



**Kerry-Ann** and the  
'82 Share House  
**Blues**

Jay Verney

A Short **Story**

# **KERRY-ANN AND THE '82 SHARE HOUSE BLUES**

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**Zen Kettle Books**

*For all the '80s girls who dreamed of better  
times*

**K**erry-Ann had choices, that was for certain. Yes, she did. Sure, she was a country mouse, as the saying went, but she'd learned, and quickly. Kerry-Ann Brazil had been around, a bit. She was accustomed to the ways of the city, more or less. She could do it, she could find a new place, now that Louise and Pete were deserting the share house for other residential temptations. And love. Don't forget love.

Choices. Either she stumped up the other two-thirds of the rent – which of course, she could afford only in her imaginary future as an executive – or she found another place – a place for one – and moved out, and on.

There was a third option, but Kerry-Ann hadn't considered it beyond a few, quite a few, catastrophising thoughts: taking over the lease from Louise and finding two flatmates of her own, from whom she'd have to gather the rent, money for utilities, and miscellaneous expenses that she couldn't begin to fathom. Strangers, they'd be, strangers who would pluck her name

and phone number from the classifieds, strangers from who knew where, on whom she'd have to depend for their goodwill, their ability to take responsibility for their actions, their capacity to remember to lock the doors at night and to not invite other strangers into the house for raucous parties. There could be complaints from neighbours, police intervention, arrests for violence, drug possession, wild and illegal sex in the front yard. There could be. And Louise hadn't endured such a fate, not remotely. She already knew Pete, and Kerry-Ann knew Louise's boyfriend, Mick: they'd worked together when Mick rotated through Kerry-Ann's department on some high-fallutin public sector management scheme. They got on well enough; he was a few years older, 26, and a few rungs higher, so Kerry-Ann was no threat to his position. Furthermore, she enjoyed the advantage – she thought of it as an advantage – of being neither stunningly beautiful, nor unfortunately plain, neither model tall, nor

dumpily short, though she was probably below average height without her pumps. She fell handily and happily into the middle – the big, impressive, centre of the bell curve – like most women and, like most women, one day she would engage handily and happily with a middling man whom she could fete as superior and accomplished. Middling men, she thought, were agreeable to compliments and boosting, especially from their middling women whom they, in turn, could think of as more beautiful and enviable partners.

At this point in her life, though, Kerry-Ann was anxious to shed her naive, country mouse persona, to push the middling limits, and she quickly acquired a taste for the inner-city pubs Mick frequented at lunch-time, and the Friday Happy Hours at various departmental premises and city bars. They both enjoyed a bet and an occasional, very occasional smoke (ganja or herbal tea, as Mick called it – that proved something about Kerry-Ann's city bona fides). They'd both been raised

Catholic, only to become wayward agnostics, apostles of the Enlightenment values of logic and rational inquiry, the here and now, the solid and concrete, excluding the effects of the herbal tea. And somehow – had it been their common upbringing in strict Catholic schools where the slightest misinterpretation of a person’s words could be disastrous and summarily punished? – somehow, they’d instantly respected each other’s preference for minimalist interaction, telegrammatic dialogues, silence. It was possibly because they shared these things in common that they felt no romantic attraction to each other, other than that initial frisson of novelty, followed quickly by the recognition of a soul friend rather than a soul romantic (Kerry-Ann wanted to say ‘fuck’ rather than romantic, but she wasn’t quite there, yet).

So, when the opening occurred for a third at Louise’s share house, Kerry-Ann – uncomplicated, middling, profanity averse, quiet Kerry-Ann (Louise herself proved to be a

devotee of the less-is-more approach to conversation) – came highly recommended. As for Pete, Louise knew him through friends in the social work community. He fitted right in with his late night shifts in the Valley stretching into mid-morning returns home and all-day sleeping sessions. He was a benign vampire, and Louise and Kerry-Ann fussed over him like a beloved brother, washing his clothes, cooking him big breakfasts when he returned from his night shifts. In return, though without raising a finger, he was a protective male presence – not that their neighborhood was feral or anything – his old boots standing beside the front door, his big black motorbike parked under one of the papaya trees in the front yard, challenging the sap to drip upon it at its peril.

