

Critics' and Authors' Reviews of Michael Stanley's Books

Dead of Night

U.K.: Available Now / U.S.: Coming in June 2019

"It's an enthralling immersive read that won't disappoint."

—Lizzie Hays, *Promoting Crime Fiction*

"This story is brutal, brilliant and utterly breath-taking, my favourite of this writing duo so far... Totally stunning in every 'sense' of the word."

—Books from Dusk Till Dawn blog

"I don't think I caught my breath properly the whole time I was reading it. It is the best thriller that I have read in a long while."

—A Little Book Problem blog

"*Dead of Night* may belong with the darkest of Noir writing, but it is also utterly thrilling—multi-layered, skilfully executed, educational, thought-provoking, and ultimately a really satisfying read."

—TripFiction blog

Dying to Live

One of *The Strand Magazine's* Top 25 Books of the Year

“Stanley keeps the intriguing plot twists coming.”
— *Publishers Weekly* starred review, August 2017

“...the best yet, with both an ingenious mystery and a deeper and more textured depiction of modern Botswana and Kubu’s piece of it.”
— *Kirkus Reviews*, August 2017

“Stanley once again mixes strongly developed characters, puzzling plot twists, and a textured African setting in an international police procedural with heart and soul.”
— *Library Journal* starred review

“Beautifully constructed and wonderfully told... What propels the book, and wondrously so, is the mystery at the heart of it and the deep uniqueness of the personalities who move through the story, some from its beginning to its end and others momentarily, never to be seen again. The result is more than a great mystery. It is a tale for anyone and everyone who finds joy in reading that is well-written and lovingly so. This volume, like its companions, is a must for your bookshelf.”
— *Bookreporter*, October 2017

“The book sustains the quality of earlier titles—in fact, I think the series may be getting better.”
— *Crime Review*, July 2017

“This is a crime story with a generous dose of tenderness.”
— Anna Stroud, *Sunday Times*

“This series is definitely on my to-read list, and if you want an entertaining, intelligent series that provides insight into life in Botswana, I’d highly recommend adding it to yours too.”
— *Criminal Element*

A Death in the Family

“Under the African sun, Michael Stanley’s Detective Kubu investigates crimes as dark as the darkest of Nordic Noir. Call it Sunshine Noir, if you will – a must read.”

—Yrsa Sigurðardóttir, bestselling and award-winning Icelandic crime writer

“Kubu returns with a vengeance—but what is prowling in the darkness of Botswana is more dangerous than the four-legged predators. Then there are the Chinese who just may be the most dangerous of all ... I love it!”

—Charles Todd, *New York Times* bestselling author

“The lovable larger-than-life detective Kubu is back; frustrated this time because it is his father who has been murdered and he is banned from involvement in the investigation...Writers Michael Sears and Stanley Trollip deliver a great story set in Africa.”

—*Cape Times*, August 9, 2015

“The fifth rip-roaring mystery in the Detective Kubu series. If you haven’t read the others, the lovable return characters, exceptional police procedural plot, and close-to-home Botswana setting will make you want to.”

—*Sunday Times*, August 16, 2015

“Stanley and Kubu deserve much more critical and commercial attention than they have been receiving; hopefully this latest installment will rectify that shortcoming.”

—*Bookreporter*, November 13, 2015

“This fifth mystery featuring Detective Kubu is another fast moving procedural notable for its warm characterizations and vivid sense of place.”

—*Booklist*, September 15, 2015

Deadly Harvest

"...A fascinating police procedural... the most complex book in this series. Besides being an intricate crime puzzle that Kubu and his team must untangle, it also looks at societal issues."

— *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, April 28, 2013

"Detective David 'Kubu' Bengu is a wonderful creation, complex and beguiling. The exotic smells and sounds of Botswana fill the pages as well as the changes and struggles of a country brimming with modern technology yet fiercely clinging to old traditions. Compelling and deceptively written, it's the perfect summer read."

— *New York Journal of Books*, April 30, 2013

"Tight plotting is seasoned with African culture and the uglier presence of political corruption, AIDS, and black magic. Detective Kubu is joined by Detective Samantha Khama, who helps unravel a mystery involving a witch doctor who is believable and utterly menacing."

— *Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine*, July 2013

"These darker, grittier entries featuring the portly and perceptive Detective Kubu blend intricate plotting and a compelling cast... Though the cat-and-mouse chase that ensues propels the novel ever forward, Stanley also peppers the tale with richly detailed descriptions of Botswana and the lively lives of its citizens."

— *Booklist*, May 1, 2013

"...richly atmospheric...gritty depiction of corruption and obsession"

— *Publishers Weekly* starred and boxed review, March 25, 2013

"...one of the finest crime thrillers of 2013..."

