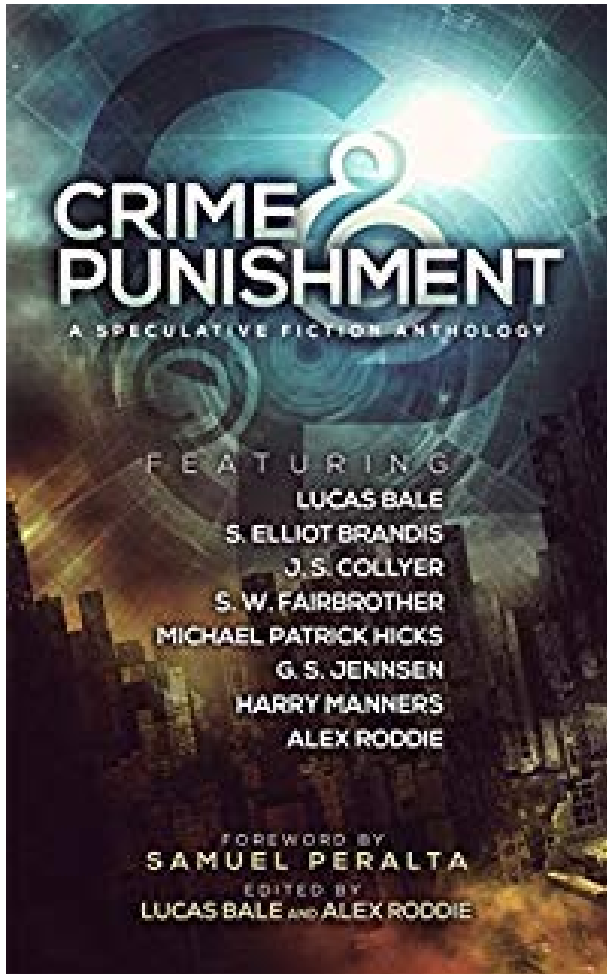


Crime and Punishment: A Speculative Fiction Anthology



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There will always be crime. There will always be those who covet what others possess, or who are driven to acts of violence through rage or cynical design. And there will always be those who seek justice for those crimes.

Yet justice is in the eye of the beholder, and rarely does it come easy.

A bounty hunter, whose own freedom depends on him finding those who must have theirs taken away, never asks why. Or what will happen to them. But when he is sent back to his home planet to hunt a child and her family, he must confront the horror of his past and question whether he can ever truly be free. A woman holds a gun to a man's head, getting ready to pull the trigger. But her story doesn't start there. It starts way back when she was a kid, in outback Australia. It starts when the government began to put bombs in people's heads. When they started toying with probability-based punishment.

Now, when she pulls that trigger, she doesn't know if he'll live or die. Or live and die. A young woman who has lost everything but her soul fights to reclaim her life from a violent, sadistic criminal. But when she's given a chance for freedom, she realises escape is not enough. First, a just punishment must be exacted for crimes committed. In the near future, where the internet has evolved into the Mind, and become so complex that content is served preprocessed and digested by personal assistant AIs, independent thought is a thing of the past, a crime even. When insurgents appear, persuading people to see the truth, a police captain begins to question where her allegiance truly lies. Eight stories that push the boundaries of what the future holds by some of the most exciting new speculative fiction authors writing today.