All in all, this share house and how it came to exist in its present form reminded Kerry-Ann of the relationships and networks that flourished in the country town she'd fled in search of – well, she was working that out. She was just glad to be in the big city, and okay, it

wasn't exactly the case that she'd identified something specific to run towards. What she had so far was the something to escape from, and in some of her dreams, she saw herself running fast but with her head turned back towards the darkening path behind her, so that she had no idea what she might encounter up ahead. In any case, that share house third option, featuring Leaseholder/Rent Collector/Boundary Rider/Party Pooper Kerry-Ann, must be avoided, and even with her head turned, a deft side-step was still possible. Yes, it was, definitely.

**S**he knew that Louise and Pete weren't deliberately causing trouble for her with their moving all of a sudden. They each had troubles of their own. Pete, for instance, skinny, bearded, pale and driven, had only ever needed a place to crash. He always seemed to be distracted, not focussing on where he was in the moment, but somewhere 'out there' in the great world. He lived in shorts or jeans, with T-

shirts and thongs. Kerry-Ann had never seen him wear the dusty boots that sat near the front door. Were they actually his? (He rode his motorbike in thongs, which had to be illegal, didn't it?). A camp bed in a tent on the river bank would have been just as acceptable to him. Safety and some measure of comfort weren't priorities for Pete as far as Kerry-Ann could tell. The only time he'd ever discussed work with them was the morning at breakfast when he'd described, between mouthfuls, a street tough pulling a knife on him and threatening to 'jab you good, fuckhead.' The kid was as high as a kite and had ended up sobbing in Pete's arms. Still, he'd looked a shade paler that morning, and he'd devoured six scrambled eggs, half a dozen bacon rashers, and four slices of toast. Kerry-Ann lost count of the coffee refills.

But the real complication for Pete was that he was a former candidate for the priesthood who'd left and become a counsellor of homeless kids – adolescents, teenagers,

junkies, rent-boys – during the course of which he'd met a woman about to take her final vows to become a fully-fledged nun, a sister of the Order of Our Lady of Mercy. The Merciless Mercys, Kerry-Ann and her mates at school had called them, although this Mercy, Jenny, Pete's 'friend,' was about as far from merciless as you could get. She was lovely and kind and considerate, and she worked in the soup kitchen in the same part of town where Pete hung out with the streeties. In retrospect, it was obvious that Pete would help Jenny out of her love affair with Jesus and into a bedsit with him above the community centre where they both plied their trade in saving souls with soup and sandwiches and their kindly, attentive ears. The whole setup was convenient, and Kerry-Ann knew without a doubt that there was nothing like convenience to either motivate a change, or to paralyse it.

**T**ruthfully, it hadn't been all of a sudden, the end of the share house. Kerry-Ann had seen it building over months, although she had no idea what to do about it. She may have been from the provinces but she knew a thing or two about relationship dynamics and those didn't change just because you were in the city. She'd watched her own parents slip and slide around each other for years, their eyes filled with tears, or anger, or nothing, which was the worst filling of all. In the share house far away from her miserable, still-together parents, Kerry-Ann had watched as Louise went through the motions of the end of her relationship with Mick and the beginning of her new relationship with Bruce. She was no wiser in knowing what she might do to help. Mostly, she kept quiet. Mostly.

Bruce and Mick had been best friends, and they had both wanted Louise for their one true love. For quite a while, from what Kerry-Ann could ascertain, Louise only had eyes for Mick – tall, fair, myopic Mick. But in the end,

she turned to Bruce – shorter, darker, curly-haired Bruce. They tippy-toed around for a long time, and Kerry-Ann was certain there'd been an overlap period towards the finish, when Louise was sleeping with both men, but only Bruce knew of it. It seemed that Mick thought he was still in with a chance during the End of Days, as Kerry-Ann came to describe them. He was enthusiastic, he smiled, he arrived with flowers and take-aways for dinner; he played fourth grade rugby to amuse Louise, though he was anything but match-fit, even for the lowly fourth.

