



When the Music's Over

Peter Robinson

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When the body of a young girl is found in a remote countryside lane, evidence suggests she was drugged, abused and thrown from a moving van – before being beaten to death.

While DI Annie Cabbot investigates the circumstances in which a 14-year-old could possibly fall victim to such a crime, newly promoted Detective Superintendent Alan Banks must do the same – but the crime Banks is investigating is the coldest of cases. Fifty years ago Linda Palmer was attacked by celebrity entertainer Danny Caxton, yet no investigation ever took place. Now Caxton stands accused at the centre of a historical abuse investigation and it's Banks's first task as superintendent to find out the truth.

As more women step forward with accounts of Caxton's manipulation, Banks must piece together decades-old evidence. With his investigation uncovering things from the past that would rather stay hidden, he will be led down a path even darker than the one he set out to investigate...

When the Music's Over Details

Date : Published July 14th 2016 by Hodder & Stoughton

ISBN :

Author : Peter Robinson

Format : Kindle Edition 497 pages

Genre : Mystery, Crime, Fiction, European Literature, British Literature

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From Reader Review When the Music's Over for online ebook

Linda says

Peter Robinson is another author that you cannot go wrong with. It has been a while since I have read an Alan Banks novel and I must say he has changed a lot to how I remember him. More polished, trimmed down and not a cigarette in sight.

Banks is now a Detective Superintendent and his first case is (in keeping with current news items) the historic alleged rape of a 14 year old girl by a well known celebrity. Running parallel with this case is the discovery of a young girls naked body on the side of a deserted road. This case is being handled by DI Annie Cabbot. As we follow the lines of enquiry through the book, it soon becomes apparent that something truly awful is happening to the young girls in the town.

Luanne Ollivier says

One of my absolute, all time favourite series, that never, ever disappoints, is Peter Robinson's Inspector Banks novels. The 23rd book in the series, When The Music's Over, releases early next month.

Robinson opens When the Music's Over with a gut wrenching prologue. The reader knows that there is someone and something very, very dark out there.....

Banks has just been promoted to Detective Superintendent. And along with his promotion, comes a high profile case. A beloved public performer, now in his eighties, may not be the man the British public has believed him to be. More than one woman has come forward with accounts of 'historical sexual abuse'. It's up to Alan and his team to see if they can prove a case that's over fifty years old.

I wondered how Banks would go about investigating the historical case. After so many years, what clues would be left to follow? As Banks says...."I mean...nearly fifty years ago...It's about as cold as case as you can get."

Running parallel and just as challenging is Detective Inspector Annie Cabot's case. The body of a young girl has been found by the side of the road, horribly beaten. Racial tension, political correctness and public relations tip-toeing are muddying the waters in Annie's investigation.

"And what are the odds of some stranger just happening along this road, seeing a naked woman walking and turning out to be a passing psychopath, deciding to beat her to death."

This latest mystery from Robinson is both topical and current. Both cases draw upon actual cases for inspiration - that of Rotherham and Jimmy Savile. Although there are two separate cases, they have common (and disturbing) starting point. The plotting is excellent, well thought out, well paced and absolutely believable.

Well loved supporting characters return, including one of my perennial faves, Winsome Jackman. We get to know young newcomer Detective Constable Gerry Masterson a bit better. She provides a different outlook from the seasoned detectives and I look forward to seeing more of her. And I never grow tired of Annie and her strong opinions.

I have always enjoyed Banks' musical tastes, often seeking out some of what he's listening to. In this latest

book, poetry is a new passion of Banks. Robinson has grown his characters as the series has progressed. Alan's personal life is always of interest. His last relationship has ended and as the book progressed I wondered if he might follow through with his attraction to one of the witnesses in his historical case.

I always like finding the reference to the title when reading. In this case, it's from a conversation...

"You know what they say. When the music's over, it's time to have fun."

"Never heard that one, said Banks. I thought it was turn out the lights."

"Don't you turn out the lights when you want to have fun, Superintendent?"

Well, leave the lights on and immerse yourself in this latest wonderful read from Robinson. While I don't know about fun, I do know it's another fantastic read from Robinson. Five stars for this reader.

