

Mystery and thriller novels by Michael Stanley

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A Deadly Covenant (2022)



While digging a trench for a new water project, a backhoe operator unearths the skeleton of a long dead Bushman. Kubu and Scottish pathologist, Ian MacGregor, are sent to sort out the formalities, but the situation rapidly gets out of hand. MacGregor discovers a massacre of Bushmen including women and children. However, the locals deny any knowledge of the event.

When an elder of the village is murdered at his home, the local police believe it was the result of a robbery gone wrong. Kubu thinks otherwise. Things become still more complicated when a mysterious Bushman appears at the massacre site, collapses then disappears again, but seems connected to the murders in some way. Kubu's boss, Assistant Superintendent Mabaku, joins them as accusations of corruption are levelled at the water project, and international anger over the massacre of the Bushman families builds. But how do the recent murders link to the dead Bushmen?

As they investigate, they uncover a deadly covenant made many years before by an unknown group, and they begin to fear that their own lives may be in danger.

Review Short Takes

“Edgar finalist Stanley’s excellent eighth mystery ... Stanley gets everything—the dialogue, the terrain descriptions, the plot beats—right. More prequels fleshing out this complex and endearing protagonist would be welcome.”

Publishers Weekly **starred review**

“*A Deadly Covenant* provides the reader with an exciting insight into crime in Botswana. A thoroughly enjoyable read.”

Alexander McCall Smith, worldwide best-selling author of the Mma Ramotswe novels set in Botswana.

“The unmatched beauty, spirit, and mystery of Africa never fails to come to life in Michael Stanley’s award-winning Botswana-based series. *A Deadly Covenant* is an irresistible page-turner and a powerful contribution to the Kubu saga.”

Jeffrey Siger, best-selling author

“I found *A Deadly Covenant* completely intriguing and engrossing, and the Bushman scenes fascinating. Vividly painted scenery, and I can feel the oppressive heat. Talk about Sunshine Noir!”

Kwei Quartey, best-selling author

"Michael Stanley presents a complex narrative, full of twists, turns and misdirection. It is a dark story of conspiracy, corruption and revenge, but Stanley leavens this with humour, and with characters that convince and engage. *A Deadly Covenant* is a real page turner, perfect for those who like their mysteries complex, and want something a little different."

Strand magazine

“(Michael Stanley gets) better and better at writing these tight, twisty, authentic crime stories.”

Jennifer Platt SA Sunday Times

“The eighth book in Michael Stanley’s enjoyable Detective Kubu series, set in Botswana, tells his origin story as a detective. As readers, we have already come to love Kubu and his wife, Joy, so it’s a pure delight to read this book, which chronicles their early courtship and Kubu’s beginnings as a detective. Kubu’s shyness and uncertainty with Joy only add to the human dimensions of his personality, a personality already well fleshed out in previous novels. ... The many threads that are successfully woven into one cloth by the talented Michael Stanley make for a very rich reading experience. This is one of the strongest novels in the series.”

Aunt Agatha’s

“*A Deadly Covenant* Earns 5/5 Water Spirits & Secrets...Engaging Must Read!...A top contender for my Best of 2022!”

Kings River Life Magazine

“Kubu, despite personal insecurities concerning love and social skills, sets his keen mind to work, absorbs, solves – gains confidence in handling police procedure, single-malt whiskey, and love.”

Lavender Magazine

“The sandy stretches of northern Botswana may appear simple but they have a complex past and a complicated present that will not yield to comfortable resolutions. Kubu is an excellent, if large, companion for readers entering his unfamiliar land.”

Reviewing the Evidence

“As has been common throughout the Detective Kubu series, Michael Stanley weaves together the core mystery and the landscape of Africa in magical ways. ... Here’s hoping for a few more “early” Kubu cases, as there is still so much to learn about this unique character, his colleagues, and the country he calls home.”

Bolo Books

“As engrossing as the investigation is, the icing on this very delicious "cake" is Kubu's courtship of his future wife, Joy. ... Any book featuring this detective from Botswana will be one to look forward to with a great deal of anticipation... and to savor every word once it is in my hands.”

