



Piece Of My Heart

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As volunteers clean up after a huge outdoor rock concert in Yorkshire in 1969, they discover the body of a young woman wrapped in a sleeping bag. She has been brutally murdered. The detective assigned to the case, Stanley Chadwick, is a hard-headed, strait-laced veteran of the Second World War. He could not have less in common with - or less regard for - young, disrespectful, long-haired hippies, smoking marijuana and listening to the pulsing sounds of rock and roll. But he has a murder to solve, and it looks as if the victim was somehow associated with the up-and-coming psychedelic pastoral band the Mad Hatters.

In the present, Inspector Alan Banks is investigating the murder of a freelance music journalist who was working on a feature about the Mad Hatters for MOJO magazine. This is not the first time that the Mad Hatters, now aging rock superstars, have been brushed by tragedy. Banks finds he has to delve into the past to find out exactly what hornets' nest the journalist inadvertently stirred up.

Piece Of My Heart Details

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Author : Peter Robinson

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From Reader Review Piece Of My Heart for online ebook

Melanie says

3 stars. I enjoyed this book. It has 2 storylines, one taking place in 1969 and one in the present day. The 1969 story is about a young woman murdered at a music festival. The present day story is about the murder of a young journalist. This is not a gory/bloody type of mystery, more of a realistic crime solving tale. I enjoyed the musical references in the 1969 storyline. I am a huge fan of the music from the time period (it is my listening preference). I was not sure how the story was going to play out until the author revealed it at the end. This is the first book I've read in this series. I have another installment waiting on my shelves and I look forward to it.

Tina says

This is book #16 in Peter Robinson's DCI Banks series. It starts in 1969 with Detective Inspector Stanley Chadwick investigating the murder of a young woman. She was found on a deserted field after the conclusion of a rock festival, stabbed so viciously a piece of her heart was sliced off.

I read several pages before thinking I may have picked up one of Robinson's books that wasn't in the DCI Banks series. But knowing the series is written in real time and Banks' gets older, to set one in 1969 would be unusual.

After several pages in the first chapter I noted a different date and year (2005) at the top of a chapter. Finally Alan Banks' story begins. He is investigating the murder of a music journalist Nick Barber in the Yorkshire dales.

If you note the date at the top of the chapters you won't be confused. The book has this format to the end, switching between the two different time periods, but Robinson deftly threads both story lines of these two cases. It was interesting to read about the bands from 1969 and I certainly recognized my favorite – Pink Floyd. Imagine being able to see them with multiple events in their early years. (I was able to see a concert of theirs in Miami in the 1970s)

In the 1969 story, DI Chadwick has to eliminate thousands of people at a concert to discover the killer. Further complications come with his conflict of interest between his 16 year old daughter who is involved with hippies and drugs that overlap into his investigation. The descriptions of people, music, the "free love era" and attitudes are aptly described.

In 2005 DCI Banks and Annie Cabbot have their own full scaled investigation of Nick Barber (the music journalist). It appears there is a link between the band Mad Hatters from 1969 festival and the recent murder. Leaving no stone unturned Banks doggedly pursues clues from present day to the current events and Barber's murder.

I was pleased to see DC Winsome Jackman get more page time in this book and hope to see more of her in the future. I still have 7 books to catch up to Robinson's most current book, When The Music's Over.

Ian says

Piece Of My Heart is my third Robinson/Banks read and likely to be my last.

There's nothing objectionable about either the writing or the story, but I feel I've done Banks now, and there's nothing else to gain.

Dovetailing two separate murder cases separated by forty years but with much in common is smart but the author had to work really hard on holding the connections at bay, sometimes too hard, and whilst there is a minor twist in the tail it's not an especially satisfying one.

Robinson presents us with endless sex, drugs and rock 'n roll cliches of the Sixties, and takes the notion that 'if you remember it you weren't there' far too seriously, even giving us the dead rock star in a swimming pool as a centre piece.

Running the two stories in parallel renders this 540 plus pages book a good 150 pages too long with considerable amounts of tedious filler which includes passages with a token Mirrenesque (DCI Tennyson) boss which adds nothing to the story. It's not without some merit as a police procedural, but I would only recommend Piece Of My Heart as a lazy, easy going holiday read.