Magdalena aka A Bookaholic Swede says

SWEDISH REVIEW

När musiken tystnar är den tredje boken jag har läst i Alan Banks serien. Jag var lite oroad att jag inte skulle gilla denna bok så mycket då jag läste föregående bok förra året (och jag hade helt glömt bort att jag hade läst en bok tidigare i serien) och för att vara ärligt så fann jag inte berättelsen i den boken speciellt engagerande. Så, det var med en viss mån oro som jag tog itu med denna bok. Jag hoppades att *När musiken tystnar* skulle funka bättre för mig. Jag hade tur, båda fallen i denna bok var intressanta och jag finner att Alan Banks och Annie Cabbot är båda intressanta karaktärer att läsa om.

Nyligen befordrade Alan Banks tar sig ann ett fall där en känd person anklagas för våldtäkt, men då det skedde för över 40 år sedan så är det svårt att bevisa det, om nu inte Banks kan finna bevis eller vittna till saken. Annie Cabbot i sin tur jobbar med mordet på en tonårsflicka. Båda fallen var intressanta att följa, även om jag tycker att Cabbots fall var en aning mer intressant. Jag tror det hela lista ut vem som är mördaren är helt enkelt något som jag finner mer intressant än ett 40+ gammalt våldtäktsfall. Men jag måste erkänna att det fallet tog sig vändningar som jag inte hade räknat med.

När musiken tystnar är helt klart en läsvärd bok och det är alltid angenämt att finna en ny bra serie att läsa där ett flertal böcker har publicerats!

Tack till Forum bokförlag för recensionsexemplaret!

ENGLISH REVIEW

When the Music's Over is the third book I have read in the Alan Banks series. I was a bit worried that I wouldn't enjoy this book so much since I read the previous book in the series last year and to be honest didn't I like the story especially much (And I had forgotten that I had read a book before that). I really hoped that *When the Music's Over* would work better and I was lucky. Both cases in this book worked great for me and I find myself liking both Alan Banks and Annie Cabbot.

Alan Banks has recently been promoted and he starts his new job with taking on a rape case. The problem is that the women in question were raped over 40 years ago and the man who she is accusing is a well-known man. Banks must find evidence or a witness, which isn't easy because it was so long ago. Annie Cabbot, in turn, works with the murder of a teenage girl. I think that both cases were interesting to follow, but I must admit that the murder case was a bit more interesting. I'm guessing that the whole finding out who the killer

is probably something that interests me more than trying to solve a 40 plus-year-old rape case. However, I have to admit that the rape case took some turns that I hadn't expected.

When the Music's Over is definitely a book that I can recommend to anyone liking a good crime novel. I especially like the fact that there are so many books in this series that I haven't read yet!

Thanks to Forum bokförlag for the review copy!

Jill Hutchinson says

I have read a few of Robinson's Inspector Banks' books and found them interesting enough to periodically dip into another one. This is a later book in the series and it certainly does not disappoint. I think Robinson may be one of those mystery writers who gets better with each release.

There is nothing tougher than a cold case.....even harder if it is an accusation of the rape of an under-age girl 50 years ago. Add one more twist which is that the man accused was a celebrity who was always surrounded by screaming young fans and groupies. And that is only the first case in this book.

Secondly, a young girl is found beaten and kicked to death on a deserted country lane and the clues are few and far between. The suspicions reach into the Pakistani population and racial tensions begin to rise.

Robinson uses fairly recent headlines as a background for both the cases that are being investigated and these provide that added touch of reality to the plots. Good book from a good author.

Rachel Hall says

Despite being a veteran viewer of the DCI Banks TV series, *When The Music's Over* was my first read of the Peter Robinson series of which this is the 23rd outing. My first impression was how different the character seemed to be to the way he is portrayed in the TV adaptation (by Stephen Tompkinson), notably more erudite and ponderous than his TV namesake. Despite my initial disconnect with the character and lack of familiarity with the back story, there was nothing to make me feel like I was a newcomer to a long running series and this novel works perfectly well as a standalone read. A recently promoted Detective Superintendent Alan Banks, Head of Homicide and Major Crimes in North Yorkshire is tasked with investigating a historical sexual abuse claim into a media personality dating back to 1967 and also acting as Senior Investigating Officer on a current and equally disturbing sexual assault and murder investigation of an underage girl found in a rural lane. Forty years separate the two cases but there are aspects which are similar in each of the two distinct cases. Banks honest reaction that he has been handed an unexploded bomb with the case he is personally assigned to is clearly reflected and that this is not the first case he wanted to face after his promotion is apparent.