Come to think of it, Mick kind of overdid things towards the end, so he must have had an inkling. He loved both Louise and Bruce, he told Kerry-Ann one Saturday afternoon as they rocketed down the coast road in search of the pair at a first grade rugby game. But the pair had already left by the time Mick and Kerry-Ann arrived, and Mick – who'd called by the share house on a whim that day, so he said – wouldn't have known they were at the game

had Kerry-Ann kept her mouth shut. But no, she'd had to insert herself into this other game, and the threesome became a foursome, temporarily, with Kerry-Ann playing the role of – what was it now? Spoiler, enabler, gossip, friend? Lonely country girl seeks relevance and excitement, no betrayal too small or large. Perhaps that was it. Or perhaps she had intended no harm; perhaps she'd simply wanted things to return to the way they'd been. But that hadn't worked for her parents, now, had it?

Where exactly did her loyalties lie these days, anyway? With Mick, the colleague who'd rescued her with Louise's share house offer after she dropped out of her degree and forfeited her right to continue living at the university residential college? Or were they with Louise, who'd generously welcomed her after a brief lunch and cursory confirmation that she had neither an extra head and four bonus arms, nor designs on Mick? Certainly, her loyalty couldn't be to Bruce, whom she

found smart-alecky and, if pressed after a few strawberry daquiris, a bit strange. But that assessment of poor Bruce had accumulated with the smallest crumbs of knowledge, the wildest of guesses and the fleetingest of perceptions garnered and gleaned from his brief visits to the share house, and he never did stay overnight there, not once. But during the End of Days, Louise stayed out, frequently. Kerry-Ann had surmised that if Louise wasn't at home, and she wasn't with Mick – who often phoned looking for her on these evenings – then she had to be with Bruce. Didn't she? She couldn't have been visiting her parents across town every time. Or friends. And then there was the arriving home the next morning, creeping up the back steps barefoot, her shoes in one hand, overnight bag in the other, looking sheepish and satisfied and as unrested as a woman in lust could be as she sank down on the kitchen chair and waited while Kerry-Ann poured her a cuppa and made her toast. Wasn't that conclusive? This was how things

happened in the big smoke, and they went on until something else happened.

**B**ruce was a patient and persistent man. Kerry-Ann guessed that's what tipped the balance eventually in his favour, that and his wealth, his indirect wealth: his father owned several hardware stores around the city, and Bruce was the heir apparent, the only son. Not that Kerry-Ann thought of Louise as any kind of gold-digger, not at all. It was just that Mick, in the time leading up to, and during the End of Days, and by comparison with Bruce, seemed to miss his opportunities, make poor choices, finish second more often than he won. In such circumstances, Bruce's financial capacities had their inevitable effects. That was the way of it.

For example, the most significant day, the last day, in fact, of the last stanza starring Louise and Mick, and the overlapping first stanza starring Louise and Bruce, was the day when Mick turned up at the share house with a new car. Kerry-Ann could never work out if the

car was meant to impress Louise or Bruce. Mick arrived late in the afternoon: it was the last model of this particular Toyota and it looked pretty much like all the others that had preceded it for several years. Only an aficionado would note a difference in the shape of the headlights or a change to the grille pattern. It was about to be replaced with a newer, more modern and groovier model, and Mick knew it, but he couldn't quite afford the extra premium, not on his public service pay, so he did the next best thing and bought a new old model. It was the same colour as his hair and his favourite work pants: a sandy beige. (He was wearing the pants that day). Kerry-Ann had been privy to the news ahead of Louise: Mick had mentioned it to her at an inter-departmental lunch, and he'd left early to go and pick it up from the dealership. Kerry-Ann had thought what most people think when they hear the word 'new' car. She'd thought it really was the newest model, the one touted in

advance colour advertisements in the weekend magazine liftouts. That one.

When Louise arrived off the bus at the bottom of the street – half an hour after Kerry-Ann, who'd flexed off especially to see the new vehicle – Mick took the steps two at a time down to the driveway to meet her as she reached the share house fence. Kerry-Ann watched from the front patio as Louise pecked Mick's cheek in greeting and Mick gesticulated at the 'new' car. Louise offered him that quick smile she had, the one that seemed to hint at other mysteries and agendas a long way away while still achieving the goal of endearment, and interest in the here and now. Kerry-Ann wished that she could perfect that smile. Mick pulled the keys from his pocket and unlocked the passenger door. Louise really had no choice but to step in and buckle up.