Kittling Books

"Not much like Precious Ramotswe’s version of Botswana, the Botswana shown here is more realistic, with the intricacies and the contradictions to be expected of such an ancient land. The resolution is far more complex than I imagined, keeping me in suspense until the final pages. A fine addition to the series."

Kevin's Corner

“The intelligent writing and short, snappy chapters had me hooked from the outset, keeping me glued to the page from beginning to end. Kubu himself is a larger than life character who I couldn’t help but fall more and more in love with as his story continued.”

Cal Turner Reviews

“The combination of magical, the mystery and a much loved character together, meant I absolutely adore every signal page of the story.”

Books Are My Cwtches Reviews

“I find the pacing of the books is just perfect, the mystery and tension pitched just right to keep me completely engaged by the story, but they always leave me wanting more.”

Jen Med’s Book Review

“*A Deadly Covenant* is a textured, layered novel with a strong narrative arc that brings together many threads and weaves them into a rich and colourful tapestry.”

Live and Deadly

“*A Deadly Covenant* is more than a detective novel, although it is a very good detective novel. It is also an examination of the poison of racism and the power of greed. Secrets of evil deeds can sprout into future evil deeds, and none of us can truly escape our past.”

Scintilla

“This was a fun, sometimes sardonic novel set in the Botswana desert, filled with interesting, sympathetic characters and enough twists and turns to intrigue the most avid mystery reader.”

Ellenzreads

“A huge part of the fun is watching how the story unfolds as the authors weave together multiple threads to form a suspenseful and fascinating mystery!”

No More Grumpy Bookseller

"The roots to the mystery have been lain with the bones in the history of the region in a revelatory and multi-faceted story."

Fiction from Afar

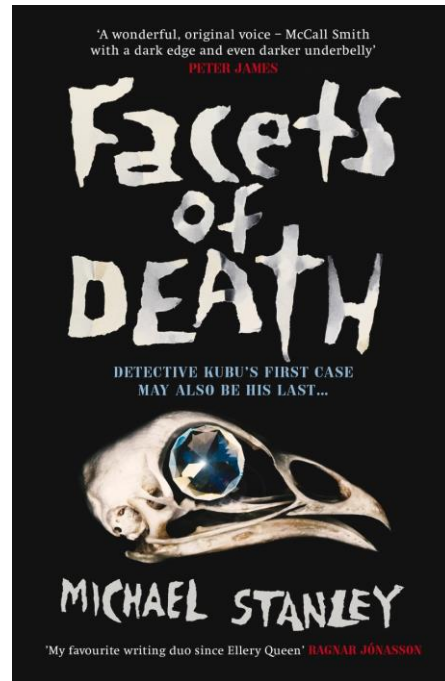
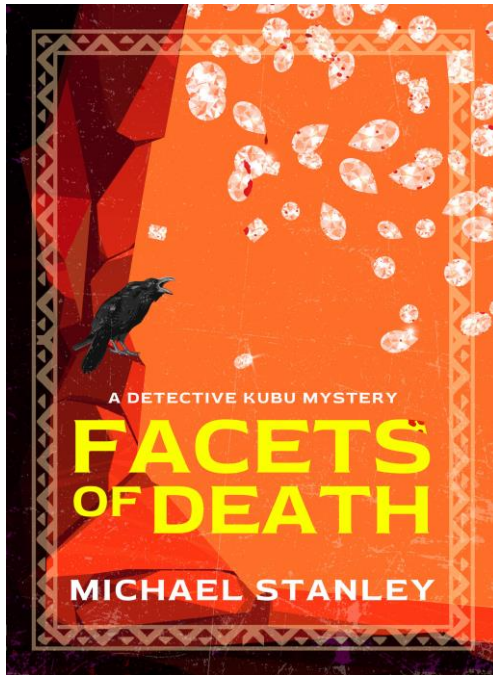
“I never fail to enjoy a Detective Kubu book and *A Deadly Covenant* is another cracker. Loved it.”

Grab This Book

“Bravo, Michael Stanley, you have me absolutely hooked!”