Danny Caxton rose to fame throughout the 1960s, first as an occasional, singer and then as a well known television host of the talent spotting show, 'Do Your Own Thing!'. Regarded in much the same way as the avuncular Jimmy Savile, with some friends in high places he had plenty of teenage girls falling at his feet. Now at the grand old age of eighty-five the recent prosecutions in the historical sexual abuse scandals convince Linda Palmer to reassert a claim that she originally took to the police as a fourteen-year-old. Now a poet and having lived a fulfilled and largely happy life, she is nothing like the damaged victims that more commonly surface. Banks wonders how a jury will respond to the claims of a composed, assured and well

educated lady. The presence of a witness and second rapist alongside Caxton could perhaps offer the glimmer of hope in securing a conviction. Banks and DS Winsome Jackson are convinced by her claims and a now single Alan Banks quickly seems to fall under the spell of the attractive and beguiling Linda. As they go about interviewing Linda Palmer, Danny Caxton, his acquaintances and possible witnesses and seeing what became of the initial police report, other countryside claims are emerging. Banks encourages Linda to keep a record of her memories in an attempt to recapture a bygone time, but whether this acts as an aide memoir in resurrecting long forgotten details or encourages the imagination to run free is another matter however, and I was somewhat sceptical about Banks methodology and rationale.

In a separate line of enquiry, the body of a fifteen-year-old girl is found naked on the normally quiet eight mile stretch of Bardham Lane. From reconstruction and what DI Annie Cabbot and DC Geraldine 'Gerry' Masterton can gather it appears the girl has been the victim of a multiple rape attack with a large quantity of ketamine in her system, only to then fall victim to a separate attack further up the stretch of the lane where she had been kicked and beaten to death. Mimosa 'Mimsy' Moffatt is belatedly identified but the trail leads back to a situation which looks ominously like an example of the grooming of white girls by the older third-generation Pakistani men who populate the area she calls home. Thankfully strident DI Annie Cabbot was a little more interesting than Banks and with a naive Gerry playing devils advocate this case was by far the most interesting to watch unfold.

Clearly Peter Robinson has taken inspiration from recent events that have shocked and appalled the UK and been afforded extensive media coverage. My familiarity with both Operation Yewtree and the sexual exploitation of young girls in Rotherham meant that at times this seemed almost like a re-write of events which have consumed the public. Maybe if I had been a keen fan of this series and had built up some loyalty to the characters then I might have been inclined to give a more generous opinion of this novel, but rehashing two cases which have been recently made prominent headlines felt like an easy option. In conclusion, little value is added to the plethora of media coverage already in the public domain, and alongside an overly verbose Alan Banks, *When The Music's Over* feels sluggish. I do feel that Robinson could have introduced an element of mystique surrounding the veracity of Linda Palmer's claim, thus putting readers in a position of having to judge for themselves the truth of her assertions. This would have added an element of intrigue to the novel which was clearly missing throughout.

The prevailing attitudes surrounding towards both Linda Palmer's claims and the fate of the murder victim showed how differently these two girls situations were considered. Courtesy of a run down council estate family home, a mother who is addicted to heroin and a tough exterior, Mimsy was in no way as naive as the fourteen-year-old Linda Palmer. Whilst Mimsy was no stranger to drink, drugs or experimentation this does not allow the attack on her to be considered anymore justifiable than that of Linda Palmer. Different family circumstances, class and socioeconomic factors should not come into the matter - victims should all be considered equal. Peter Robinson has researched the realities of such cases and issue cannot be taken with his sensitivity and serious attitude to the incidents, but I do feel this was at the expense of action and forward progression. The aspect of this novel which did work well was how it served as a discussion about what the wider public often view as special treatment and sensitivity surrounding crimes committed by descendants of ethnic minorities. Peter Robinson also did a clever job at reflecting the range of contrasting views both in the community and the police force itself about victims and the crimes which are committed against them. Why are some victims 'asking for it' and others less so? Hearing the difference of opinions between the players involved is perhaps the most insightful aspect of this novel.

