

Book Review

Tin Soldiers – Alex Smith

When she's not running a busy school office at Warden House , Monique Farmery loves nothing more than disappearing into a good book—and for her, that usually means diving straight into the next grisly DCI Robert Kett case.

Clearly not one for gentle, cosy mysteries, Monique is fully committed to the dark-and-dangerous end of crime fiction. And honestly, if she's still hooked by book nineteen, that's a recommendation worth paying attention to.

Tin Soldiers kicks off with one truly horrifying crime, the kind that immediately makes you sit up a little straighter. From there, things only escalate. What begins as one shocking murder quickly spirals into a full-blown citywide crisis that leaves the Extreme Crime Task Force scrambling. Even if you've never encountered Kett before, you'll get an instant sense of who he is: a dogged, determined detective who keeps going long after most people would need a lie-down and a cup of tea. That grit really holds the whole story together.

The lovely thing for newcomers is that *Tin Soldiers* doesn't make you feel like you've missed the first eighteen episodes of a very long TV box set. Although, Monique does recommend that you start at the beginning!

You get the odd hint that Kett's past has been... eventful, let's say—but the plot never leans on backstory. Instead, you're swept into the rising tension, the creeping sense of danger, and the feeling that the city of Norwich is slowly closing in on its own residents. The pace is brisk, the atmosphere heavy, and both the serial killer and the gang feel wild enough to keep you on edge.

In the end, *Tin Soldiers* is a tense, grisly, and surprisingly easy entry point into the series. Even if you're brand new to Kett, there's plenty to enjoy: a compelling lead detective, a city teetering on the edge, and a mystery that grabs you right from the get-go. It's exactly the kind of crime thriller that makes you think, "Well... maybe I should go back and start from the beginning," not because you're lost, but because you'll want more once you've torn through the final chapter.

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"The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go." Dr Seuss