Bettie? says

[Bettie's Books (hide spoiler)]

Nathan says

This review is dedicated to my Goodreads, good friend Mr Steven Betts :-)

This is the second Peter Robinson book I have read. I really enjoyed the book, even if it was a bit too long and I guessed the culprit fairly early on.

The story centres around my native Yorkshire and also involves another of my passions, Rock Music. There was a slight twist in the tale too and I will keep reading his books.

Chomsky says

Peter Robinson è autore molto noto in Gran Bretagna, molto meno in Italia, dove questo romanzo incongruamente intitolato "Black dog" è uno dei pochi tradotti nella nostra lingua.

Le indagini sull'omicidio di una ragazza durante uno dei primi festival rock nel 1969 e sulla morte di un giornalista specializzato in musica si dipanano su due piani paralleli prima di trovare una convergenza inaspettata causata dalla perseveranza dell'ispettore Banks che non crede alle coincidenze e rilegge le vecchia indagine con occhi nuovi per trovare tracce non viste oppure occultate in passato.

Il romanzo ha un notevole sottofondo musicale essendo ambientato in parte durante l'epoca d'oro del rock con le band che nascevano e morivano in breve tempo. La band al centro dell'attenzione è la fittizia "The Mad Hatters" ma ci sono tanti e continui riferimenti ai gruppi più celebri che danno un valore aggiunto al plot giallo.

Non capisco però il titolo italiano "Black dog" che chiaramente cita un famoso brano dei Led Zeppelin, che anche loro stanno sullo sfondo della vicenda, ma che non ha nessun appiglio logico mentre il titolo originale "Piece of My Heart" ricorda un clamoroso successo di Janis Joplin.

Se non conoscete Peter Robinson forse è il caso di colmare questa lacuna magari cominciando da questo giallo che è il sedicesimo di una lunga serie cominciata nel 1987 con "Gallows View" e per ora chiusa da "Careless Love" del 2018, venticinquesimo episodio della saga dell'ispettore Banks a cui la BBC ha dedicato anche la serie televisiva "DCI Banks".

David Freeman says

Enjoyed it. Really liked the link to the past in 1969. I was around then. We actually got married then. And it was good making links to real bands. Even Jethro Tull got a mention. Now for #17.

Pete Loveday says

A good read that is a great bargain - two gripping stories in the one manuscript! How good is that! Once again Chief Inspector Banks rolls into a deep mystery that has a similarity to a murder scene of 4 decades earlier. Despite 'Dagwood', Banks overcomes the odds and gives us a suspenseful thriller with a wicked twist.

Eadie says

In this book 16 of the Inspector Banks series, Peter Robinson does an excellent job in switching between three separate murder cases, two from 1969 and one from the present day, which seem to be related somehow. This book was also an introduction to a new character, Superintendent Gervaise, who definitely is beginning to conflict with Banks and Annie Cabbot's idea of how to run a police department. Peter Robinson is an excellent story teller and this book was a real page-turner for me. I found the hippies from the 60's to be very believable and the plot was very interesting and entertaining. I'm looking forward to reading the next installment and highly recommend this series to those who love mystery thrillers.

Margaret says

Excellent DCI Alan Banks novel.

This one swings between a murder in 1969 and one in about 2006. In 1969 a young woman is found murdered in the aftermath of a music festival. In 2006 a male music journalist is founded murdered in a Yorkshire holiday cottage. Slowly, the threads of the two murders, separated by nearly four decades. begin to twine together.

The past and present are carefully separated in the book, not always as clearly as they could've been. However, it isn't too hard to keep track of the time strands.

The most interesting juxtaposition is that between the policing methods of the late 1960s and those of the 21st century. The contrast weaves an interesting spell through the book.

Not the best Alan Banks novel by far, but an absorbing and delightful read.

Highly recommended.

Jessica says

By the time the connection between the past and present cases is revealed, it's not very much of a surprise, particularly for genre fans. The insight into the backstage world of musicians is intriguing, but my overall enjoyment is marred somewhat (as it has been more than once with Robinson) by the persistent naivete of his female characters. For someone as cool as Banks, I'd expect the women in his world to be somewhat more with it.

