



## The Chessmen

*Peter May*

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Fin Macleod, now head of security on a privately owned Lewis estate, is charged with investigating a spate of illegal game-hunting taking place on the island. This mission reunites him with Whistler Macaskill—a local poacher, Fin's teenage intimate, and possessor of a long-buried secret. But when this reunion takes a violent, sinister turn, Fin realizes that revealing the truth could destroy the future.

## **The Chessmen Details**

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Author : Peter May

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## From Reader Review The Chessmen for online ebook

### Phrynne says

The final book in this trilogy and it did its job of wrapping up all the loose ends very well.

As with the previous two books the best part was the whole atmosphere of the island, the bogs, the mist, the rain and the way the people seem to live in a slower, old fashioned way. I actually liked this book a little less than the first two as it bounced around a bit too much into a past which did not really interest me.

Nevertheless it was still very good, very readable and a great conclusion to an excellent series.

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### Richard Derus says

Rating: 3.5\* of five

The series is complete. My relief is genuine.

I'll find something to say in due course.

**\*\*DUE COURSE HAVING ELAPSED\*\***

Peter May cut his storytelling teeth in Scottish television, creating two prime time drama series and script-editing a third. He is very clearly Scottish, choosing an unfamiliar and unforgiving setting for this series: The Hebrides, no less than Ann Cleeves's more famous Shetlands TV and book series, is globally known for its distilled essence of Scottishness. No smart author who wasn't Scottish would dare to do this.

But the problem is that the Hebrides form an atmospheric backdrop for a personal saga of surpassing ordinariness. The gross-out food-gathering antics of the Hebrideans in *The Blackhouse* aren't integral to the murder, they're the handy means for it. *The Lewis Man* came off better than *The Blackhouse* because it was a universal plot far more compelling than the first one, but again the Hebrides could as easily have been the Balearics or the Cyclades.

Now, at the end of the trail, we're confronted with a murder that frankly makes no sense, a murder that makes all the sense in the world, a death that's explained in as bloodless (in the bad sense) a way as any in detective fiction, and a hit that my shoulders have been hunched in anticipation of since the middle of *The Lewis Man*.

I'm not one for book reports, so go read the synopsis and some more spoilery reviews to glean some insights into which might be what. I'm here to tell you that this wasn't a satisfying three-book read. But, the Gotcha! Gang is now crouched above their keyboards waiting to snort in derision, you read them! Yep. I did. I got the series from Quercus and, even though it takes me forever to get around to reviews these days, I still honor my commitments.

The end result of my reading isn't the sense of time wasted so much as time misused. The author has storytelling chops. He deploys the expected tropes in the usual order and does so against the background of a culturally unique place without, as Cleeves does, allowing us a deeper-than-guidebook sense of the ways and means of these isolated folks. I would be howling to the stars about these books if I'd felt the crimes had

originated organically in Hebridean soil. The author's ability to make a story one wants to follow isn't in question. The main character is a homecoming middle-aged ball of grief and rage, so that's familiar. He isn't anyone we haven't met before, but he's well developed enough for that not to be a major concern.

In the end, I'm not sure what to tell you. If Scotland is a fascination of yours and you're a murder-mystery addict, ie if you're me, yeah sure read away. Don't expect a peak experience. If you're a tartan noir person, and why the hell wouldn't you be?, these will occupy summer beach hours adequately. Even refreshingly, given that there isn't a single warm day in any of the texts.

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## **Liz says**

*The Chessmen* has much of what made the first two books of this series worth reading. The wildly beautiful setting and the atmospheric overtones that accompany each scene keep it from being less than three stars, but I'm sad to report that it fell short in most other ways. It surprises me how much I dislike this book in comparison to its predecessors.

The best part of this story is also the most confounding: Fin's friendship with Whistler. Whistler is a larger-than-life character, and the emotional ties between him and Fin are palpable in the flashbacks to their teenage years on the island when they were a huge part of each other's lives. I enjoyed those scenes quite a bit. So why is this confounding? Because there was nary a mention of Whistler in either of the first two books. Nary a mention, even, of any other members of the band who were featured so prominently here. It's like they were conjured up and fit retroactively into Fin's youth.

