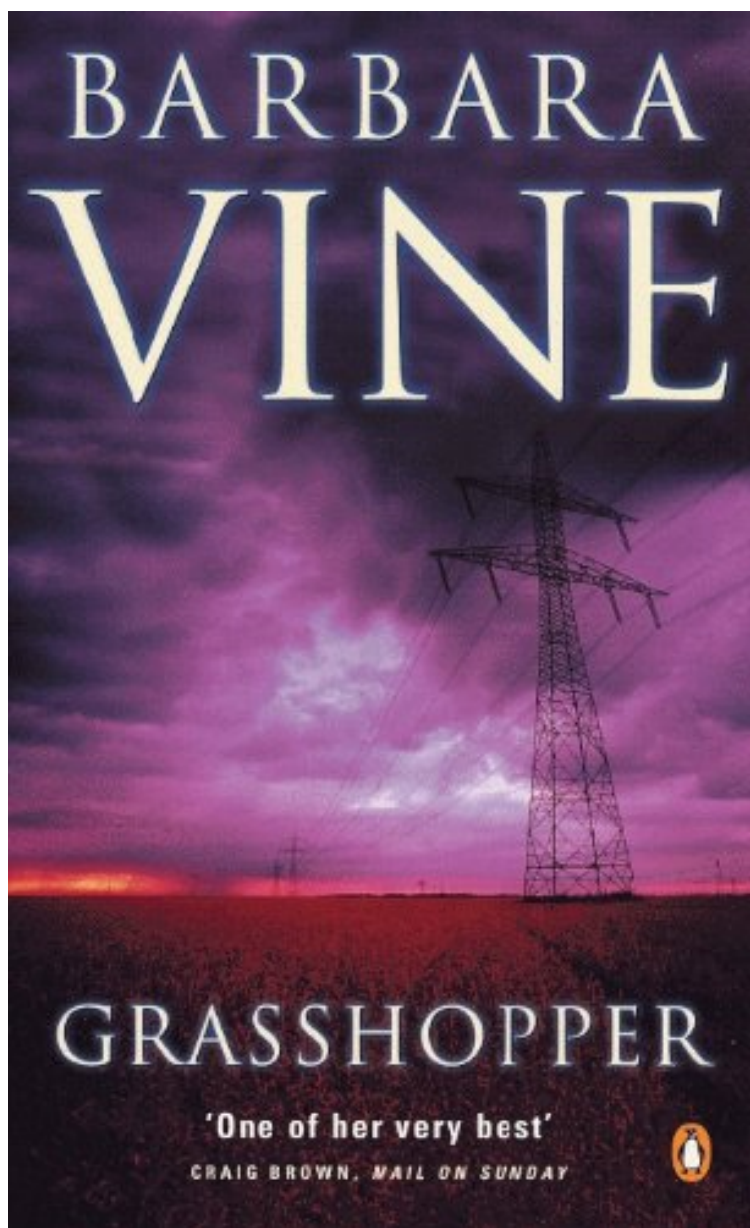


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Grasshopper



Par Barbara Vine
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Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurGrasshopper is an enthralling, chilling novel by the bestselling queen of crime Barbara Vine"They have sent me here because of what happened on the pylon'When Clodagh Brown writes these words at the age of nineteen, she believes that she is leaving behind the traumatic events of her youth. But Clodagh soon learns that you can never entirely escape your past.In the aftermath of the incident on the pylon - a gargantuan electrified grasshopper - Clodagh goes off to university, moves into a basement flat arranged by her unsympathetic family, and finds freedom trekking across London's rooftops with a gang of

neighborhood misfits. As she begins a thrilling relationship with a fellow climber, however, both Clodagh and the reader are haunted by the memory of the pylon and of the terrible thing that happened there - and by the eerie sense that another tragedy is just a footfall away. Grasshopper is a modern crime masterpiece that will have you gripped from the first page to the last. If you enjoy the novels of P.D. James, Ian Rankin and Scott Turow, you will love this book.

The Rendell/ Vine partnership has for years been producing consistently better work than most Booker winners put together' Ian Rankin' A superb and original writer' Amanda Craig, Express' Barbara Vine is the pen-name of Ruth Rendell. She has written fifteen novels using this pseudonym, including A Fatal Inversion and King Solomon's Carpet which both won the Crime Writers' Association Gold Dagger Award. Her other books include: A Dark Adapted Eye; The House of Stairs; Gallowglass; Asta's Book; No Night Is Too Long; In the Time of His Prosperity; The Brimstone Wedding; The Chimney Sweeper's Boy; Grasshopper; The Blood Doctor; The Minotaur; The Birthday Present and The Child's Child..com

