



The book launch was a great success. We had almost 200 people to the event and had some fantastic readings.

Many people have asked me if they could read the review by Tom Percy. QC. Please click [read more](#) for the complete summary. Please also view some images of the night in our photo gallery [click here](#)

Tom Percy QC Mangadoo Summary – Launch Night

I must say that I approached this task with trepidation.

I have been asked to launch books before. But they are usually legal books, or those in the true crime genre.

I'd never met or heard of David Morgan.

But when Steve Mills first approached me to be part of this launch my first thought was "why not", but my second thought was; "what if I don't like it, I mean, genuinely don't like it?"

Steve of course had the answer: "Mate, just pretend you like it. You're a lawyer, you prostitute your integrity all the time, and get paid to do it!..."

Mercifully that problem didn't arise.

This book is a good book at a number of levels. Amongst its attributes it is highly readable, it's got highly original plot, and the backdrop of 1870's Western Australia is a fascinating and colourful one.

In short, it has that elusive quality required of a novel: it works.

But having said that, it probably also has to be said that Mangadoo will in all probability never go down in the annals of great literature. It will probably never be on the curriculum of English Literature 10 at UWA. It probably won't win the Nobel Prize for literature.

David Morgan isn't James Joyce. And Mangadoo isn't Ulysses. But, then again, it doesn't pretend to be.

It's sometimes said that the test of good writing is defined by the ability of the writer to suspend the reader's disbelief, and David certainly has mastered this art.

Imagine a story about an English Derby winner who is stolen, then wins the Melbourne Cup under a false name, then races in Perth, and then for good measure goes to Roebourne to sire station ponies.

All of a sudden you are 100 pages into Mangadoo, all of the above has happened, and you haven't batted an eyelid with disbelief or suspicion.

Now that's what you call writing.

What I personally liked most about the book was David's ability to capture the essence of that nearly extinct creature, the bush race meeting, and what it meant to a town like Roebourne and its people.

Sadly the feeling and communality of the annual bush race meeting is a dying thing these days. You need to go a long way to find it. Only at places like Marble Bar, Kojonup and Mingenew and Leonora does the ethos of the true bush Cup meeting lives on.

But it lives on in perpetuity in Mangadoo, at pp211-214

As I said, this isn't James Joyce, it isn't Solzhenitzen, it isn't Dickens.

Mangadoo is perhaps best described as Colleen McCullough meets Robert Louis Stevenson, meets Tim Winton.

It's a hybrid of DNA from The Thornbirds crossed with Treasure Island with an infusion of Cloudstreet.

It doesn't try to conform to any established literary genre; it defies categorization. And that's probably why it works.

I wish it every success.

TFP