



## Crooked Street

*Brian Freeman*

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**Crooked Street** Brian Freeman

**The hunt for a killer in San Francisco becomes a dizzying game of cat and mouse in a thrilling novel of psychological suspense.**

*“Lombard is your Moriarty, Frost. Taking him down will be the most dangerous thing you’ve ever done.”*

San Francisco homicide detective Frost Easton hadn’t seen his estranged friend Denny in years. Not until he dies in Frost’s arms uttering a final inexplicable word: *Lombard*. Denny appears to be the latest victim in a string of murders linked by a distinctive clue: the painting of a spiraled snake near the crime scenes. Is it the work of a serial killer? Or is Denny’s death more twisted and personal?

To find the answer, Frost reaches into a nest of vipers—San Francisco’s shady elite—where the whispered name of Lombard is just one secret. Now, drawn into a cat-and-mouse game with an enemy who knows his every move, Frost finds there is no one he can trust. And somewhere down the crooked streets of the city, Frost’s cunning adversary is coiled and ready to strike again.

## Crooked Street Details

Date : Published January 29th 2019 by Thomas & Mercer

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Author : Brian Freeman

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Genre : Thriller, Mystery Thriller, Fiction, Mystery

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# **From Reader Review Crooked Street for online ebook**

## **Ray Palen says**

Read my review this Friday on Book Reporter!

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## **Linda Strong says**

This is the third of this series, and although it reads well as a stand alone, I highly recommend that you start with the first book. Frost Easton is a terrific series character. Always thought of as a boy scout, it's meant that he is honest, and willing to go the extra mile to get at the truth.

THE CROOKED STREET starts with a death, a death that Frost hadn't see coming. But then again, nothing about this death rings true. Seems like everyone is shrugging it off .. maybe had something to do with using/dealing drugs .... the cops don't want to go any further ... the media have blatantly written it off. And what does "Lombard" mean? This was the last word spoken before the victim died.

There are going to be many more bodies falling .. all linked by a very descriptive clue. Always somewhere around the death there is a painting of a red snake.

Frost finds himself embroiled in a dangerous game of cat and mouse. Is this the work of a serial killer? Or is there something else going on ... something even worse?

I really like how this author gives the reader up close and personal glimpses of his private life, as well as the professional side. And being a cat lover... I love Shack, his cat of an indiscriminate pedigree. This is a real page-turner and it was hard to put down for any length of time. The ending was suspenseful, and I never saw it coming. No cliff hanger, but a great lead in to the next adventure for Frost Easton.

Brian Freeman is right at the top of my favorite authors. I love his Stride series and was delighted when he started the Easton series. I knew I could count on him putting together wonderful characters that were unforgettable and story lines that would not only be credible, but well written and exciting. He has never disappointed me.

Many thanks to the author / Thomas & Mercer / Netgalley for the advanced copy of this crime fiction. Opinions expressed here are unbiased and entirely my own.

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## **Jeanette says**

It is the first time that i have read a book by Brian Freeman and now eager to read more. An excellent story from start to finish and talk about the twists and turns. Each time i thought i had it figured, so there was another twist. I am not going to write what the story is about, as i do prefer one to read for themselves, but i do recommend.

My thanks to Netgalley and the Publishers for my copy. This is my honest review and all opinions are my own.

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### **Lou says**

The Crooked Street is the third novel in the Detective Frost Easton of San Francisco Police Department series; each instalment works perfectly as a standalone as the crime is self-contained to that particular book, but you will not be privy to information on the recurring characters full backgrounds. I loved the murder and mayhem, thrills and spills San Fran PD go through, and the complexity of the plot made this unputdownable for me.

The author challenges the reader to keep up with the developments, the endless deceit and a wholly untrustworthy mob of people; this is definitely one of the most twist-driven and surprise-filled thrillers I've had the pleasure to read of late. The twists in the tale are plentiful and pull you into one way of thinking before whipping the rug from underneath you leaving you scratching your head aghast. Mr Freeman impressed me by disguising the perpetrator until very late on, which created tension throughout, and he cleverly weaves a dark yarn that I enjoyed immensely.

It does, however, end on a cliffhanger which is rather annoying as whether I will remember the details of this book when the sequel comes out is debatable. Frost is a character I can see myself really appreciating as the series progresses. He knows his own mind and is morally driven. I looking forward to the next instalment and the evolution of the characters.

Many thanks to Thomas & Mercer for an ARC.

You can also find my reviews posted here on my blog.

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### **Elaine Tomasso says**

I would like to thank Netgalley and Thomas & Mercer for an advance copy of The Crooked Street, the third novel to feature San Francisco detective Frost Easton.

When Frost's old friend Danny Clarke dies on his doorstep saying the word Lombard he is put in charge of the investigation, an investigation which is gathering more interest from his bosses than it seems to warrant. Things get even more complicated when a PI points out a link through a spray painted snake to eleven previous murders.

