



## Department Zero

**Paul Crilley**

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When Cthulu calls, *Department Zero* listens. Paul Crilley's zingy, hilarious new book takes a cheeky swipe at H. P. Lovecraft, Los Angeles, single fatherhood, and pretty much everything else. Peppared with pulpy slang and enough one-liners to choke a film-noir detective, *Department Zero* is a fun change of pace from an often-too-serious fantasy list.

Who doesn't love a self-conscious, foul-mouthed, down-on-his-luck antihero? Harry Priest has failed at absolutely everything he's tried, and he knows it. A full-time crime scene and corpse clean-up specialist, he still can't stomach the smell of rotting flesh. His marriage has failed. And when he's recruited to top-secret Department Zero, a supernatural crime-fighting team, he's not totally sure he can handle the swarms of demonic spiders.

Or the feats of derring-do. He's no Steve McQueen, but Harry has nothing to risk—except his custody arrangement. Whether Harry believes the parallel world he's stepped into or not, he's playing for keeps. Spear of Destiny? Cult of Azathoth? Whatever, Harry thinks. He just wants to get home to he can say goodnight to his daughter.

Crilley keeps things light and punchy, and to Harry's horror, the monsters keep on coming. Harry takes on every obstacle in the known world—and apparently every one in the unknown world too. Crilley throws in some excellent references to Douglas Adams and at least one conspiracy theory, just to keep the pages turning. He's a wonderful, natural writer, also the author of *The Osiris Curse* and *The Lazarus Game*.

Part video game, part graphic novel, *Department Zero* is juicy, hairy, squishy, satisfying fun.

CLAIRE RUDY FOSTER (March/April 2017)

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