

Fun lovin' criminal author not amused by health scare

Edinburgh crime author Doug Johnstone has revealed he is recovering well after suffering a stroke.

The Portobello-based author has published 11 novels, the latest of which is *A Dark Matter*, part of the Skelfs series, a story based on three generations of women who take on the running of a family funeral business and private detective agency.

Johnstone, 49, who once designed radar and missile guidance systems, is also a musician who plays drums in the crime writers band Fun Lovin' Crime Writers. The spin-off band, which includes best-selling crime godmother Val McDermid, Chris Brookmyre, Mark Billingham, Luca Veste and Stuart Neville played the Queen's Hall in January and last year appeared at Glastonbury.

The father-of-two said: "Thought I should let you all know some unfortunate news – I had a stroke a week ago. Relatively minor but still a shock, as I don't have any big risk factors. Recovery already going super well, and I'll be taking it easy for a while, but hope to be fully fit soon enough."



Photo courtesy of Orenda Books © Chris Scott

He has received hundreds of get-well messages, including encouragement from Rebus author Ian Rankin who messaged: "Stay strong Doug, hope to catch up with you soon."

Best selling author Jenny Colgan added: "Oh Douglas! So glad to hear you're on the mend, that's dreadful" and Scotsman sports journalist and author Alan Pattullo, added: "Best wishes Doug, shocked to hear this. Glad the recovery is going well. Hope to see you on a football pitch somewhere soon."

Star of the famous Scottish film Gregory's Girl and actor turned crime author, John Gordon Sinclair, said: "Sorry to

hear your news Doug. Hope you make a full and speedy recovery amigo. All the best.”

Originally from Arbroath, before his crime writing career Johnstone obtained a degree in physics and was awarded a PhD in nuclear physics. Described as “a master of the page-turning, heart-gripping, plot-driven tale” Johnstone’s 2015 book *The Jump* was short-listed for the McIlvanney Prize for Best Scottish Crime Novel.

Responding to the get-well messages, he said: “Thank you so much for all your love and encouragement in reply to this news. It’s been a wee bit overwhelming, to be honest, but it is so warming and truly appreciated.”

'A Dark Matter showcases a writer at the peak of his powers, except that with every book, Doug Johnstone just gets better' Val McDermid

DOUG
JOHNSTONE



They know where the
secrets are buried...

A

DARK
MATTER

*'I was addicted from the first page; gripping, gritty
and funny as hell'* Erin Kelly