On the Shelf Books

Facets of Death (2020)



Facets of Death is a prequel set in the late 1990s when Kubu first joins the Botswana CID as a raw detective. While he's trying to be accepted by the current staff and to make a role for himself in the CID, a massive diamond heist takes place on the road from Jwaneng—home of the world's richest diamond mine.

It's immediately clear that this is no opportunistic robbery. The mine has a complicated security scheme in place, and the police immediately suspect an inside job. The robbers systematically eliminate all the witnesses, and then they are killed by the South African police, leaving the detectives with nothing to go on.

Kubu and his boss, Mabaku, are sure they can solve the case if only their contacts can stay alive long enough to point them in the right direction. However, when one of the mine's senior managers becomes the next victim, they're forced to set a trap for the crime's mastermind. If it fails, their careers are over—in Kubu's case before it's even begun.

Awards

Finalist for the Silver Falchion Award for Best Investigator, Killer Nashville 2021

Accolades

The Times and Sunday Times Crime Club Pick of the Week

Review Short Takes

“*Facets of Death* is easily one of the best heist novels I’ve read since Gerald Browne’s classic *11 Harrowhouse*.”

Bruce Tierney, BookPage **starred** review

“A thrilling and intriguing ride-along with Botswana’s number-one good-guy detective”

Tony Park, Best-selling author

“A thrilling and enthralling novel that is just so beautifully easy to read I raced through it while inhaling every word ... Set in 1998 *Facets of Death* is an atmospheric, intriguing, and wonderfully readable crime novel I most definitely recommend.”

Liz Robinson, Love Reading

“The local colour is as delightful as the intriguing investigation.”

The Times and Sunday Times Crime Club **Pick of the Week**

“Besides being an exciting police procedural, this book helps us understand this big, likable detective who loves food and singing arias when he’s alone. It should send readers unfamiliar with the series right to the bookstore.”

Mary Ann Grossmann, Pioneer Press

“Those who are familiar with Kubu will rejoice over this latest entry... As for readers who are new to Kubu and Botswana, *Facets of Death* functions as the perfect place to jump on. Every fan of mystery novels already should be reading and enjoying this series...”

Joe Hartlaub, Bookreporter

“I’d no more miss a Detective Kubu mystery than I would forget to brush my teeth in the morning. If you haven’t had the pleasure of meeting David “Kubu” Bengu, get your hands on a copy of *Facets of Death*. You can thank me later.”

Cathy Cole, Kittling Books

“The series you didn’t know you needed in your life ... an absolute joy.”

Nick Triplow, Grab This Book

“Parallels to Alexander McCall Smith ... are clear, but Kubu’s distinctive personality, juxtaposed against scenes of his country’s darker sides, help his adventures stand out.”

Adam Woog, The Seattle Times

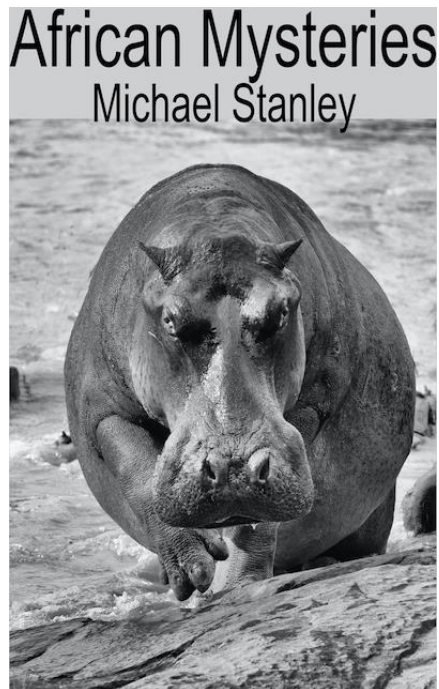
“...between Kubu and Alexander McCall Smith’s Precious Ramotswe, the tradition of botho, humility, dignity, courtesy, and respect for others is upheld in all its richness, which makes for a reaffirming read every time.”

Jane Murphy, Booklist

“Entertaining... Series followers will enjoy the backstory.”

Publishers Weekly

African Mysteries (2020)



A collection of four southern African mystery short stories from Michael Stanley.