As a new reader to the DCI Banks series, *When The Music's Over* did feel slightly laboured and proceeded at a sedate pace, often with lengthy periods of rumination from Banks which brought nothing to the storyline and verged on rambling. The excessive detail dragged and there was a plodding feel to this whole novel, particularly in comparison to many of the police procedurally I have read in the last year or so. The denouement leaves the future of Alan Banks a little up in the air, and Peter Robinson clearly has potential for further novels but, personally, I would be more likely to revisit this series if the spotlight shifts to the

altogether more fascinating DI Annie Cabbot.

Rob Twinem says

On the front of the hard cover edition to Peter Robinson's excellent novel "When the Music's over" there is a comment by the author Jeffrey Deaver...."Top-notch police procedure" This is an unassuming but very apt comment about a novel and a story that I found totally engrossing from the first to last page. Deaver's comment almost has the effect of implying that this is a work of some drudgery and reading it is somewhat akin to a work of labour and toil. The truth could not be more different for this is a story that takes you right into the heart of a police investigation (in fact two investigations) an almost fly on the wall drama, you watch and read with fascination and excitement as the facts reveal themselves and our two heroes DS Banks and DI Annie Cabbot unravel a story of mistrust, evil and deceit in an attempt to bring the perpetrators to justice.

Detective Superintendent Alan Banks is investigating an historical case of sexual abuse against one time television and stage performer Danny Caxton. Linda Palmer was barely a teenager at the time when it is alleged Caxton charmed and allured her to a hotel room in Blackpool where the rape and assault took place. In the meantime Detective Inspector Annie Cabbot is hot on the trail of the brutal rape and murder of a vulnerable 14 year old Mimsy Moffat. Banks as part of his new promotion is actively involved in one case and overseeing the other and as always it is wonderful to see the interplay between Banks and Cabbot given their past "romantic" history.

The magic with Peter Robinson's writing is that you the reader almost feel a part of the investigation. His research as always is impeccable and the storyline very of the moment if we consider the recent events that occurred in Rotherham and Rochdale and the celebrity trials of such notables as Rolf Harris, Stuart Hall, and Max Clifford. Adding to this the deplorable actions and breach of trust by Jimmy Savile and Cyril Smith MP then we have the basis for an informative and well researched story. I love the author's descriptive style of writing very easy to read yet visual and exciting in its delivery...."His hairy belly dropped over his belt, little squares of fat pushing through the net of his string vest, and his man-breasts wobbled when he moved. He could also do with a shave and a haircut, and probably a wash , too. A tin of Carlsberg Special Brew rested on one arm of his armchair and an ashtray on the other."....."For the rest, there are drugs, drink, violence, crime or just simply apathy broken up by the distraction of video games, sex, and mobile phones. Life is something to be got through. Days are hurdles, weeks are rivers to cross, months lakes and years oceans."

This is wonderful writing of the highest order; a brilliantly researched and presented story with a very suitable and proper conclusion. The 23rd Alan Banks novel and although it might be preferable to read the series in order! When the Music's Over can be read as a standalone. Highly Recommended.

Roger Brunyate says

Cold Case, Hot Topics

Although I had seen Alan Banks and his second-in-command Annie Cabbot on television, this is the first I have read of Peter Robinson's 23 novels featuring the pair. You always wonder if the book will contradict the screen portrayal of the characters; this didn't, but it didn't add to them much either: they were believable and well-dimensioned on screen; they are equally believable in print. What the novel does offer is a remarkably expansive account of the police pursuit of crime, focusing less on solution than elucidation. There are two

quite separate crimes here: a long-ago sexual assault case involving an aging celebrity and the murder of a teenage girl. Banks, newly promoted to Detective Superintendent, is nominally in charge of both, but delegates the murder case to Annie. Compared to most detective stories, though, there are no bombshells; the focus instead is thematic, and the book is much more like a novel than a mystery in the depth to which it treats its themes.