A recurring feature of May's writing that doesn't sit well with me is that he obviously has no use for strong women in his storylines, and it's taken to a whole new level in *The Chessmen*. The entirety of Marsaili's brief appearances are spent as "pale and sad," or exhibiting jealousy toward another woman from Fin's past. In fact, the only woman with a backbone in this story, Mairead, is described ad nauseam as utterly alluring and seductive, and knowingly causes strife between her male bandmates. She is made to be desirable but not likeable. What I'm trying to say is that these women are cliched to a painful degree. I know this might not bother other readers, many won't even notice it, but I personally have no more time for it.

It's been an interesting trilogy but there will be no more May for me.

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## **Andrew Smith says**

So, after reading (well, listening to actually) this trio of books back-to-back I've reached the end. After *The Blackhouse* and *Lewis Man* introduced us to Fin MacLeod, this story completes a perfectly formed trilogy. The descriptions of the wild and remote Hebridean islands is ever present as is the all pervading influence of the church, but it's the individual characters that rightly take centre stage here. We are introduced to quite a cast from Fin's early years and learn a good deal more about how his life developed between leaving school and the beginning of his police career. Lifelong male friendships were forged and girlfriends came and went.

As before, there's a crime to be solved - this time a body is discovered in a 'plane after a loch is strangely emptied by a phenomenon known as a 'bog burst' – but this is never allowed to dominate proceedings. Just as interesting are the anecdotes from Fin's early years and his catch-up with old friends and acquaintances. And there's history here too. I was fascinated by the tale of the tragic fate of nearly 200 islanders who perished when the *Lolaire* hit rocks close to Stornaway Harbour. As the boat went down they were drowned

or dashed against rocks. It was the early hours of New Year's Day, 1919 and the men were soldiers returning home from fighting in the war. I found the account of this real event to be heartbreaking.

These books are brooding and sad in places but uplifting too. The bond between people on these islands feels different to anything I've experienced in my lifetime: somehow the linkage is stronger, the alliances more deeply held. But this can cause problems of its own in this place where everyone knows everyone and secrets are hard to keep.

It's been a joy to be in the company of these people for the past few weeks and I will miss them, and the islands, desperately. I shall, though, be seeking out more work from the author – he knows how to spin a yarn, this man.

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### **Charlotte says**

I feel quite saddened to have to score it only three stars after having really enjoyed the first 2 books of the trilogy. Beautiful scenery, a very likable lead and an imaginative back story running from the previous books. However, for me there were a number of flaws:

\*Whistler - for being such a good friend, he needed to have been mentioned in the earlier books

\*Solas - if helping the band through Fins' school & uni years was so much a part of his life, it should also should have been mentioned earlier

\*Roddy & the band - I don't feel there's been enough research into the Celtic music scene. I didn't find their level of success in the charts etc to mirror the true nature of how celtic music sits within the wider music scene of scotland and the uk. What about the various music festivals across scotland - eg Celtic Connections, a key part of the celtic music calendar, especially a band based in Glasgow. I just didn't find this element of the book to be believable let alone what we find out later about the plane & Roddy.

\*Reverend Murray - the conclusion of the story felt rushed, almost an after thought. Having had so much time with these characters in the second book, I think they deserved more attention in the conclusion.

I still enjoyed the book but it is the weakest of the trilogy.

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### **Ellen says**

The Chessmen (Lewis Trilogy #3) by Peter May.

My hope in writing my review is that the words, although inadequate, may reveal the depth and scope revealed so magnificently in this story by the author.

Fin MacLeod has chosen after 15 years to leave the police force. Now as ex-Detective Inspector he's returning to the Outer Hebrides, the place of his birth. The land, his past and all the faces from his past. All the unfinished business that's needs to be smoothed over...if that's possible after all the time that has past. Fin and his wife, Mona, of 16 years are done. The only link they had to their loveless marriage was their precious boy. Fin's & Mona's son was killed by a hit and run driver who remains free to this day. The loss of his son's death brings bitterness & pain at the mere mention of his name.

Fin is about to embark on a new job. A job that will bring him face to face with another person from his past. The face of Whistler. His old and dear friend with whom he's had the closest of friendships, but now with a

job that may cause him to rouse the deep seeded anger in Whistler that he's been known for.

The other face from Fin's past is that of Marsaili. His long lost love due to his own selfishness & stupidity. Can they ever begin where they left off or is this just wishful thinking on fin's part?

To say that this brilliantly written story had twists & turns are words that are not worthy enough for this author or book.

HIGHLY RECOMMENDED FOR THE SERIOUS MINDED READERS.