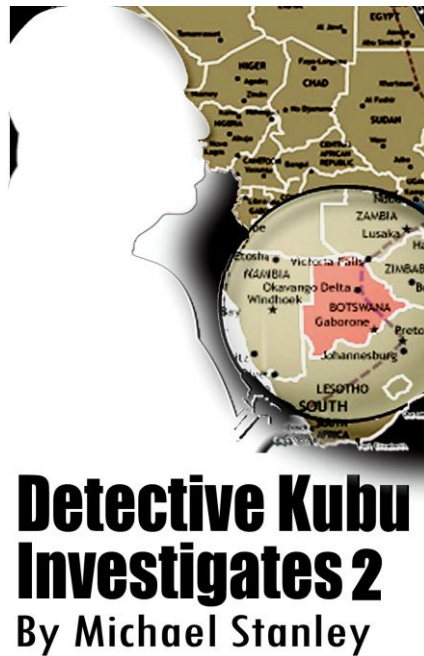
Serial Killer is set in 1999, when Kubu is a brand new detective, wet behind the ears and trying to find his role in the Botswana Criminal Investigation Department. As a new detective, Kubu is assigned a trivial case trying to catch a prankster. But then the pranks start to escalate and seem headed towards murder.

“Informal recycling” is a common profession in South Africa (and many other places). On garbage-collection days, the informal recyclers go from bin to bin searching for anything they can use or resell. In *The Ring*, one of these recyclers makes a horrifying discovery in a rich, Johannesburg woman’s bin.

The Otter Trail is a wonderful five-day hike along South Africa’s south coast. In *Three on a Trail*, two girls start the trail but only one comes out. And that one can’t remember what happened. The missing girl’s brother decides to find out, but gets much more than he bargained for.

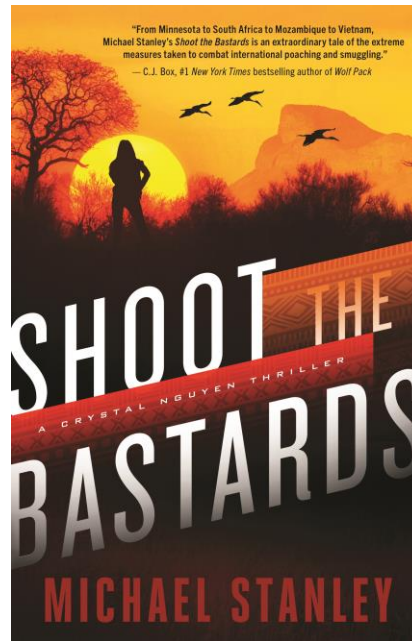
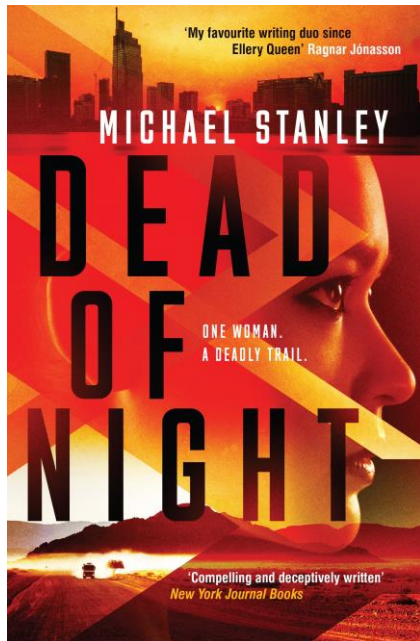
The final story in the collection is *The Last Case of Inspector Fourie*. Angry about being overlooked for promotion and sour about the lack of success with prosecutions in South Africa, an embittered police detective investigates a murder and the theft of diamonds from a De Beers facility. The puzzle is how did the diamonds leave the building through all the automated security, and what happened to them after that?

Detective Kubu Investigates 2 (2019)



The second collection of Michael Stanley short stories. Two of the stories in this collection involve Kubu himself—one where he’s wrestling with a violent murder linked to rhino poaching in the north of the country, and one where he’s wrestling with cooking dinner for Christmas. (It’s one of his favorite dishes, and the recipe is included if you’d like to try it.) Another story revolves around Bushman people exiled to New Xade in the Kalahari. Something evil has crept into their village. Is it human, or something even worse? Finally, there are a couple of stories that are completely different and set outside Africa.

