

# BASTARD VERDICT

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293 pages - \$18.99 - Fiction, Suspense-Thriller

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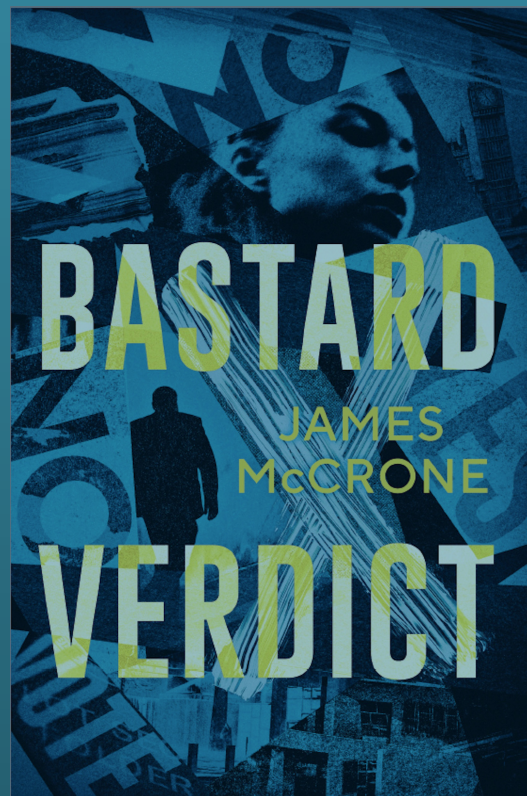
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YOU DON'T NEED TO WIN, JUST DON'T LOSE

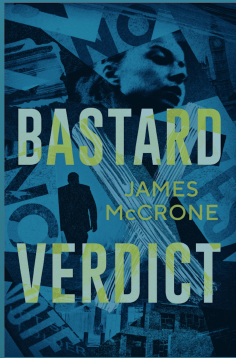
In politics, people cheat to win, or because they're afraid to lose. Which isn't always the same thing. A second referendum on Scottish Independence looms, an unlikely investigator uncovers meddling in the first, and desperate conspirators panic, with deadly results. *Bastard Verdict* weaves high stakes, low politics, and complex characters into a noir tale of power, loss and Faustian bargains.

When a Scottish government official enlists FBI Elections Specialist, Imogen Trager (on research leave at the University of Glasgow) in the fall of 2023 to look into the 2014 Scottish Independence referendum—ostensibly as a means of ensuring that a possible second referendum will be conducted fairly—he claims that he wants an outsider's unencumbered view. But the government official may not be what he seems, and the trail Imogen follows becomes twisted and deadly, leading to a corrupt cabal intent on holding on to power.

## Early reviews

"Once again James McCrone has created a political thriller as fresh as tomorrow's headlines." —Tom Straw, author of seven *New York Times* bestsellers as Richard Castle.

"McCrone's deft prose and sharp characters make *Bastard Verdict* a must-read political thriller." — Richie Narvaez, award-winning author of *Hipster Death Rattle*



James McCrone is the author of the Faithless Elector series, about a stolen presidency, which *Publisher Weekly* calls a "fast-moving topical thriller. Its surprising twists add up to a highly suspenseful read." *Kikus Review* calls them "Gripping and intelligently executed political dramas."

*Bastard Verdict* is McCrone's fourth novel. To get the details right for this thriller, he drew on his boyhood in Scotland, and scouted the locations for scenes in the book while attending Bloody Scotland in 2019 and again in '22.

His short stories have appeared in *Rock and a Hard Place*; *Retreats from Oblivion: The Journal of NoirCon*, and in the short-story anthology *Low Down Dirty Vote*, vols.2 and 3.

He's a member of Mystery Writers of America, Int'l Assoc. of Crime Writers, Philadelphia Dramatists' Center and he's the vice-president of the Delaware Valley Sisters in Crime chapter. A Pacific Northwest native (mostly), he lives in South Philadelphia with his wife and three children. James has an MFA from the University of Washington, in Seattle.