

Dear reader,

'Jackson Brodie is a terrific character, full of intriguing contradictions. On the one hand, he's a classic action hero: a man of few words, capable of violence in what he considers to be a just cause. He has a smile that melts women. But he's continually baffled by them too.'

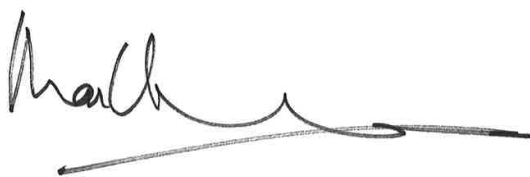
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It has been nine years since we published Kate Atkinson's last Jackson Brodie novel, *Started Early Took My Dog* (no.5), and fifteen years since the first in the series, *Case Histories* – the first book of hers I had the privilege to edit. When Kate told me she was writing a new one for publication in 2019 it filled my heart with joy. Anyone who has read these books will know just how very special these contemporary novels are, and I knew that there were many readers around the world who had long waited for this too, as Jackson Brodie has become an iconic character for so many. But - not only Jackson: her readers will be delighted to encounter again some of the characters from the earlier novels that became so real to them, including Julia from *Case Histories*, and Reggie from *When Will There Be Good News?*.

I call these novels 'literary crime', because although Jackson Brodie is a former policeman turned private investigator, and they all do have a mystery at their heart, there is also always that delicious awareness that underneath the complex plotting and unforgettable characterisation, Kate is also playing with the whole crime genre, putting on to it her own uniquely teasing post-modern stamp.

I think you will find *Big Sky* has all Kate's hallmark wonderful writing, mischievous wit, emotional depth and deft plotting. She is, uniquely, a writer of quality fiction that wins critical accolades and prizes while selling in mass market numbers. All that aside, I just hope you will love reading it as much as I did.

Yours,



Marianne Velmans
Publishing Director, Doubleday