Jane says

I'm a fan of Robinson's Inspector Banks series, set in Yorkshire. I've just finished the 16th, Piece of My Heart.

There are two intertwined narratives. In one, Banks and his partner, DC Annie Cabot, investigate the 2005 murder of music journalist Nick Barber. In the other, set in 1969, DI Chadwick looks for the killer of a young woman who was stabbed, after midnight, at an outdoor music festival. Banks is convinced that the two cases are connected, and how they're connected is the primary mystery.

Banks and Cabot thoroughly and methodically research their case and solve it. There's professionalism but no drive here, not on Banks's part, and not on Robinson's.

In some of my favorite installments of the Banks series, the inspector gets personally invested in what he discovers about the victim and in the search for the perpetrator. Not so much here. So, neither did I.

Damaskcat says

Having read several very good books in this series which kept me up long past my bedtime because I just had to find out what happened, this one didn't seem as good to me. I like a mixture of past and present cases but in this one there was something a bit lacklustre in the 'past' case which meant it didn't really hold my attention. I didn't particularly like the police characters and the victim seemed rather two dimensional so I didn't really care who had murdered her.

That said - I did enjoy reading it, just not as much as I have enjoyed previous books in the series. The present day case was well done and interesting and climax of the case was very tense. This was an entertaining read, but for me not as good and as gripping as previous episodes in the series.

Bob says

This book follows two murders years apart and has Inspector Banks searching back to the older one in an attempt to get a handle on his. The first murder happened at a rock concert back in the hippy/flower child era and was connected to a local bad of the era. The current murder was of a writer doing an article on the band. Lots of name dropping of the major bands of the time and Bank's problems with a new boss. Eventually connections are made and questions answered.,

Karen Brooks says

This engrossing novel commences in 1969, when a lovely young, free-spirited woman is found dead in a sleeping bag after a huge music concert and the suspects range from concert attendees to the musicians themselves.

Fast forward to the Twenty-First Century and Banks is called to investigate the quite brutal murder of a music journalist, Nick Barber, in a small village. Not only is the motive for his death unclear, so are the reasons for Barber's presence in an unremarkable part of the UK. The list of suspects slowly grows but is unsatisfactory as while there are motives for murder, they aren't really enough to sustain a murder charge. Puzzled and intrigued, Banks knows there is a mystery attached to this man and his death, a feeling confirmed when a page of numbers, some circled, is found scrawled in the back of a novel Barber purchased. But what do they mean? Are they even important?

Segueing between 1969, the era of free love, hippies and counter-culture and current times, two unrelated crimes, two different types of investigations, are explored and the plot literally thickens. The further Banks is drawn into the sometimes seedy world of famous rock stars, the more perplexing the case becomes but it's not until Banks and his team begin to look into the past that not only do answers begin to emerge, but painful memories that some will do anything to repress also erupt...

This is a terrific Banks installment. Not only does Robinson evocatively explore the late 60s with musical references, clothing, ideology, living conditions and generational differences through the older case, in both the past and present he manages to intertwine the personal and professional imbuing the novel with layers that are at once exciting and touching. Add to that Banks and Annie Cabot dealing with an ambitious boss, and Winsome with an unpleasant sycophantic peer and the story fires on so many levels.

Intricately plotted, it's evident that Robinson painstakingly researched this book to give accurate dates and times for which to connect his fictitious scenarios with real world events, giving the story additional verisimilitude. It is also fascinating to contrast the policing styles of the late 60s and the science available to that of present times. Also compared are two fathers who raise/are raising children within different social and cultural contexts and the challenges they face understanding and relating to their kids.

Thoroughly enjoyed this Banks book. Clever, well-written and tightly plotted, A Piece of My Heart works as a crime novel but also as a time capsule of a bygone era. My only niggle is that for all the effort Robinson put into writing a wonderful, gripping story, the kindle version I read had so many errors - typos, punctuation, syntactical, it was incredible. I have never read a professionally published work so littered with

mistakes and it was really annoying. You pay for quality - even in electronic form - and expect it. I think Robinson has been let down in this regard. Fortunately, the story is so good, it didn't detract (too much) from my reading pleasure.