It is also remarkably up-to-the-minute. I have not lived in Britain for some time, so needed to look up the various things that make this topical. One is the case of Sir Jimmy Savile, a well-known pop icon, television presenter, and charity fund-raiser. After his death in 2011, first the BBC and then Scotland Yard began looking into the numerous accusations of sexual assault made against him, ultimately concluding that several hundred of these had substance. Robinson references the real Savile case frequently, but for his novel creates a Savile look-alike named Danny Caxton, now in his eighties and living on the Yorkshire coast. Banks is asked to interview both the former star and his most believable accuser, a local woman called Linda Palmer, now a published poet, who claims that Caxton raped her when she was 14. Banks believes her and finds her a kindred spirit. He asks her to compile a memoir of the event, which is remarkable less for its revelations than for the amount of peripheral detail Linda puts in, memories that the writer freely admits may be partly invented. As a literary study of how the needs of storytelling might embellish and even distort the essential truth, I found this fascinating, although I felt that the amount of invented detail, whether admitted or not, would surely lessen the document's value in court.

The other topical aspect took me completely by surprise. Apparently in towns over the North of England there has recently been a surge of activities by "grooming gangs." These are gangs of men predominantly of Pakistani heritage who prey on young disaffected white girls, woo them with attention and presents, have sex with them, and then force them into servicing their paying clients. Annie and her sidekick DC Geraldine Masterson (an attractive character, from a privileged background) soon suspect that their victim might have fallen foul of such a gang, but the investigation needs to take many twists and turns before they work everything out. Their progress is hindered by what I assume must be another topical fact—that local police forces have been so demoralized by the chilling effect of accusations of racism that they are virtually paralyzed. Although most of the surprises come in this thread of the story, I felt that Robinson was slightly more interested in chronicling the phenomenon than developing our understanding of the individual characters involved.

The double plot, the number of characters, and the unfamiliar titles can make this hard to follow at times. It is also a long read for a rather muted climax. But it was always interesting, and a fascinating window on affairs in Britain today. So not quite five stars, but certainly a high four.

Christine says

Peter Robinson's Banks series has been going for years. I have not read all of the series consecutively. Confession time. I've mostly dipped in and out of it. The latest 'When The Music's Over' reminds me of why I keep returning to Banks.

We get a story with a fabulous contemporary spin. Banks is presented with a challenging historical sex abuse case from an ageing celebrity to tackle. Think of Jimmy Savile, the disgraced DJ whose disturbing hidden life has been uncovered following his death. This is the character of Danny Caxton. All very well done and incredibly gripping stuff. There is a parallel case of a troubled teenage girl, who is found dead in the sticks.

Annie Cabbot and Alan Banks are just great together. It really didn't matter that I wasn't totally familiar with their previous stories. The characters are just so strong and easy to bond with. Banks has been promoted and

is clearly suited to a position of authority. I enjoyed Cabbot and her impetuous female sidekick.

This was excellent and hugely enjoyable. Proper Yorkshire crime, with a very up to date vibe. It feels very 2016. Recommended!

Diane S ? says

Another long running series that I have read from the beginning and the two cases prominently featured are ripped from today's headlines. These books are very slow moving, thorough, descriptive showing the slower pace of actual detective work as opposed to the rushing pace of many thrillers. It is this realistic depiction that makes settling down with these slower paced procedurals worthwhile.

Alan Banks, has recently been promoted, is now the man in charge, so even though his main case is that of an older celebrity said to have preyed on underage girls in the past, (shades of Bill Cosby which is mentioned) he also oversees Annie's case. That case also involves young, underage girls and explores the world of grooming and also the difficulty the police are now confronted with when the accused are of a different ethnic origin. Banks himself is a very interesting character, loves music which is always an important part in this series, also loves poetry. Always a very good balance between the personal lives of characters and the cases being worked on.

Some of my long running series I have dropped, either for lack of freshness or boredom, but this series is one I still look forward to and after 23 books that says something in itself.

ARC from publisher.