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## Sue says

This final book of the Lewis Trilogy accomplishes a lot in bringing some closure to many, though not all, story threads begun in *The Blackhouse*. As was true with the first two books, while there are mysteries both old and new that require investigation, the essence of *The Lewis Men* is once again the location and the people of the Hebrides, most especially the Isle of Lewis, a physically lonely and lonesome spot at the western-most edge of Europe. Buffeted by the wind and water off the Atlantic, their ongoing effects result in a harsh life.

Once again, Fin MacLeod is at the center of the story, the mystery, the hunt, the ultimate investigation. This time, a natural event discloses a downed plane in what had been a deep lake. Now uncovered, it reveals a body and opens a case almost 20 years cold. As Fin lived on the island at the time and knew its residents, we are introduced to added cast members from his life.

But what continues to capture me as much as the details of the past history are the continuing wonderful descriptions of the environment.

*He felt an enormous sense of relief as he drove across the wide open spaces of the Barvas moor, like a weight lifted from his shoulders...The sky ahead reflected his mood, gray breaking to blue, flashes of sunlight falling in dazzling patches on distant tracts of peat bog scarred by generations of cutting. Colour appeared all across the moor with the change of light, gold and purple, the wind rising now to whip through the long grasses and usher in cooler, brighter weather. (p 220)*

and here:

*The sky over the sands of Traigh Uige was painted on. Great fat brushstrokes of pale grey and cream. The wind was brisk and cool and blew through the last of the coastal tormentil, shrivelling its yellow petals like the first breath of winter. (p 225)*

There are many such descriptions of varying length which allow the reader to see the landscape and feel its impact. It is an equal character in these novels.

I continue to strongly recommend these novels but do advise they should be read in order.

Addendum: I'm adding a link to another review by a fellow GR member, Harry. He also discusses the entire trilogy.

<https://www.goodreads.com/review/show...>

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## **Jaline says**

The Lewis Chessmen are real artifacts, discovered near Uig, Lewis in 1831. There is some speculation as to their origin, but they appear to have been crafted in the 12th century, and most historians believe they were originally created in Norway.

In this book, the last of the Lewis Trilogy, replicas of the chessmen play a pivotal role in solving a murder. There is another murder that is discovered – one that occurred 16 years ago. Again, Peter May's masterful weaving of the stories of his characters' pasts with events that are currently underway is completely spellbinding.

The period in Fin Macleod's life that is highlighted through this last book is just prior to his university years through to shortly after those years. It is a time I could relate to well as he became the road manager during those years for a popular band named Solas and my own music career would have been occurring during the same ages. At times, the shenanigans and accidents and other weirdness of the lifestyle became very uncomfortable for me to read about. Someone peeked into my own past and wrote about it. Through it all, I could relate most closely to Fin because even though he was part of it, he wasn't "in it" to the same degree the others were. That is to say, his mission was to remain as authentic as possible in a wild land of illusion, smoke, and mirrors.

So, to say this book struck close to my heart would be an understatement. The years described are a somewhat angst-ridden and uncertain time in young people's lives anyway. Fresh out of high school and into a new school that is supposed to prepare one for the rest of their lives when they don't really have a clue what they want to commit to for the rest of their lives. Not to mention the relationships and attempts to get those commitments sorted out and on track – all while making a multitude of mistakes and errors that either get carried for life as baggage, or learned from and added to the wisdom pile. There is much of this sorting out going on in the book. It makes it both endearing to read, and painful at times.

There were tie-ins to the first two books of the Trilogy in this third outing as well, and I am so glad that I read them one after the other as some of the threads are subtle, and ones that appeared to have been resolved or were non-resolvable in previous books. If asked, I could not honestly say which book of the three is my favorite. They are all of a piece – completely congruent with each other and inter-dependent on each other.

I loved this series and it is going to take some doing to find another that can impress me as much as this saga. I'm already feeling lonely for these people and this Island.

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## **Carolyn says**

This is the third book in what is an excellent trilogy. Centred around Fin Macleod, the novels have taken him from an Edinburgh DI, grieving the loss of his young son and the breakdown of his marriage back to his childhood home on Lewis in the Outer Hebrides to reconnect with his old friends and lost loves. Now

resigned from the police and employed to manage security on a large estate, he is living with his childhood sweetheart and coming to terms with being a father to a son he didn't know he had, but still feeling that something inside him is missing.

