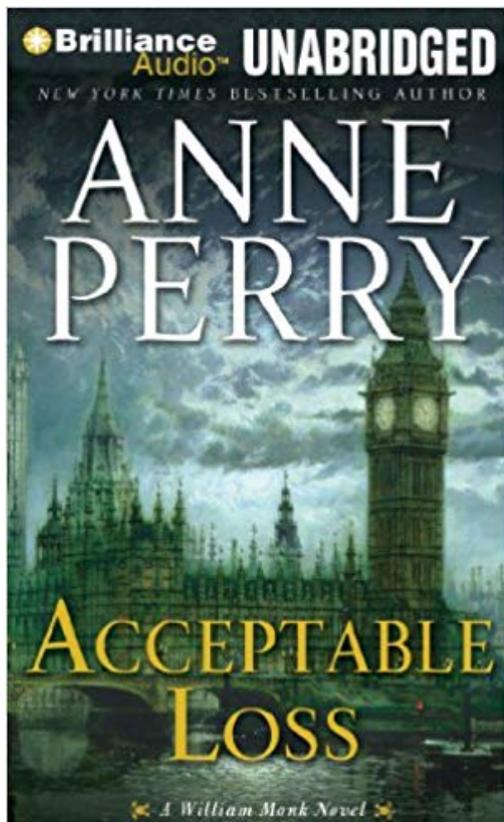


## Acceptable Loss (William Monk Series) by Ralph Lister, Anne Perry



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**ISBN:** 1423372530

**ISBN13:** 978-1423372530

**Author:** Ralph Lister, Anne Perry

**Book title:** Acceptable Loss (William Monk Series)

**Publisher:** Brilliance Audio; Unabridged edition  
(August 9, 2011)

**Language:** English

**Category:** British & Irish

**Size PDF version:** 1694 kb

**Size ePUB version:** 1700 kb

**Size FB2 version:** 1990 kb

**Other formats:** rtf txt docx lrf

When the body of a small-time crook named Mickey Parfitt washes up on the tide, no one grieves; far from it. But William Monk, commander of the River Police, is puzzled by the expensive silk cravat used to strangle Parfitt. How did this elegant scarf — whose original owner was obviously a man of substance — end up imbedded in the neck of a wharf rat who richly deserved his sordid end? Dockside informers lead Monk to what may be a partial answer — a floating palace of corruption on the Thames managed by Parfitt, where a captive band of half-starved boys is forced to perform vile acts for men willing to pay a high price for midnight pleasures. Although Monk and his fearless wife, Hester, would prefer to pin a medal on Parfitt's killer, duty leads them in another direction — to an unresolved crime from the past, to blackmail and more murder, and to a deadly confrontation with some of the empire's most respected men. To a superlative degree, *Acceptable Loss* provides colorful characters, a memorable portrait of waterfront life, and a story that achieves its most thrilling moments in a transfixed London courtroom, where Monk faces his old friend Oliver Rathbone in a trial of nearly unbearable tension — in sum, every delectable drop of the rich pleasure that readers expect from an Anne Perry novel.



## Reviews of the **Acceptable Loss (William Monk Series)** by **Ralph Lister, Anne Perry**

### **Jake**

Other than Agatha Christie, there isn't a better author in this genre than Anne Perry.

I've been reading her for years. Not one of her stories was a disappointment.

Again, except for Agatha Christie, Anne Perry is the ONLY other author I would consider 'Re-reading' one of their books.

An I NEVER read a book/story twice!!!

If you want to read a 'William Monk' story, start with one of the first ones about him.

Always better to start at or near the beginning of a series, other wise you'll really miss how the character develops, the how, where and why. Some things get explained in subsequent stories, but you'll miss so much.

Think of a time in your own life, condensed, with some of the drama or little things left out of that period, that went into that portion of your life.

It's those little things that actually round out the story, small things that count!

### **INwhite**

First Sentence: Hester was half-asleep when she heard the slight sound, as if someone were taking in a sharp breath and then letting out a soft, desperate gasp.

Inspector William Monk and his wife, Hester, are still trying to help young orphan Scuff overcome his horrific experience of being kidnapped for use on a ship owned by Jericho Phillips used to "entertain" wealthy, corrupt men. No one much cares that Mickey Parfitt has been murdered, until the means of his death is discovered to be an expensive custom silk cravat belonging to a wealthy young man. In the investigation, they track Parfitt back to another such ship where 14 young boys are found held captive. Before his suicide, Lord Justice Sullivan, also involved in the previous case, had claimed wealthy barrister Arthur Ballinger, was the power and money behind the boat. A further complication is that the Monks' friend, barrister Oliver Rathbone, is married to Ballinger's daughter.

To say Anne Perry is a superb writer is anything but hyperbole. There is no one who better captures the Victorian period. From the homes of the wealthy, to the lowest, meanest parts of London, she creates a fully-realized world and time. Her detail is exacting; answering any question a reader might have as to its veracity. She doesn't paint the pretty picture, but the rough-edged, realistic view of the time.

Perry clearly illustrates the misconceptions and bias formed by people based only on social and economic differences. The subject of pedophilia and pornography is timeless and terrible. She raises strong moral and ethical issues, but never in a manner that is preachy or strident. Perry clearly conveys the internal struggles which can arise and asks very important questions about loyalty and power; the greed for power even when used for good--but at which price.

The mystery itself is very strong; partly focused on the investigation and partly on the courtroom scenes. Learning about legal and court procedures of the time were fascinating. Nothing about her writing is dry; but rather strongly emotional yet never maudlin. We are left, at the end, with an open question but not one that is detrimental to the story.

Although it can stand alone, "Acceptable Loss" reads best as a continuation of the previous book "Execution Dock." Either way, I strongly recommend "Acceptable Loss."

ACCEPTABLE LOSS (Hist Mys-Insp. William Monk/Hester-London-Victorian) - VG+

Perry, Anne - 17th in series

Ballantine Books, 2011

### **Fordrelis**

I've read all the books in the William Monk series except the latest. I can't put these down! Anne Perry is a fascinating writer. There may be a plot here and there that seems similar to one other, but then she comes up with one so unique that I stand in awe of her creativity. This particular plot follows the one in Execution Dock. Of all the possible culprits, I guessed the guilty correctly, but I was never quite sure until the end. There are so many sides to the characters, one is never quite sure of their reactions (here, Rathbone's resolve is tested), which adds to the complexity of the weave of suspense and keeps the pages turning. Don't miss it!

### **Drelalak**

In this novel, Anne Perry completes the investigation that was started in Execution Dock. Anne Perry has become so good at defining the Victorian period down to the last boot nail that I felt, once again, that I was there. The harshness of the crime involved is tremendous and I found refuge, at points, by relaxing with Monk and Hester's relationship and their new inclusion of Scuff, the brave young boy from Execution Dock. I have to say I was bothered by the downward spiral of Margaret, Hester's former friend, and Oliver's wife, from brave, noble woman to narrow minded shrew. I often admired her in the previous work. However, aside from that, Anne Perry's treatment of this case is remarkable. Although not as exciting as Execution Dock, it clearly shines with a strength of its own.

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