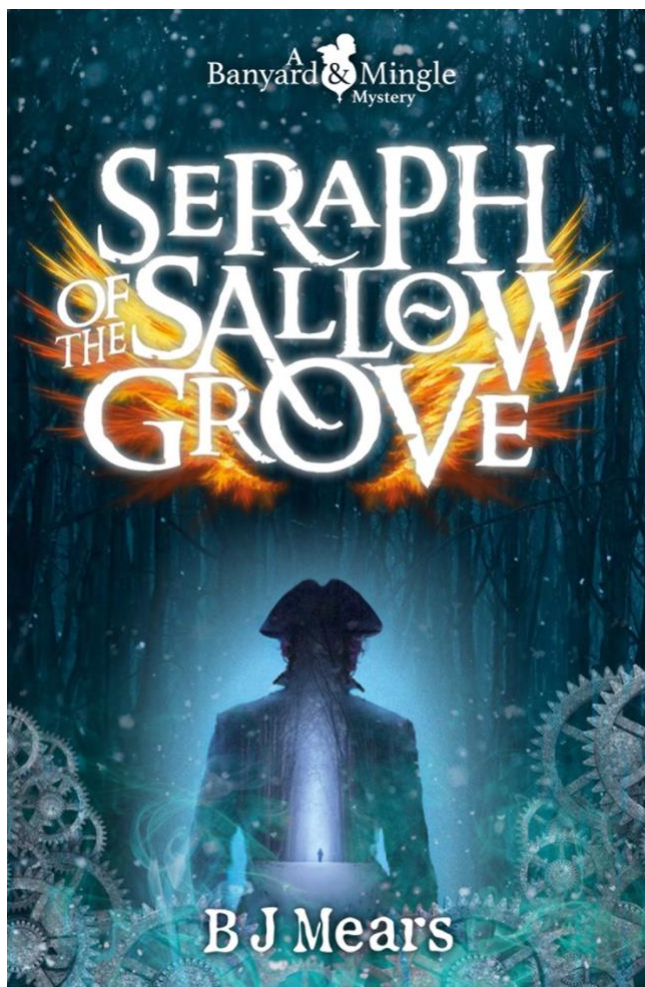


Seraph of the Sallow Grove – Press Release

Dystopian novel offers hope in the midst of social crisis



'Excellent mystery featuring clever detection and brilliant characters, in a well-imagined, post-apocalyptic society. Highly recommended.'

Brian Price, author of the DC Mel Cotton series

This winter, we will all be facing incredible challenges. With recession looming, growing NHS backlogs, an unprecedented energy crisis and widening inequalities following the pandemic, it can be hard to know where to find hope. In Ben Mears' new novel, we discover what difference courage can make in a dystopian world very like our own.

In a world that is recovering from environmental cataclysm and facing the prospect of conflict, private detectives Michael Banyard and Josiah Mingle battle unceasingly for justice in a society built upon the backs of the poor and exploited. On top of their sleuthing day job, they work to liberate slaves and set them up with new identities, doing all they can to resist an evil system. If Michael Banyard and his partner can find the courage to bring light and fairness to some small part of the world around them, it encourages us that we can too.

In this standalone novel, the fourth instalment of Ben's thrilling series, Banyard and Mingle are approached by the fearsome Lord Draker – and immediately put on their guard. Two high-profile figures have been murdered with chilling precision, their bodies unearthed in an eerie snowbound grove – but why would the chief of police come to them? As the body count rises, a terrible pattern emerges, confronting Banyard and Mingle with their greatest challenge yet. Facing deadly threats and political pressures, Banyard discerns a sinisterly sacred motive, and Mingle a risky opportunity to make their investigation pay. Will the true murderer be apprehended, and can they prevent the next killing?

'This novel represents a colossal amount of work,' comments Ben. 'It has been the most challenging book of the series so far – a reflection of the intricacy of the Seraph mystery, perhaps. Banyard and Mingle are characters full of good intentions, and while they certainly have their issues, they carry something that's close to my heart: a desire to help others less fortunate than themselves, and a zeal to see justice done. They are also seriously fun to write. I hope they have many more adventures to come!'

For teens and adults alike who are struggling with all the bad news and threats on the horizon, Banyard and Mingle – and *Seraph of the Sallow Grove* – may be just the tonic they need, providing light relief and the encouragement to keep hoping and persevering through the weeks and months ahead.

'A well-wrought whodunnit portrayed with captivating characters. First-rate!'

Jeff Parke, WiFi SciFi

Ben Mears

In addition to his role as an author, Ben is a published songwriter, illustrator and award-winning graphic designer. He is married and has three inspiring daughters. As a visiting author, he runs Creative Writing Workshops in secondary schools and academies.

Seraph of the Sallow Grove by Ben Mears (ISBN: 9781912726516) is published by Instant Apostle and is available on 23rd September 2022 from bookshops and online retailers.
Fiction, paperback, 288pp, £9.99.