While they were away on their 'new' car jaunt, another vehicle arrived. Kerry-Ann watched it glide to a stop in front of the house. She'd remained on the patio to finish off the

smoked oysters and crackers she'd begun to eat with Mick. At first, she thought it was a visitor for the neighbours since she didn't recognise the car. Another new one, judging by its shine and cleanliness. Brilliant white duco, gleaming chrome, black interior, a rear spoiler, and air-conditioning, given that the windows were up and the weather was hot. There was something very attractive about the shape of the vehicle: a smoothness of line that suggested confidence and achievement. It was the latest, very latest Mazda coupe. Kerry-Ann had seen the ads; heavens, everyone must have seen the ads. Bruce stepped out and walked to the front of the car where he stood for a while surveying his beautiful new toy, his long white socks – he always wore white shirts, dark business shorts and long white socks – jauntily down around his ankles. Kerry-Ann could see his smile from where she sat on the patio. He had very white teeth – they rivalled the white of his new car, and his socks – and his smile was more like a grimace, but it seemed that that had something

to do with the mild seizures he endured every so often. According to Louise, he'd trained himself to clench his teeth in this way more or less permanently, in an effort to prevent chipping and tongue biting, should the worst occur without warning. Which it did only rarely now that his new medication from America had been so successful. So when he smiled, there was the grimace, though he still looked acceptably cute, if a little simian, in Kerry-Ann's opinion.

When Bruce joined her on the patio and asked Louise's whereabouts, Kerry-Ann told him about the new old model Mick had bought and their current outing. 'Well,' Bruce said, and 'Hah.' These were two expressions Bruce used often in conversation. Kerry-Ann could tell he wanted to know more, but he restrained himself and sat quietly with her, scanning one end of the street and then the other, munching crackers.

Things moved quickly when Mick and Louise finally returned. It was after six and the

sun was sinking. Mosquitoes had driven Kerry-Ann indoors and she'd already lit coils for the kitchen and dining-room, but she figured that Bruce's concern for his new coupe, and Louise, motivated him to stay out there, waiting. She heard the car doors slam over the cooking sounds of her stir-fry chicken and noodles. She'd just added the hoisin sauce and a touch of sesame oil to round it out – a recipe she'd learned from Louise – when they arrived. They, if you want to use the term loosely.

Kerry-Ann put the lid on the frying pan and moved it off the heat before walking briskly through the dining-room to the patio. She was in time to see Mick's sandy head disappear inside the sandy new car as Louise turned away from him and, head bowed, made her way up the stairs. When she reached the top step, Bruce rose from his director's chair and took the three steps required to take Louise in his arms. She'd been crying; her eyes were red and even her hair looked despondent and flat, and moist (no air-con?). The three of them, Kerry-

Ann in the doorway, Louise and Bruce a metre or so away from her on the patio, stared down at the beige car. Suddenly, Mick's face appeared behind the windscreen, staring up at them. He blinked rapidly a few times, as though he had a lash scratching across his eyeball, and then his face disappeared. The car reversed smoothly down the driveway until it got to the section covered in papaya leaves and rotting papaya flesh dropped by the fruit bats. Kerry-Ann had been meaning to rake it up.

It must have been the new tyres, their absolute newness, something, because the car slewed and slipped sideways and Kerry-Ann said 'Oh,' as Bruce muttered 'Well, shit,' and Louise said, 'God.' They watched as Mick's hands, pale and freckled, pulled the steering wheel from side to side, trying to regain control before the fence pillar met the rear bumper. He succeeded but, just as quickly, somehow the angle that had saved the bumper allowed the car to scrape past the big flaking concrete fence pillar, creating three dark, uneven stripes on

the passenger side rear door. Louise started down the steps as Mick finally righted the car and made it out to the footpath. Kerry-Ann waited for him to kill the ignition and get out, but he didn't. He continued reversing into the street, turned the wheel and took off before Louise could step around the papaya slush.