The novel opens with the discovery of a body, another cold case for Fin to solve but one that will drag up memories and people from his past to collide with the present. It's a tale of lies, jealousy and deception that has repercussions for Fin and his group of friends from his high school days.

What I love most about these books is the strong sense of place. I have never visited the Hebrides but with Peter May's fine writing I can visualise the eerie and windswept landscape of craggy mountains, grasses and boggy peat, the inland lochs and the cliffs along an often angry sea. I can also feel the insular, almost stifling feeling of living on an isolated island, one where little has changed over time and everyone is linked in some way.

I also enjoyed learning the story of the Lewis Chessman, 78 beautifully carved ivory chess pieces made in the 12th century in either Norway or Iceland and found on a Lewis beach in 1831. for further information see wikipedia: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lewis\\_c...](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lewis_c...)

Below is a photo of one of the chess pieces in the British Museum, a berserker (infantryman) seen biting his shield prior to going into battle (isn't he gorgeous!):

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## Tracy Harper says

I hate to say this but the concluding book in the trilogy left me somewhat disappointed. if you had removed the epilogue, and this wasn't the concluding chapter in the trilogy, I might have felt differently. I.e. if this was a series of books like the David Hewson (Nic Costa) series), I wouldn't have felt that the entire story was compromised. My main issues would be:

I do not understand why the new character of Whistler was introduced. He had never been mentioned prior to this and given the relationship that was described it seemed inconceivable that a) he wouldn't have been mentioned as part of Fin's childhood in the first book and b) that Fin wouldn't have visited him before this point I.e upon his return to Lewis.

The character of Marsaili wasn't even a secondary character in the plot. Given that this was the concluding book of the trilogy I had anticipated that the characters we had come to know would be part of the plot structure. Fins relationship with Marsaili and his son were key to the previous books and both individuals were conspicuous by their absence. A lot of complex issues were introduced in the first two books which were not even touched upon. I understand the need for each book to be stand alone but for the readers who had followed this story from the beginning, I couldn't help but feel a little short changed.

The death of Fins son was a theme throughout the first two books and I had anticipated that this would form a large part of the concluding book. Therefore the epilogue felt and read very much like an after thought.

Hated the conclusion of the Donald Murray story. Seemed incredibly rushed and not at all well considered.

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## Harry says

### Book Review

Third in The Lewis Trilogy, *The Chessmen* brings us to the conclusion of the trilogy. This time, the crime bears some resemblance to the *The Lewis Man*, in that a cold case appears to have been unearthed as a small airplane bearing the body of a murdered musician is uncovered from a Lewis Island loch (lake) some seventeen years later.

What struck me in this reading as well as the previous novels is May's dedication to the art of writing a novel. The man spent five years on the island in order to write his trilogy, an outsider in a world where inhabitants would be suspicious of anyone inquiring into their lives (see links below pointing to some videos of that endeavor). This dedication comes across quite clearly in the beautiful passages that describe the Hebrides. There's an art to writing descriptive passages, to write them so that readers not familiar with the geography can quite clearly envision something with which they are not familiar and infuse such passages with delicate descriptions mirroring plot events to come. It comes across in the deep characterization and psychological motivations that spark the events in the novels so that the reader is mesmerized and being prepared (like food in a slow cooker) for the climactic ending. Masterful story-telling, in my opinion.

I've read some reviews where bringing in unknown characters, former friends of Fin's, disconcerted some readers as they'd have preferred the characters mentioned in the first two in the trilogy. This concept of character focus, according to the author, was a deliberate move as he wanted to focus the second and third in the trilogy on other persons from Fin's life, to move the focus away from Fin's story as it were while maintaining his narrative voice. To accomplish this, I've noted Peter May's use of cold cases to unearth these formerly unknown childhood strings into Fin's life as each cold case places the focus on a different set of characters from Fin's life. Personally, this did not bother me at all. On the contrary, I thought it an excellent authorial device. Lewis Island and subsequent Hebrides islands, though a bubble set apart from the rest of the world, nevertheless are inhabited by a substantial number of people. Couple that with Fin's knowledge of a lot of it, to have introduced characters in previous books that were not directly tied to the crime would have been to needlessly introduce insignificant details that would have detracted, rather than add to the novels in question. Whistler for example, a significant character in this novel, had no close ties to Artrair the main adversary in *The Blackhouse*, nor had he close ties to the characters in the second, given his solitary life. Primary characters throughout the three novels remain, of course, part of this novel.