Dead of Night (UK 2018), Shoot the Bastards (USA 2019)



When freelance journalist, Crystal Nguyen, heads to South Africa, she thinks she'll be researching an article on rhino-horn smuggling for *National Geographic*. But, within a week, she's been hunting poachers, hunted by their bosses, and then arrested in connection with a murder. And everyone is after a briefcase full of money that may hold the key to everything.

Fleeing South Africa, she goes undercover in Vietnam, trying to discover the truth before she's exposed by the local mafia. Discovering the plot behind the money is only half the battle. Now she must convince the South African authorities to act before it is too late. She has a shocking story to tell, if she survives long enough to tell it.

Review Short Takes

“An extraordinary tale of the extreme measures taken to combat international poaching and smuggling.”

C.J. Box, bestselling author

“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, skillfully executed, educational, thought-provoking, and ultimately a really satisfying read.”

TripFiction blog

“I love Crys Nguyen, an intrepid environmentalist, quick thinking and fearless.”

Susan Hooper, Reviewing the evidence

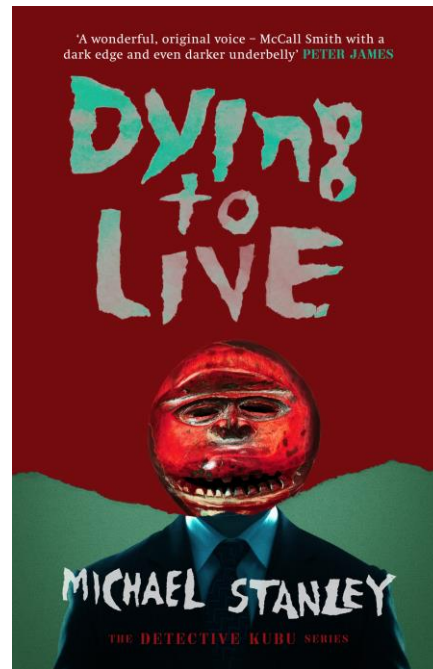
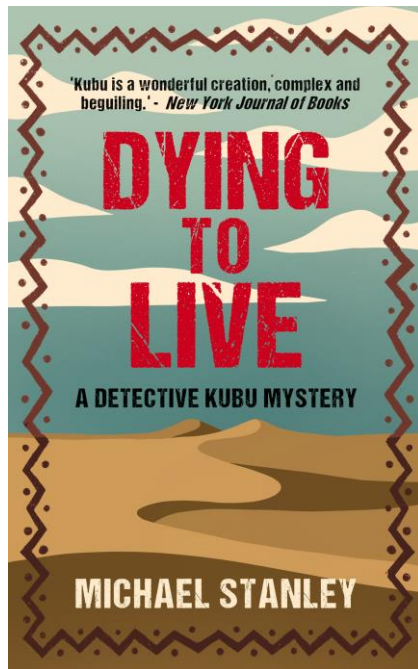
“*Dead of Night* is a book the world needs. It’s a crime novel with a difference. Unlike your usual crime novel where you can usually figure out who’s committed the crime towards the end, *Dead of Night* throws you off at every turn, drawing you into the sea of deceit that, by the time you realise you’re fully submerged, the darkness has you firmly in its grasp.”

Dan Stubbings, The Dimension between Worlds

“...an entertaining page-turner. Readers will look forward to the sequel.”

Publishers Weekly

Dying to Live (2017)



When the body of a Bushman is discovered near the Central Kalahaari Game Reserve, the death is written off as an accident. But all is not as it seems. An autopsy reveals that although he is very old, his internal organs are puzzlingly young. What's more, an old bullet is lodged in one of his muscles ... but where is the entry wound?

When the body is stolen from the morgue and a local witch doctor is reported missing, Detective 'Kubu' Bengu gets involved. Kubu and his brilliant young colleague, Detective Samantha Khama, follow the twisting trail through a confusion of rhino-horn smugglers, foreign gangsters and drugs manufacturers. And the deeper they dig, the wider and more dangerous the case becomes.

