

## **BONEHEAD by Mo Hayder**

*Published by Hodder & Stoughton*

My latest book recommendation is '*Bonehead*' by Mo Hayder. Set in a small village, it is a chilling psychological crime thriller.

### **MY REVIEW**

Up until three years ago, Alex Mullins had always considered the local legend of Bonehead – a semi-skeletal woman who brings bad luck to all who see her – to be just an old wives' tale. But when the coach she was travelling in, following a school reunion, suddenly swerved off the road and landed in a lake, killing several of her classmates, things changed. Fortunately, Alex and her childhood friend, Arran Black, managed to escape and swim ashore. However, while Alex lay on the ground in a semi-conscious state, she was convinced she saw something resembling Bonehead approach and lean over her.

Now a Gloucestershire police officer, Alex is trying to put the past behind her. However, when a mysterious photograph is anonymously delivered to her mother's house, taken from the woods at the bottom of the garden, questions about the coach crash and what she thought she saw that night begin to surface. Determined to discover if anyone else had seen the vision, Alex decides to contact some of the other survivors, but none of them seem to want to talk about the crash, claiming to have seen nothing. At first, Alex thinks it might just be her dazed mind playing tricks on her, but when Arran's dog Tumble disappears in the woods without a trace, closely followed by the disappearance of her own dog Bamber, she soon realises that someone means them harm and that both hers and Arran's families might well be in danger.

Cleverly written with complex characters, '*Bonehead*' explores the superstitions, insecurities and secrets of a small village rocked by tragedy. Everyone seems to be hiding something and nobody is above suspicion. Add to this a large creepy wood with a foreboding atmosphere and you have all the ingredients for a gripping novel.

Focusing on the two main families, the Mullins and the Blacks, the story is told from the alternating viewpoints of Alex Mullins and Maryam Black, Arran's mother. It is through them that the pieces of the jigsaw puzzle finally start to fit together, leading to a shocking and explosive ending that will break your heart.

## THE AUTHOR

After leaving school at fifteen, Mo Hayder worked as an actress in tv and film, barmaid, security guard, filmmaker, hostess in a Tokyo club, educational administrator, and teacher of English as a foreign language in Asia. She had an MA in film from the American University in Washington, DC, and an MA in creative writing from Bath Spa University, UK.

She wrote 11 crime novels under the name Mo Hayder, and her fifth novel, *'Ritual'*, was nominated for the Barry Award for Best Crime 2009 and voted Best Book of 2008 by *Publishers Weekly*. *'Gone'*, her seventh novel, won the Edgar Allan Poe Award. Two of her books, *'The Treatment'* and *'Ritual'* have been made into films and her novel *'Wolf'* – nominated for Best Novel in the 2015 Edgar Awards – has recently been adapted for the BBC. Prior to her diagnosis with Motor Neurone Disease in December 2020, she had completed *'The Book of Sand'* and the first drafts of three more books in a series of speculative fiction, from which she took her greatest personal writing satisfaction.

Hayder passed away in July 2021 as a result of MND. She lived her life as a creative artist, never afraid to challenge her personal boundaries or those set by the establishment. She leaves behind a husband and daughter, a powerful legacy of books, and an incredible number of people who loved and admired the many facets of her diamond personality.

***'Bonehead' is published by Hodder & Stoughton and is available in ebook, paperback, hardback and audiobook format from Amazon. It is also available in hardback from Waterstones, Foyles and W H Smith.***