I'm happy with this being a trilogy. All good things must come to an end (there are some series authors that might learn from this). I will be interested to see how I'll receive some of May's other books as I intend to read them. With some trepidation, I might add. Too often it is the case that authors known for an excellent series fall flat when attempting something else. We'll see.

Here are some links to videos you might be interested in after reading this trilogy along with some samples of Gaelic music. I do not recommend viewing these before a reading, as inevitably you will lose some of the magic in May's descriptive prose with preconceived notions because of having viewed the videos first. I've also included the link to a video from which May took his characterization of the formidable "Whistler".

The award winning video that inspired the Whistler character.

*The Blackhouse* - the story behind the publication

Peter's research video from the Isle of Lewis

Peter's research video for the *The Lewis Man*

Book trailer for *The Lewis Man*

Peter's research video for *The Chessmen*

Peter May interview on *The Blackhouse*

### Series review

*The Lewis Man Trilogy* is a triumvirate of crime novels coalescing the life of Fin Macleod, an Edinburgh Scottish policeman, who upon his return to the island of his birth some eighteen years later discovers he has in many ways never left Lewis Island. If you are so inclined to pick up this crime series be prepared for an extraordinary journey into Gaelic culture: its remoteness from mainland life, its Gaelic music, customs, lifestyles, religion, and its fascinating look into the Hebrides islands' psychology and people.

Haunting in its retrospective, the trilogy moves its readers into the harsh conditions that encompass Fin's youth growing up on Lewis Island and onward into his life as a policeman who answers the call of the Hebrides where his Gaelic roots make him the obvious guy for the job to uncover the truth behind a heinous murder that has taken place on Lewis Island. *The Blackhouse* marks the return of Fin MacLeod to his birthplace, a move marked with significant trepidation on Fin's part. He never intended such a return, did not wish it, were it not for suspicious similarities to a murder he was investigating in Edinburgh. What follows is an intricate exposition across three books where the personal reasons of why Fin MacLeod left the island and refused to return to it are studied and laid bare for Peter May's readers.

The trilogy encompasses three crimes, each the focus of its respective novel. Briefly, the first involves the discovery of a disemboweled man hanging from the rafters of a boat house on Lewis Island. The second focuses on the discovery of a young man found pickled and preserved in the bogs some fifty years later, again on Lewis Island. The third takes place when a loch (lake) on Lewis Island suddenly drains itself of all water only to reveal a long submerged airplane containing the body of a famous Gaelic musician who had mysteriously disappeared some seventeen years earlier.

Critical to an understanding of the trilogy is that the Hebrides is presented as a sort of bubble in which nothing changes. It is to this bubble that Fin, who was determined to escape the harsh island life to go to university in Glasgow, returns eighteen years later in the first of the triumvirate novels. Marked with tragedy, Fin's life orbits forward by this very return to his roots. The first centers itself around Fin MacLeod, the second and third novels though told from Fin's perspective center themselves on the characters from Fin's childhood, characters who continue to live unchanged within the bubble. Fin, no longer a policeman but with the heart of an inspector, slowly unravels the mysteries in full concert with his boyhood friends, lovers and foes. The powerful psychology of its characters, the delicate tapestry and ethnographic study of the Hebrides, the beautiful and descriptive passages that open the imagination of its readers, and the incredible story that is unveiled throughout the three novels make this trilogy one of the best I've read.

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### Marita says

In the final novel of *The Lewis Trilogy: The Blackhouse, The Lewis Man, The Chessmen*, Fin Macleod is once again employed, this time as head of security on a private estate. He is given the task of curbing the poaching of animals and of salmon, but one of the poachers is his old childhood friend Whistler. Fin will be faced with making important choices and decisions.

As with the previous novels in this trilogy, the action takes place on the Isle of Lewis in the Hebrides and the location is an integral part of the story, almost a character itself. Fin grew up on the island, but had left it to study and work in Edinburgh. Now, **"He had come back to the womb, the island of his birth, but he wasn't sure why. In search of who he had once been, perhaps."** And so he takes the job on the estate.

When Fin meets Whistler again and steps into the latter's house he found that: **“Stepping into it was like falling down the rabbit hole.”**\* Again Fin's present and past collide.

