



## On Track for Murder

By Stephen Childs

### PRESS RELEASE

*Her father stabbed to death, her brother caught with the bloody murder weapon, and her stepmother suspiciously missing: eighteen year old Abigail Sergeant is forced into a dangerous cross country adventure to uncover the truth and bring the real killer to justice.*

Travelling from England to Australia in the late nineteenth-century, Abigail and her naive younger brother hope that reuniting with their father — and his new wife — will offer them security. What awaits them on the shores of the Swan River dashes any prospects of a blissful life. Discovering her father murdered and her brother seemingly caught red handed, Abigail's life is thrown into turmoil. The police are convinced of Bertrand's guilt, but Abigail is determined to prove his innocence, whatever it takes. The only thing that the now insensible Bertrand will say about the murder is that their step-mother, Frances, knows what really happened. Frances, however, has fled south to Albany, a port from which she plans to board a ship bound for New Zealand. With time

running out, Abigail persuades the police to let her follow Frances, but only if she is chaperoned by the reluctant Constable Ridley Dunning. Embarking on a heroic train journey across Western Australia, Abigail faces deception, kidnap, sabotage and arson, forcing her to draw on a resolve she didn't know she possessed. But will that be enough to save her brother from injustice?

Duelling with the hardships and social inequalities of the Victorian era, Abigail Sergeant is a strong and independent young protagonist who surprises her acquaintances with her determination and unusual abilities. Forward-thinking, her views often juxtapose awkwardly with the Victorian ideal of womanhood; her brilliance with machinery and her passion for technology and science, prove that mental and physical strength need not preclude finesse, and that family and love can become powerful, inspirational tools.

Author Stephen Childs captures the landscape of his adopted Western Australian homeland in skilful and vivid detail. The region's culture and its epic terrain has always held a certain fascination for Childs, and soon after moving there he began researching the story of how the Swan River colony originated as a commercial enterprise, and what early settlers had to endure to survive. The history and extraordinary stories sparked the premise behind his assured debut novel, **On Track for Murder**. A beguiling blend of romance, mystery and a desperate race against time, **On Track for Murder** will entertain fans of Agatha Christie and P. D. James with its plot twists and turns, leaving them guessing — and gasping — until the very last page.

**About the author:** Born in Ealing, West London, Stephen Childs immigrated with his family to New Zealand in the 1970s. He has enjoyed a long career in the film and television industry. After a serious health scare in 2005, Childs' view of life changed. He briefly went into politics as a parliamentary candidate in the national elections, standing against the now New Zealand Prime Minister, John Key. The drive to pursue new challenges prompted Childs to relocate to Western Australia, where he now lives in Joondalup, north of Perth, with his family and two cats. In his spare time, Childs enjoys exploring the great Australian outdoors and studying genealogy. **On Track for Murder** by Stephen Childs (published by Clink Street 1st September 2015 RRP £7.99 paperback, RRP £4.99 ebook) is available online from retailers including amazon.co.uk and can be ordered from all good bookstores.

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