authors debut novel, but it certainly doesn't read like one, it's exceptionally well written, with an intriguing plot, which is both dark and sinister. *Rattle* is one of those books where an incredible sense of malevolence is there from the from the very first page and it remained there until the last spine chilling chapter, it's a highly compulsive read, dark, totally gripping and very dramatic. It's categorised as a crime thriller, but it goes beyond that it's much darker and definitely more disturbing than the usual crime read.

I really don't want to say to much about the plot as it really is one of those you need to read with little more than the book description to go on. What I will say is the author has produced a serial killer (*The Bone Collector*) like no other, he made my blood run cold, in fact I actually suffered nightmares whilst reading this book, but my god what a complex character. This is a serial killer with two very different sides, the carer versus the evil caretaker, but his total lack of empathy in either role make him terrifying, even more so when Fiona Cummins describes his thoughts and feelings with such conviction, It gives the reader a glimpse into the mind of a sinister psychopath which made for a chilling read.

The author has the rare talent of making all her characters come alive, the victims family's are very well depicted, their loss and anguish is palatable, as family's personal relationships begin to disintegrate I couldn't help become emotionally involved in their story, and the innocent victims well let's just say they will melt even the hardest heart. Detective Etta Fitzroy was another intriguing character, she's tenacious, and driven and shows great empathy for both the victims and their families, like many Detectives in fiction she does have issues but they add credibility to her character.

*Rattle* is told during the period of just over a week, the chapters have time stamps which add a sense of urgency to the plot. I'm sure my heart rate went through the roof, as Fiona Cummins doesn't let up on the suspense. The dialogue is sharp and the writing fluid and at times beautifully descriptive, which added to my enjoyment of this rivetting novel. Fiona Cummings has given the reader a roller coaster of a thriller for sure, but this novel is also a rich and harrowing story of the psychology of evil and those who strive to stop it, insights that will stay with you long after you've finished *Rattle*.

In case you haven't guessed I actually loved this book and it's a **MUST READ** for fans of crime thrillers and if you like them Dark then you are going to love it too. *Rattle* is a chilling and inventive debut from a very talented author and I personally think this book is going to be **HUGE** when it's published at the end of January 2017.

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## **Emma says**

This started out well but it pretty quickly became clear that there's nothing new here. The writing is ok, the plot interesting enough, but by the last third I wanted to skim whole pages and only read it all because it was a review copy. One of the main Detectives, Etta, becomes increasingly irrational and I was more annoyed by

this than I should have been because, again, she seemed to be intelligent and capable at the beginning.

All in all, just an average read.

Thanks to Macmillan and Netgalley for the chance to read this review copy. All opinions are my own.

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## **Paromjit says**

This is a chilling debut from Fiona Cummins revolving around a serial killer, The Bone Collector, and his obsession with collecting unusual and rare animal and human skeletal deformities. They are displayed in the bizarre family museum of which he is the curator. His interest extends to abducting children who have bone abnormalities, like Clara Foyle and Jakey, who has Stone Man Syndrome where his body grows new bones that leads to the sufferer being encased in a prison of bones. The Bone Collector's intention is to display their skeletons in his museum. DS Fitzroy is haunted by the killing of young Grace Rodriguez and leads the hunt for Clara and Jakey.

The story is delivered through multiple viewpoints. So we see the marriage faultlines and despair of Amy and Miles Foyle as Clara is taken. We feel the strain that having Jakey and the demands his condition has wrought on Lilith and Erdman's marriage and the excruciating impact his disappearance has on them. Erdman is trying to survive the pressures of his job and failing, his love for Jakey leads him to try and find the serial killer. Fitzroy is driven and determined to catching the perpetrator, belatedly discovering his calling card. She desperately wants a child and her marriage is disintegrating. We only learn the name of the bone collector late in the story, lending him an insidious quality and a certain invisibility. This heightens the air of menace and fear the reader experiences. We are given an insight into his disturbing family background and how he learnt his macabre craft from his father.

It is the author's excellent skills in placing the reader right in the midst of what the characters experience that is the greatest strength of the story. Seeing through their eyes ensures we feel their agonies, fears, stresses and frustrations. You root for DS Fitzroy despite her flaws, and understand the pressures she is working under. I would highly recommend this character driven novel as a atmospheric and absorbing read. Many thanks to Pan MacMillan for an ARC.

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