The new old model resembled a rally car as it zoomed down to the intersection with the main road where the traffic flew by as though pursued by demons. The car's left blinker flashed bright and orange as Mick idled at the corner stop sign. Louise drifted to the front fence and waited, and Bruce and Kerry-Ann kept their places on the patio. Kerry-Ann thought she could hear Mick revving the motor, but in reality she knew he was too far away for her to be sure it was him. When a break came after what seemed like far too long, the beige car took off with a screech across the stop sign's broad white warning strip and disappeared in a second. Somewhere, a horn tooted. Mick had crossed some kind of line, Kerry-Ann realised.

In motor racing, as she recalled Saturday afternoons in her home town watching the only thing on TV – sport – the same line did for both start and finish.

**F**rom that night on, The Night of the Two Cars, Kerry-Ann became the flatmate in charge of the share house. When Louise trudged back upstairs and the three of them sat down for dinner, Kerry-Ann awaited an explanation. She sat very still and tried to chew her stir-fry as quietly as possible. ‘Well,’ Bruce said at one point, and then got up and turned on the radio. Friday drive time, Kerry-Ann’s favourite music on the city’s first FM station, although she could have done without it. She could have done with some information. Bruce opened another bottle of red and filled everyone’s glasses to the brim. Kerry-Ann felt the way she’d felt around her parents in the long days and longer nights of their estrangement: a little bit anxious, a little bit sick in the top of her stomach, although she

could usually quell that with a few deep breaths. A couple of times her mother had thought that her daughter was hyperventilating. Kerry-Ann had been surprised that her mother had even noticed her breathing in the face of the huge absence that filled their house and announced the death of yet another suburban love story.

Louise and Bruce didn't seem to notice anything beyond themselves, staring silently at each other across the table. Kerry-Ann briefly considered moving her plate and glass to the kitchen to eat with the help, and then knew that the gesture would make no difference. They didn't see her at all. Apart from which, the only kitchen help were a dozen or so moth-eating geckoes, and the field mouse that frequented the stove recess and under the fridge in search of a little indoor comfort. No, the mouse wasn't helpful, but Kerry-Ann gave credit for feistiness and couldn't bring herself to set a trap, yet.

When dinner was over, and the dishes washed – Louise and Bruce did their duty and

Louise wouldn't hear otherwise, since Kerry-Ann had cooked the meal – the two of them said goodnight. It was only eight o'clock, and Kerry-Ann thought that, at last, Bruce would spend the night under the share house roof. But as she stood drinking the last of the wine at the kitchen door, she watched them disappear first into the hallway to Louise's bedroom, then return to the dining-room with a suitcase and backpack. A haze of mosquito coil smoke had given the room a gauzy look under the yellow light Mick had installed in the absence of insect screens on the windows. 'Well,' Bruce said, holding the suitcase and gazing across the room towards Kerry-Ann. 'See you,' said Louise, smiling her smile, hoisting the backpack over one shoulder.

'Bye,' Kerry-Ann replied, not knowing what else to say as the two moved from yellow to black and into the night. Although her parents had ended their relationship, neither of them had ever developed enough momentum to actually leave home, with or without new

partners. Besides, neither of them could have afforded to live separately – the mortgage was what kept them physically together. That, and a lack of motivation to start over again, Kerry-Ann suspected. It was simply more convenient to stay and embrace inertia, paralysis. But these four people – she included herself as a member of the cast, despite her exclusion from the star-crossed love triangle – they were young and vigorous and lived in a city full of houses and friendly streets, of residences awaiting their approval and welcomed presence. They had choices.

Over the next two weeks, Kerry-Ann observed the gradual removal, as if by magicians, of the household furniture. Arriving home from work one night, she found that the lounge suite had gone, but someone had thoughtfully left a poo-brown velour bean bag in its place. It could have used more filler, but it was comfortable enough after several drinks. The TV had disappeared, too, so Kerry-Ann

visited the local electrical store and bought herself a portable black and white set - \$15 off because it was display stock. The rabbit ears worked well at a 30 degree angle.

Two nights later, the disappearing dining-room set freed up a large space. Kerry-Ann could have run dance classes, had she danced. The kitchen table and its two mismatched chairs had flown the coop with the dining-room furniture, so Kerry-Ann bought her red and white striped steamer chair from her bedroom, along with a fold-up picnic table that had accompanied her from home to university. 'You never know when you might need an extra study table,' Kerry-Ann's tearful mother had said at the time. Study table, yes. Now she could study her breakfast cereal in peace on the dance floor. A couple of times, she studied the field mouse as it made diagonal runs across the lino from the stove recess to the fridge and back. It probably felt as though it was out in the yard again in the suddenly open-

plan kitchen. Free at last, as Kerry-Ann had become in her newly minimalist circumstances.