A new novel from Barbara Vine (or Ruth Rendell, her alter ego) is always cause for celebration, and in this exceptional psychological thriller, she displays all her mastery of craft to draw the reader into an unfamiliar world. She paints a vivid picture of the roots of obsession in the history of a young woman whose love of high places has been marked by tragedy, guilt, and exile from her family's home. Clodagh Brown has always been frightened by enclosed spaces and loved climbing, a phobia and passion that resulted in the death of her high school sweetheart. As a college student living in the basement of a distant relative's home in Maida Vale, a slightly shabby London neighborhood, she encounters a group of peers who share both of these psychological quirks and introduce her to the steep rooftops of her new surroundings. Clodagh soon falls in love with Silver, a young man whose top-floor apartment across from her flat houses a diverse and fascinating group of people. Their youthful idealism and moral certainties are often at odds with conventional values and legal niceties. While Clodagh and Silver carry the story, their peers present ample opportunities for Vine to showcase her talent for imagining a multiplicity of lives and personas--from Liv, the Swedish au pair who can clamber over rooftops like a mountain goat but is terrified of what awaits her on level ground, to Jonny, whose pathological need to dominate the others, particularly Liv, leads to the shocking and tragic denouement. When the climbers chance upon a top-floor flat where a couple and their adopted mixed-race son are hiding from the authorities (who would remove the child from their care), Vine's ability to alter pace without sacrificing story or character really stands out. Grasshopper is an acutely drawn, immensely satisfying book.

--Jane Adams

Extrait They have sent me here because of what happened on the pylon. Or perhaps so that I don't have to see the pylon every time I go out or even look out of a window. "We've thought of selling this house and moving," my father said. "Don't think it hasn't been in our minds. Still you won't . . ." He left the sentence unfinished, but I knew how he would have ended it. You won't always be here, he'd meant to say. A girl of your age, you won't live at home much longer, you'll be off to college or a job, a home of your own. And out of sight, out of mind, he meant too. Gradually people will stop thinking of us as the parents of that girl, they'll stop asking what kind of parents we were to bring up a girl who would do that, and they'll stop staring and pointing us out. Especially if you don't come home very often. Maybe they'll think you're dead. Maybe we'll tell them you are. That last bit was in my imagination. I'm not saying they wish me dead. They have my welfare at heart, as my mother puts it. Which must be why they were so happy--happier than I've seen them since before the pylon day--when Max made his offer. The best they'd hoped for was a room in whatever accommodation the college had available or for me to be the fourth girl in a shared flat somewhere. "A whole flat to yourself," my mother said, "and in a lovely part of town." I had a picture in my mind then of rows and rows of mock-Tudor houses, striped black and white like zebras, with pampas grass in their front gardens and Audis outside their garages. Daniel and I had seen plenty of them, riding around the ring roads on his old Motoguzzi. Our London was the outer suburbs, Waltham Cross and Barnet, Colindale and Edgware, Uxbridge and Richmond and Purley. We counted the pylons and took photographs of the barbed-wire guards on their legs. We never penetrated as far as Maida Vale and we'd never heard of Little Venice. But still I thought "a nice part of town" must mean houses like our house. How Max could have a flat in it, I couldn't imagine. Flats were in blocks, there had been plenty of those up along the North Circular Road too, great sprawling flat-roofed buildings painted custard color with their names in letters of black or silver: Ferndean Court and Summerhill and Brook House. So when I got here this afternoon I wasn't prepared for what I found. My father had been going to drive me. It's what parents do when their child goes off to college and a new place to live in. I've seen enough of it to know. They pack up the trunk of the car and all the back of the car too, with clothes and sports gear and books and radio and CD player and maybe a computer and, of course, a hamper of food. It's

a joyful occasion, a turning point in someone's life, and if it's the dad driving and the mother left behind, she's tearful but she's smiling too, calling out "Good luck" and making the departing one promise to phone as soon as she's settled in and not to forget the cold chicken in the hamper and the homemade cake. My leaving home wasn't like that. I wouldn't have expected it to be and I never had much faith in my father's promise. As it happened, the car went in for service the day before and the garage phoned and said they'd like to keep it for another day to have a look at the electrics. Maybe Dad didn't fix it that way. I expect it was just a piece of luck for him. Anyway, they said it couldn't be helped, I'd just have to manage on the train. So I left in much the same way as I've lived these past two years, under a cloud. After the pylon my parents had counseling, just as I did, and the counselor told them they had to be understanding and supportive. It was their responsibility to help me put all that behind me and make a fresh start, not blame myself and feel guilty all the time. But they couldn't. I suppose they couldn't help themselves. I think they really saw me as evil. One of the ways they dealt with it was to tell me they didn't "know where I got it from," as if every action you performed and every mistake you made had been made by a string of ancestors before you and passed on in a gene of thoughtlessness or daring--or evil. This morning and all through lunch they were giving me those looks that are a mix of wonderment and--well, resignation, I suppose. And I could see something else there too: relief, hope maybe, a fresh start for them as well. They have sent me here because of what happened on the pylon. Or perhaps so that I don't have to see the pylon every time I go out or even look out of a window. "We've thought of selling this house and moving," my father said. "Don't think it hasn't been in our minds. 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