I thoroughly enjoyed The Crooked Street which is an exciting thriller with a complicated plot. The reader will need their wits about them to keep up with the myriad characters, motivations and double crosses - my head was spinning with all the permutations as the novel progressed. Trust no one was the advice given to Frost early in the novel and my goodness is that true as Mr Freeman twists the reader every which way, never knowing who to trust, who is lying or where the truth lies. There is twist upon twist, all cleverly done and well enough disguised to fool this reader. It's masterful but I had to drop my rating from 5 to 4\* because it ends in a cliffhanger, ok it's a doozie and extremely unexpected but how am I supposed to remember the detail of this novel in a year's time when the sequel is published?

I like Frost Easton as a character. He's a good man with a strong moral compass which wavers slightly over the course of the novel due to the circumstances he finds himself in.

The Crooked Street is a good read which I have no hesitation in recommending.

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### **Maura says**

Disclaimer, I received a free copy of this book from NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.

3.5 stars rounded up because I fell for every trick Freeman played.

I've read the other two Frost Easton books and while I thoroughly enjoyed both of them, this one is by far the best! Freeman is an excellent mystery writer and I'm usually pretty good at figuring things out about halfway through the book, and maybe I was having an off week, but all the turns took me by surprise. It stands well on its own, but would definitely be helpful and prove for a more enjoyable reading experience if you read the previous books in the series.

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### **Naomi says**

I don't know how in the hell he does it, but, as usual, Brian Freeman kicks ass and takes names in his newest upcoming release. Full blog review coming in January, 2019. In the meantime, catch up with books one and two in the Frost Easton series and pre-order this book on Amazon! Don't forget his stand alone books and (one of my fave series) Jonathan Stride for some good reading. There is a reason why this man is on my top 3 list of recommended authors and I am a snobbish reader.

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### **Elisa says**

If all the books I read this year are half as good as Crooked Street, it will be a good 2019. I am a big fan of the first two Frost Easton novels (how can you not love a cop whose partner is a cat?) and not that the previous baddies were lame but Lombard is the worst. He (or she?) has unlimited power and is pretty much indestructible. Frost, who is incapable of compromising his integrity, has to work really hard just to solve one measly string of murders that may only be the tip of the iceberg. Now that most of the setup is done and we know who's who and why Shack the tuxedo cat is the cutest landlord ever, we really get to the action very quickly. An old and estranged friend of Frost's shows up on his doorstep and dies, using his last breath to give him a clue: "Lombard" Frost will have to find out who or what that is. The setup will not be unheard of to anyone who has seen The Usual Suspects. Like Keyser Söze, Lombard is a myth. The master criminal that no one has ever seen but who may actually be real. This is a great setup so I was OK with it not being completely original and the rest of the story is inventive and very suspenseful. The very last twist left me screaming at my Kindle. I guess even Shack can be wrong sometimes.

I chose to read this book and all opinions in this review are my own and completely unbiased. Thank you, NetGalley/Thomas & Mercer!

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## Joyce says

5 stars

It has been a long time since I have picked up a Brian Freeman book and I had forgotten what a remarkable writer he is. I was blown away all over again.

Frost Easton is a detective with the San Francisco police department. His one-time friend Denny Clark dies in his arms late one night in Frost's home. Before he dies he whispers the word "Lombard." What could this mean? There is a Lombard street in San Francisco, but Frost doesn't think Denny meant the road.

When a private eye named Dick Coyle breaks in to Frost's house he has an unfortunate meeting with Shack. Shack is the tuxedo cat of Frost's who also does duty as an enforcer. Coyle tells Frost that there is a serial killer in San Francisco and he murdered Denny. Furthermore, he says he can prove it.

I like the way this book talks about Frost and his life away from being a detective. I really appreciated Frost's relationship with Shack and his brother Duane. Shack is a great cat. I have a major soft spot for cats and this really enhanced the novel for me. (One of my cats is even a tuxedo, lol.) The various characters are great. They are brilliantly described and well-drawn. This book is very well written and plotted. It tells a story in a linear fashion; one event follows another in a logical progression. The chapter transitions are smoothly flawless. I really liked this book and strongly recommend it to anyone who enjoys police procedurals or just a darn good read.

I want to thank NetGalley and Thomas & Mercer for forwarding to me a copy of this absolutely great book for me to read, enjoy and review.

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## Darren says

I got this as a arc e book from Net Galley. I enjoyed reading it. It had a good story to it. I liked the variety of characters in it. It is my first book read by this author. I hope to read more books by this author.

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## Jean says

There are those who are crooked, and then there are those who are just plain evil. Inspector Frost Easton crosses paths with both kinds in *Crooked Street*. I just finished Brian Freeman's second Easton novel, *The Voice Inside*, and jumped right to the newest one. Like the previous thriller, this one was just as hard to put down. Wow!

Freeman, who is well known for his Duluth detective Jonathan Stride, has based this new series in San Francisco. He's moved his thrills from one chilly, hilly city to another, and Easton has what it takes to become another fan favorite. He's got a reputation as a Boy Scout, a cop who plays by the rules, even if it means playing a waiting game or having to make impossibly difficult choices. Thus, he has earned the respect of good guys and bad guys alike, which isn't to say that there aren't those who don't try to beat him.