Thomas Strömquist says

All the ingredients I love are here and most of the characters I know and love. The story is horrifying, engaging and complicated. Still, the feeling that we are just going through the motions never left me. Sorry, I really should say they did - when DC Masterson goes off on her own, chancing a lot, but ultimately finding a tiny crack in the case for all to hammer on - that was a couple of very effective and suspenseful chapters!

The story is really two: a young girl is found sexually abused and horribly murdered; a case that is investigated by Annie Cabbott and 'Gerry' Masterson. The investigation immediately leads into the Asian community of the area she's from. Banks himself is handed the (highly topical) cold case of a 1967 rape of a then underage girl by a media celebrity. Both these devastating and sensitive storylines are handled well, but the narrative still leaves me with a feeling that the pages needs to be filled and Banks needs to be Banks, listening to his records, having a drink, going to the pub with 'Dirty' Dick (who is a little pale in this one I found).

It may be that if you haven't read the preceding 22 books in the series that you will find this one amazing - for me it was a good and solid 3-star read (that's 3 stars according to Robinson's/Bank's own high standard, mind). Looking forward to the next one!

Carol - Reading Writing and Riesling says

My View:

Raise your glass and help me celebrate- this is my first DCI Banks read! Kudos to the author that despite the fact that I have not read the previous twenty two books I never felt like I was missing any significant back story or didn't understand the protagonist's quirks and foibles.

Peter Robinson artfully writes about historical abuse and a current case of abuse against children within the same framework by cannily supervising one investigation and leading in the other. Both crimes reflect contemporary social issues and crimes that unfortunately we are hearing a lot about in the media today; the crimes committed by those who feel "entitlement"; the attitude by some sections of society who believe that women are available to be used and abused, debased, traded and treated like commodities; sexual toys. Robinson tackles this subject with sensitivity and honesty. Robinson has one of the female protagonists write a diary of sorts to record her thoughts, emotions and any details she can recollect of the crimes(historical) committed against her – the writing is simplistic yet brutal in its honesty and humanises the experience, validating the victims emotions and responses – past and present.

This is very well thought out, well developed and engaging police procedural that shines the spotlight on both historical and current abuse cases, highlights the difficulties in investigating the crimes and discusses attitudes to victims and perpetrators – past and present; an excellent read for all fans of crime fiction.

Tony says

WHEN THE MUSIC'S OVER. (2016). Peter Robinson. ****.

Inspector Banks has just received a promotion, not that I can remember what it was. English police rankings confuse the hell out of me. Very nearly the next day, he is faced with the brutal rape and subsequent murder of a young (14 years old) girl from one of the estates. It is immediately believed by the residents of the town that the deed was done by some member or members of the Pakistani residents. There is a lot of animosity between the 'white' residents and the large number of 'colored' men and women of Pakistani descent, and any criminal activity is immediately blamed on one or more of their number. This sizzling animosity between the two races is one of the core issues of Robinson's new book. In this one, he manages to discuss most of the problems that arise from the presence of two separate segments of the town. He also uses this theme as a platform for addressing teenage prostitution by underage girls and the prevalence of joblessness and poverty among many, if not most, of the white segment. Much of the book feels like preaching, but Robinson has to get it all off his chest. He has done his research for this novel, and manages to pull in all points of view on the social conditions that exist in large parts of England. He also bases a large part of his plot on the criminal misconduct of show business personalities, and how they seem to be above the law. You can tell that the author has been reading the newspapers lately. In all, it is a good crime thriller, though it could have done with some additional editing to eliminate some of the tangential plot episodes.

Recommended.

James Thane says

When Peter Robinson began the Alan Banks series in 1987, with Gallows View, Banks was a Detective Chief Inspector, and the early books followed him through the investigations of a number of crimes. Fairly early on, Robinson gave Banks a young subordinate named Annie Cabbot, who became a fixture of the series herself. Now, twenty nine years and twenty-three books into the series, Banks has been promoted to Detective Superintendent, supervising a number of investigators. Cabbot is now a Detective Inspector with a subordinate of her own, and therein lies the principal problem with this book.

Understandably, Robinson is reluctant to let go of either character, even briefly. But he's well past the point where he can have Cabbot simply trailing after Banks as he does all the heavy lifting in an investigation. His solution is to give both Banks and Cabbot their own separate cases and then follow the investigations.