Whistler is but a minor poacher, taking game only for the pot, i.e. his own meals, but the owner of the estate, Jamie Wooldridge, is determined to not only stop him but to turn him out of his home. This leaves Fin with a huge dilemma. But this is not his only problem. A murder has been uncovered and there is a link to other childhood friends. Fin is absolutely determined to get to the bottom of the story and once again calls on his long-suffering detective friend, George Gunn, for help.

Once more history and culture of the Hebrides are interwoven into the tale, and in the process not only readers like myself learn much about the islands, but Fin learns about himself. During the course of the trilogy Fin discovers a lot about his past and he learns much about the people he grew up with. The story is peppered with flashbacks to Fin's past.

I leave the prospective reader to discover the story's connection with the Lewis Chessmen, but here is a picture (Wikipedia) of them to whet your appetite to read this novel. It is recommended that the trilogy be read in sequence.

\*In each novel of this trilogy there are allusions to Alice in Wonderland and Alice through the Looking Glass.

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## **Brenda says**

With ex-Detective Inspector Fin Macleod once again living permanently on the Isle of Lewis, it wasn't long before he re-connected with his old childhood friend, Whistler Macaskill. The carefree days of their youth were over shadowed by the poachers in the area; Fin's new job was to investigate the illegal activity and catch them. But the night the two were high up on the mountains in a terrible storm, was the night of what was known as a “Bog Burst” when the loch they were overlooking drained down into the valley – the small light plane which was lying at the bottom of the loch looked terribly familiar...

Roddy Mackenzie, musician and friend to both Fin and Whistler, had gone missing seventeen years prior. It seemed he'd finally been found but Fin, although in shock, registered something more unsettling on Whistler's face. Fin was determined to discover what Whistler was keeping to himself, also how and why Roddy died. Secrets, lies, anger and betrayal – was it possible for Fin to discover the truth? And what would be the outcome if he did?

*The Chessmen* is the third and final in the Lewis Trilogy and I'm sad it's over. Another gripping and intense crime thriller set in the vast and remote Isle of Lewis; the story of the Lewis Chessmen intrigued me. Seventy eight chessmen, which (view spoiler) – hence the title. I thoroughly enjoy this author's work each and every time I read him, and highly recommend *The Chessmen* (after *The Blackhouse #1*, and *The Lewis Man #2*)

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## **Magdalena aka A Bookaholic Swede says**

*Fin Macleod is working as a head security on an estate on Lewis. He is in charge of investigating illegal game-hunting and this brings him at a collision course with an old friend of his Whistler Macaskill a local poacher. The something unexpected happens, the dead body of musician and an old friend to both Fin and*

*Whistler is discovered in an airplane in a lake.*

The first two books in this series are truly great and I've been looking forward to reading the last book in the trilogy and it was great to once again return to the isle of Lewis and Fin Macleod. But I didn't find the case in this book as interesting as the last two books, the finding of dead musician and the secrets that this reveal were just not intriguing enough I think. Don't take me wrong the book was good, just the case wasn't surprising enough. But the ending did have a great big surprise that I didn't expect, but that was more to do with something relevant to the previous book.

All and all not as superb as the previous two books, still enjoyable to read and I quite liked Whistler. I do wish that Peter May will write more books about Fin Macleod even though this book is the last in the trilogy.

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## **Michael says**

This completes the trilogy of murder mysteries set on Lewis Island in the Outer Hebrides of Scotland. Fin left this rural backwater 18 years before when he went to college on the mainland and subsequently became a police detective in Edinburgh. But the death of a child and the break-up of his marriage has him looking for self-repair from his roots in this remote Gaelic speaking community. In the prior book, we learned he has a special connection in the form of a son he didn't know about being raised by the high-school girlfriend he left behind after an infidelity he regrets. This book starts with him working security for an estate manager and sharing the discovery of a body in an old plane crash when a bog suddenly drains. The body is believed to be that of an old classmate who had begun to achieve fame and success as the leader of a Gaelic folk pop group, for which Fin had served as the roadie. At the scene of the discovery is a reclusive poacher nicknamed Whistler who was a former member of the band who dropped out supposedly over jealousy over love for the group's sexy vocalist. This book satisfied my love of books that work as biographies of place and special rural communities. It also taps into my fondness for crime procedurals in which the personal life, character flaws, and moral quandaries to the hero are bound up with the tale.

For a great overview of the series, see this review by fan Harry Roolaart: [Link](#).

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