

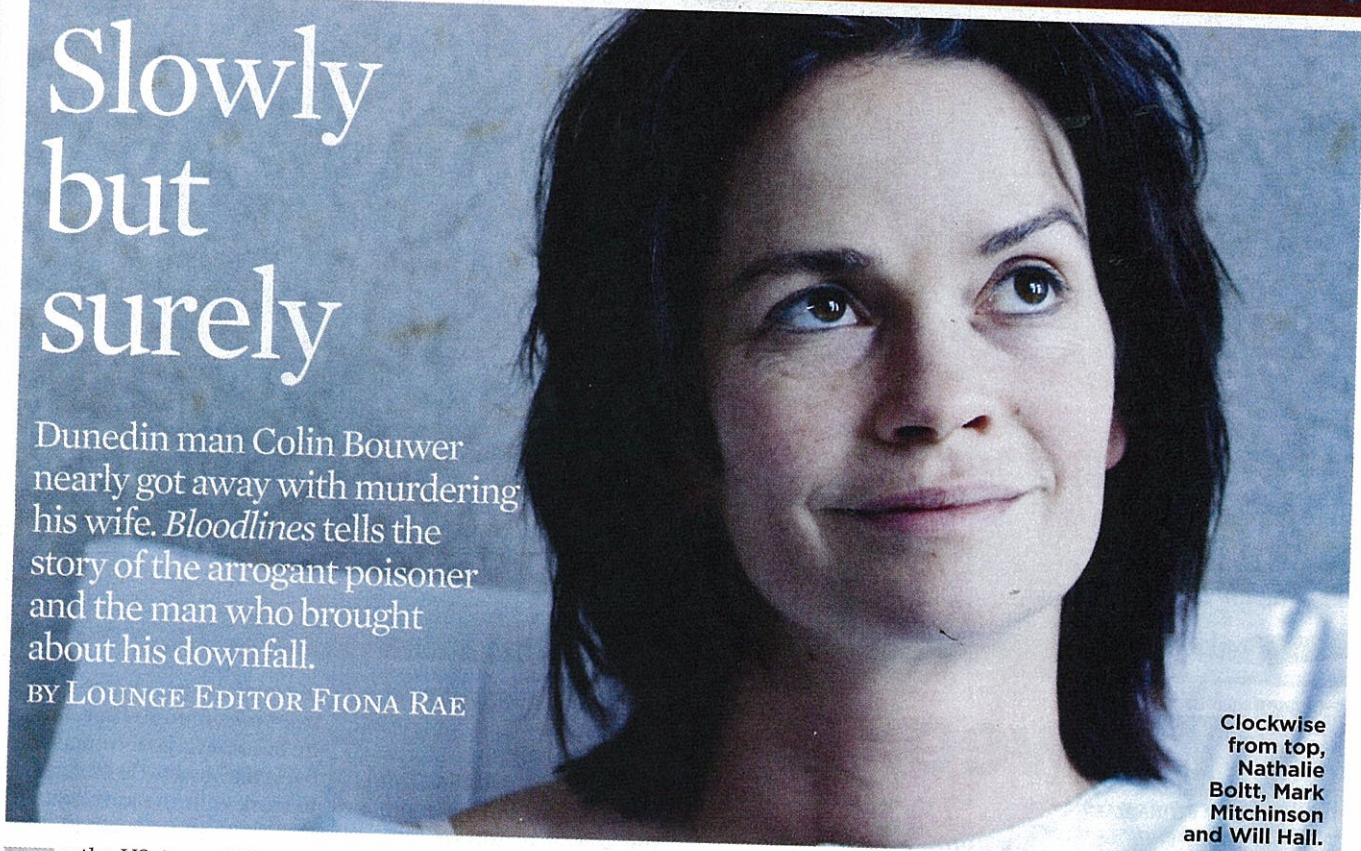
# The Lounge



## Slowly but surely

Dunedin man Colin Bouwer nearly got away with murdering his wife. *Bloodlines* tells the story of the arrogant poisoner and the man who brought about his downfall.

BY LOUNGE EDITOR FIONA RAE



Clockwise from top, Nathalie Bolt, Mark Mitchinson and Will Hall.

In the US, it would be a ripped-from-the-headlines episode of *Law & Order*; here, the 2001 trial of Colin Bouwer for the murder of his wife, Annette, was a sensation that gripped the nation and chilled Dunedin to the bone.

**Bloodlines** (TV1, Thursday, 8.30pm) dramatises Bouwer's slow poisoning of Annette (Nathalie Bolt) over a period of months with blood-sugar-lowering drugs. She is admitted to hospital several times, and has many tests, including a biopsy of her pancreas. Eventually, Bouwer brings on quietus with a fatal dose of insulin.

Bouwer, the head of psychiatry at the University of Otago, might have got away with it but for the suspicion of Annette's doctor, Andrew Bowers (Craig Hall). At the last minute, he ordered a post-mortem, which showed

evidence of drugs in her system, but no pancreatic tumour, as had been suspected. This was the spark that set Detective Brett Roberts (a mustachioed Will Hall) on the trail of false prescriptions, incriminating emails and a motive.

Director Peter Burger brings the same care and suspense to this story as he brought

to *Until Proven Innocent*, the dramatisation of the conviction and eventual release of David Dougherty.

Although we know how Bouwer's story turned out, his machinations and lies are gripping. In a brilliantly nuanced performance, Mark Mitchinson captures Bouwer's charm and arrogance – and his careful falsehoods. He said

he was a political prisoner in South Africa and had been tortured in jail, he lied about his qualifications and he claimed to have prostate cancer.

In 2001, Bouwer received a non-parole sentence of 13 years, and when his defence team appealed against his conviction, he got two more years. ■

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