There are many.

When an estranged old pal shows up at his Russian Hill home, literally at death's door, the last word out of his mouth is "Lombard." What the heck? Naturally, the first place Frost goes is to San Francisco's famous Lombard Street, which is known for its one block of eight hairpin turns that make it the "crookedest street in the world."

Eventually, though, he finds a private eye who tells him about a trail he's been following. It involves a serial killer called Lombard and graffiti-like red snake symbols left at the scenes where victims are found. Who, or what, is Lombard? A serial killer, or something more sinister? Why was Denny killed? What, if any, is the relationship between the victims? The plot takes Frost through a series of zigzags and bends with danger at every nook and cranny. Will there be more bodies before all is said and done? Does Lombard really exist, or is he/she just a myth? Who can Frost trust? He is told by his captain and a fellow investigator to trust no one. I had suspicions but nothing but my guts to rely on. This is one roller coaster ride!

Speaking of roller coasters, Frost's personal life is sort of like that too. Remember that in the last book he thought maybe he'd found his "Jane Doe," a woman who was, unfortunately, unavailable? Well, the plot thickens in this one. Boy, does it ever!

Also, Frost gets a lot more physical in this book. No, not like that. It seems like every time he turns around, someone in some fashion is pounding him on. Ouch! Oh, uh, Frost, you might want to consider locking your doors. It's not just his friends and family who show up unannounced while he's away. If not for his own safety, he needs to consider Shack, his beloved tuxedo cat. Just sayin'.

There is plenty of tension in this one. The characters are great. We get to see more of his buddy Herb, the old hippie artist. He's a smart guy, and I love his talks with Frost. Brother Duane and his lady Tabby return. The fellow cops are interesting characters. Are they trustworthy? Who knows? Are any of them trustworthy? Having read so many of Brian Freeman's books, I *knew* there was a big twist coming at the end, but I *NEVER* in my wildest imagination expected this one! *NO!*

I wish to express my appreciation to NetGalley, Thomas & Mercer, and Brian Freeman for this ARC copy in exchange for my unbiased review.

5 stars

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### **Janice Lombardo says**

I suppose that I was biased when I began reading this book. I have read all of Brian Freeman's works and have loved every one of them! And this is yet another winner.

Frost Easton (Book #3) DI Easton becomes entangled with a friend from 10 years ago. Except this friend literally dies on his doorstep. Denny (Frost's friend) was involved in something bigger than the Chief of Police wants to admit. Politically - it would have been much better to tie the case up and be done with it. However, Frost cannot do that - he knows that there is more to Denny's death than meets the eye. We go from Chinatown in San Francisco to the suburbs with Frost looking for clues. This includes the "crooked snake", someone called Lombard and even high price call girls. Frost will not stop until he solves the case.

A delightful read - I HIGHLY RECOMMEND !!!

Many Thanks to Thomas & Mercer and NetGalley for a superb reading experience, once again.

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### **Nicola Short says**

I received a free arc of this book from NetGallery in exchange for a true and honest review. Thank you to Brian Freeman and his publisher for the opportunity to read "A Crooked Street."

Brian Freeman is a excellent mystery writer, he draws you into his books right from the beginning pages. I have not read the previous two books in the series and, though it may have been helpful to have read them, I think it stands well on its own. I will be reading the other books in this series.

I stayed up most of the night reading this book and highly recommend it.

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### **Sherri Lewis says**

\*\*\* I received an advanced e-copy from Net Galley in exchange for my honest review

I am a huge fan of this author's books, and I think this may be my favorite one yet. It is so action-packed that I couldn't put it down. You know it is a good book when you reach the end of the book and go "no!!!!!!!!!!!!!!". Needless to say, I can't wait for the next book in the this series.

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### **Kylie D says**

I was so excited when this book became available, I maybe even hyperventilated a little! I have loved Brian Freeman's Frost Easton series since The Night Bird, and this latest offering didn't let me down. This book opens with Frost's estranged friend Denny arriving on his doorstep in the middle of the night, dying in Frost's arm, but not before getting out one word, "Lombard". Frost soon meets up with a PI named Coyle, who has a strange story, that a series of graffiti snakes have turned up near cases of unexplained deaths, and they soon find one near to where Denny was killed. Coyle thinks the snakes indicate that the mysterious Lombard is behind the deaths, but nobody in law enforcement will listen to his story. More bodies, and snakes, start to pile up and Frost finds that time is against him, and he can trust nobody. High-class escorts, drug dealers and a luxury yacht all start to muddy the waters, as Frost doesn't seem to know if he's chasing a myth, or a legend. Adding to his problems is the love triangle between himself, his brother and his brother's fiancée. The Crooked Street is a first rate thriller, worthy of the previous books in the series. I devoured this one in quick time. Would Frost get the baddie? Or the girl? And how is Shack, the coolest cat in literary history? I recommend this book to all lovers of mysteries and crime novels.

My thanks to NetGalley and the publisher for an ARC in exchange for an honest review.

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