At the end of her first week as apparent sole occupant, she thought to check Pete's room, and confirmed that his bed and wardrobe had departed, too. One afternoon after work, she found an envelope propped against the rabbit ears of her new TV set. Her name was written on it. Well, it could hardly have been for the mouse. Kerry-Ann recognised Louise's handwriting. Louise's note informed her that the house was to be demolished and the landlord would not be renewing the lease. Really? They had three weeks left to move out. Louise had paid the rent for all of them, including Pete, up to the final day. She said she didn't want to be reimbursed – 'my shout,' she wrote – and she hoped Kerry-Ann would be happy in her new home. New home. Well, yes, that was the way of it. When Kerry-Ann telephoned Louise's workplace, she was told that Louise was on vacation for a month. The following Friday,

during happy hour at the bar she and Mick had frequented, Kerry-Ann learned from his colleagues that Mick had left for Canberra – a sudden secondment opportunity had arisen. It was an offer her soul friend couldn't refuse.

On Saturday morning, Kerry-Ann bought the paper from the service station on the corner. She sat on the front steps and circled any likely-looking vacancies under Flats, Board, Rental Accom. She was too late for all of her circles, and other possibilities were out of her price range, or in unfamiliar suburbs. Share houses, naturally, were out of the question, and she couldn't bring herself to mix up her personal and work lives again quite so soon, so no one at her workplace had a clue that she was slipping towards sleeping in her car, or resigning and returning to her hometown, the beaten country mouse. Or she could simply stay here, in this all but empty place, the sole occupant, a squatter, until her eviction by demolition persons unknown. Could she still

be a public servant with a record as a squatter?  
She told herself to calm down.

Action, that was the thing. She stood up and walked quickly to the kitchen, found a pumpkin seed in the bottom of the crisper, and fastened it to the mousetrap Louise had bought and flung on top of the fridge, forgotten. She set the trap and slid it under the fridge. Just as swiftly, she grabbed the broom and slid it out again, the movement setting it off. The snap of metal against wood echoed in the empty room. Buzzer. She threw the trap into the backyard. This was still technically a share house and Kerry-Ann could share it with whomever she pleased.

Action. She grabbed her car keys, went to the front door and scooped up Pete's old boots. They'd become an installation at the Museum Of Vacant Spaces. They could enjoy a new life as security accessories on the front stoop of her new home. She took them down to the car, unfolded over the back seat the

emergency blue tarp she'd never used, and placed the boots on top. She'd begun to pack.

She felt good, invigorated almost by the trip down and the run back up. She puffed her way to the middle of the dance floor and twirled twice. She stood still, listening to her breath. Still home. Still here. She returned to the car to retrieve the boots. Upstairs, the fridge motor turned over, a rabbit ear dropped. The kitchen mouse smelled pumpkin seed, somewhere out there.

## About the Author

Jay Verney is an Australian writer who has published two novels



traditionally, as they say: ***Percussion*** (University of Queensland Press), and ***A Mortality Tale*** (Allen & Unwin, 1st Edition; UQP, 2nd Edition), and a stack of other stuff including essays, articles, memoir, opinion pieces, newspaper columns, movie reviews, poetry, short stories, and theses.

***A Mortality Tale*** was shortlisted for the Australian/Vogel and Miles Franklin Literary Awards, and ***Percussion*** got some pretty good reviews, too.

Jay has a PhD (in genre and crime fiction), and a Master's degree (memoir) in Creative Writing from Queensland University. In 2009, she received a Dean's Award for Outstanding Research

Higher Degree Thesis for her PhD. La-di-da and yippeekiyay, or exclamations to that effect. Seriously though, she was quite chuffed to receive the award and has it framed on her wall of - yes, framed things - at home. Occasionally, she shows it to her cat, Dotty, intending to pull her into line and create a sense of awe. So far, however, Jay remains the servant and Dotty the boss. The universe is as it should be.