Banks draws a fifty-year-old cold case involving a celebrated entertainer named Danny Caxton. Several women have now come forward, accusing Caxton of sexual improprieties. The most serious accusation comes from a woman who says that when she was only fourteen years old, Caxton lured her into his hotel room where he and another man raped her. The girl and her mother reported the case to the police, but the investigation went nowhere at the time. Given the new accusations that are being leveled against Caxton, the case is revived, but all of the evidence that might have been collected initially has disappeared, and Banks, who believes the woman's story, has a very difficult task ahead of him.

Cabbot's case is a contemporary one, also involving a fourteen-year-old girl who is gang-raped in a van and then pitched from the van into a roadside ditch. She crawls out of the ditch and only a few minutes later is murdered. The young woman comes from a very dysfunctional family and has fallen into bad company. The small town where she lived is racially divided, with tension simmering between the white residents and a large group of people with Pakistani ethnic origins, and the case may well blow the lid off the troubled relations between the two groups.

Robinson approaches the situation by dividing virtually every chapter in half. One half is devoted to the Banks or Cabbot case and then abruptly shifts to the other. The two cases have absolutely nothing that links them together, and Robinson attempts to bridge the problem by bringing Banks and Cabbot together for drinks a couple of times to kick around their respective investigations. But it's a very frustrating approach, or at least it was for me. Every time one of the stories would begin to gain a bit of momentum, the spell was broken while Robinson switched to the other.

In truth, Cabbot's case is much the more interesting and could easily have sustained a novel all by itself. The Banks case seems thin, and Robinson has to stretch it out quite a bit in order to fill the space needed. Realistically, he would have been better off simply to let this be Cabbot's book and let her run with the case under Banks's general supervision.

This is not a bad book, but it is a frustrating one. These are two appealing characters, and I understand the Robinson, like many readers, is very fond of them. But I hope he finds a more satisfactory way of dealing with them the next time out.

Esil says

I am a bit obsessive compulsive when it comes to reading a mystery series in order. I like to start from the beginning and keep going. This becomes a problem when I want to read a long running series. It's especially problematic when I know that the earlier books may not be the best. Peter Robinson's Allan Banks series is a

case in point. I have long been eyeing this series but felt daunted by the fact that it is now over twenty books long. All this to say that I was really going against my nature when I decided to take plunge and read an advance copy of When the Music's Over, which is the 23rd book in the series. But I'm glad I did. I'm sure I missed some of the nuances of the dynamics between Banks and his colleagues. But otherwise this was a really good police procedural with the qualities I appreciate in a good mystery: nice slow detailed buildup of the story and characters, current challenging social issues, depiction of the police as a complex mix of dedication, corruption and real emotions, and an unpredictable but plausible outcome. All that to say that I will happily read more book in the series, but I'm not sure if I'll start from the beginning or keep going with no. 24... Thank you to the publisher and Netgalley for giving me access to an advance copy.

Damaskcat says

I have read all the previous books in this well written and compelling series and I think this one has to be the best so far. DI Annie Cabbot is set to investigate how a teenager's body came to be found battered to death on a lonely stretch of road having apparently been thrown from a moving vehicle. As she delves into the case it becomes more and more disturbing and leads her and her colleague DC Gerry Masterson into some very dangerous and murky waters indeed.

Superintendent Alan Banks - newly promoted - find his first case involves the investigation of a celebrity crime nearly half a century old. Charismatic Danny Caxton is accused of raping Linda Palmer in his hotel room in Blackpool during a summer season there. The two crimes - both involving fourteen year old girls - mirror and echo each other as the two investigations gradually progress.

Here is Peter Robinson at his masterly best. The writing is low key and understated and all the better for it because it sends shivers down your spine while you're reading it. The crimes are all too contemporary and really bring the crimes in the headlines today to life from the victims' perspective.

I liked Alan Banks as a character right from the first book in the series and he develops into a fully rounded characters as the series progresses. In spite of this the books can be read as standalone novels as there is enough background information in each of them to make the series characters' lives intelligible to anyone who just wants to dip into the series. I can thoroughly recommend this book to anyone who has read others by this author and by fans of this series.