— *The Strand Mystery Magazine*, Feb.-May, 2013

"*Deadly Harvest* is a fantastic read, with a tense original story that draws you in and holds you enthralled from the first to the last page."

— *The Library Door*, September 22, 2016

Death of the Mantis

Rated as Number 5 by *The Strand Magazine* in its selection of best 12 mysteries of 2011

“...the best book I’ve read in a very long time...*Death of the Mantis* is a fantastic read. Brilliant!”

— Louise Penny, multiple award-winning author of the Inspector Gamache mysteries

“Impossible to put down, this immensely readable third entry from (Michael Stanley) delivers the goods. Kubu’s painstaking detecting skills make him a sort of Hercule Poirot of the desert.”

— *Library Journal* starred review

“The information on the Bushmen... is fascinating. Stanley does an exceedingly good job of presenting their plight and culture in an interesting and sympathetic manner. He also conveys the other characters, both black and white, in rich, multilayered dimensions... a very readable novel that offers fascinating reflections on life in modern Botswana.”

— *The Canberra Times*, November 5, 2011

“...*Death of the Mantis* is a wonderful piece of work, a novel that is quietly perfect in every way... one of those rare books that transcends its rich genre. While there is a mystery at its core, it is also a study of the human condition, of the best and worst of people who do what they do for the best and worst of reasons. And Kubu is one of the best friends you will make between the pages of a book.”

— *Bookreporter*, October 27, 2011

“Most fascinating is that the story surrounds and reveals many of the ancient traditions and current ways of the Bushman in the red Kalahari... you will want to keep reading about the desert and its prey to the very end.”

— *Cape Times*, June 3, 2011

The Second Death of Goodluck Tinubu

“...brilliant sequel to last year’s *A Carrion Death*... Stanley is not content with a single plot line, effectively juggling the murders with cross-border drug smuggling and the circumstances surrounding an upcoming African Union meeting. Kubu, a dedicated gourmand, is just one of many fully fleshed and charmingly realistic characters... each character is memorable and adds depth to this tense and involving police procedural.”

— *Booklist* starred review, May 1, 2009

“...a smart, satisfying, complex mystery.”

— *Entertainment Weekly* (A rating), May 6, 2009

“Following his spectacular debut, *A Carrion Death*, Stanley comes roaring back with an even better tale. Bringing a love of Africa similar to Alexander McCall Smith's popular *No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency* series, the author has created an excellent new venue for those who love to read about other cultures while enjoying a good mystery. Highly recommended.”

— *Library Journal*, April 1, 2009

“Kubu’s second case is as leisurely and well-appointed as the first... Stanley should satisfy all armchair travelers and most mystery fans.”

— *Kirkus Reviews*, April 15, 2009

“It's the same country as Alexander McCall Smith's wildly popular *No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency* series—but hardly the same territory. Stanley offers a lot more action ‘out bush,’ while delivering a tale every bit as evocative in its sense of a place and the people who live there.”

— *The Times Picayune*, June 8, 2009

“Detective Kubu is a gift to mystery readers – he’s an instant classic.”

— *Ann Arbor Chronicle*, June 13, 2009

“I was gripped and entranced from the first page. A wonderful, original voice—McCall Smith with a dark edge and even darker underbelly.”

— Peter James, bestselling British crime writer

A Carrion Death

"The gritty Botswana depicted in Michael Stanley's *A Carrion Death* differs from Alexander McCall Smith's gentler vision, but the jovial, corpulent Det. Kubu is a winning creation."

— *Los Angeles Times*, Favorite Crime Novels of 2008, Dec. 7, 2008

"A first novel saturated with local color... Happily, Kubu is also hugely appealing—big and solid and smart enough to grasp all angles of this mystery. Readers may be lured to Africa by the landscape, but it takes a great character like Kubu to win our loyalty."

— *New York Times Book Review*, April 13, 2008

"Delightful... Plot twists are fair and well-paced, the Botswana setting has room to breathe and take shape as its own entity, and Stanley's writing style is equal parts sprightly and grave."

— *Los Angeles Times Book Review*

"Characters in this first outing are utterly believable, for good or ill... Kubu himself is a marvelous creation, his distinctive characteristics... as well considered as the plot... With any luck, Kubu's next outing will be as filling and tasty as one of the large man's dream meals."

— *Boston Globe*, April 14, 2008

"The intricate plotting, a grisly sense of realism and numerous topical motifs... make this a compulsively readable novel."

— *Publishers Weekly* (starred review), February 25, 2008

"[A] fast-moving story... Rich with the atmosphere of modern Botswana, and peopled with interesting and well-drawn characters, this is an exciting debut."

— *Booklist*, February 1, 2008

"Kubu solves crimes with reason and resolve... This is a deliciously satisfying first mystery."

— *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, April 19, 2008