Jay's third novel, ***Spawned Secrets***, a thriller set in a rainforest and featuring disgraced stockbrokers and a serial killer (yes, he's after the stockbrokers - fictional payback is cathartic and fun) is her first foray into digital publishing. She has plans to publish more ebooks very soon with KDP, including e-versions of ***A Mortality Tale*** and ***Percussion***.

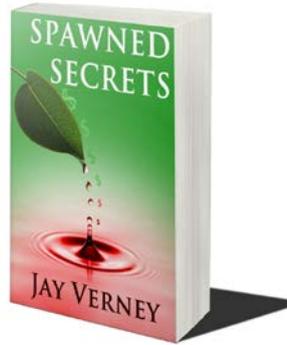
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**Hello**

**Grasshoppers**

If you enjoyed *Kerry-Ann and the '82 Share House Blues*, you might like to check out Jay's third novel, *Spawned Secrets*. Read about it below, or [click this link](#) to go to Amazon's page where you can See Inside to try before you buy.

## Spawned Secrets



**T**he Global Financial Crisis is in full swing.

Banks and businesses are closing. Homes are foreclosed. Bernie Madoff has been arrested. Jobs and savings are lost forever. People are angry, very, very angry.

A group of disgraced (and disgraceful) stockbrokers are enjoying a rainforest getaway weekend as a severe storm front approaches. And a deadly secret blows in from their past, carried by a mystery stalker, 'Guy Friendly,' determined to execute each and every one of them with surgical precision and the wrath of an avenging demon.

Their only protection comes in the form of Garfield Fletcher, former ship's cook, jilted lover, and now, fake private eye, courtesy of his ever-so-slightly-shady cousin, Henry Pinkert. The ink on Garfield's newly printed Certificate of Accreditation is barely dry when

he finds himself up against the mystery killer who will inspire the most difficult choices Garfield has ever had to make.

In ***Spawned Secrets***, award-winning author, Jay Verney's third novel, all of these ingredients, and more, come together for a surprising climax and aftermath, as old friends reunite in the strangest of circumstances, and new friends face tragedy and betrayal.

*The rainforest has always spawned secrets.*  
**Janette Turner Hospital**

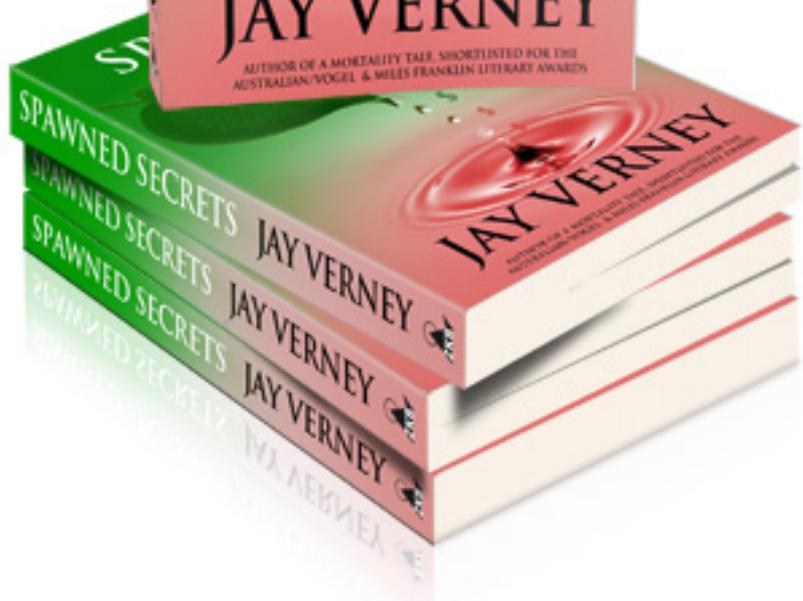
*In fiction, your fantasies of retribution are fulfilled, and fiction's saving grace is that harm comes to no-one, but satisfaction and catharsis are yours for the taking. **JV***

# SPAWNED SECRETS



JAY VERNEY

AUTHOR OF A MORTALITY TALE, SHORTLISTED FOR THE AUSTRALIAN/VOGEL & MILES FRANKLIN LITERARY AWARDS



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