A fresh new slice of 'Sunshine Noir', *Dying to Live* is a classic tale of greed, corruption and ruthless thuggery, set in one of the world's most beautiful landscapes, and featuring one of crime fiction's most endearing and humane detectives.

Accolades

The Strand Magazine Top 25 Books for 2017

Review Short Takes

“Stanley keeps the intriguing plot twists coming.”

Publishers Weekly, August 2017. Starred review.

“...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

“I’ve read all the books in this series, and *Dying to Live* is hands-down the best of the bunch to date.”

Bruce Tierney, Bookpage, November 2017

“DYING TO LIVE is 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.”

Joe Harlaub, Bookreporter, October 2017

“Strong, complex mysteries. Wonderful settings that pull you right into the heart of the story. Characters that grow and change over time and endear themselves to readers.”

Cathy Cole, Kittling Books, October 2017

“The book sustains the quality of earlier titles. In fact, I think the series may be getting better.”

Chris Roberts, Crime Review, July 2017

“This is a crime story with a generous dose of tenderness.”

Anna Stroud, Sunday Times

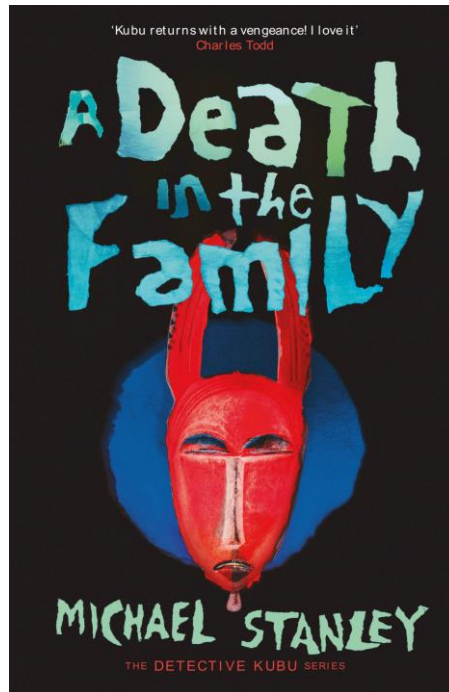
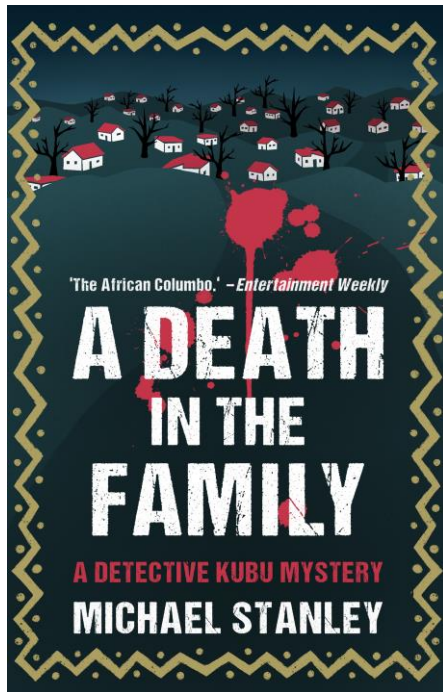
“This series is definitely on my to-read list, and if you want an entertaining, intelligent series that provides insight into life in Botswana, I’d highly recommend adding it to yours too.”

Doreen Sheridan, Criminal Element

“Gripping, mysterious and full of excellent characters, *Dying to Live* is another perfect example of Sunshine Noir. Highly recommended!”

Bibliophile Book Club

A Death in the Family (2015)



Faced with the violent death of his own father, even Assistant Superintendent David 'Kubu' Bengu, Botswana CID's keenest mind, is baffled. Who would kill such a frail old man? The picture becomes even murkier with the apparent suicide of a government official. Are Chinese mine-owners involved? And what role does the US Embassy have to play?

Set amidst the dark beauty of modern Botswana, *A Death in the Family* is a thrilling insight into a world of riots, corruption and greed, as a complex series of murders presents the opera-loving, wine connoisseur detective with his most challenging case yet. When grief-stricken Kubu defies orders to try to bring the killers to justice, startling and chilling links emerge, spanning the globe and setting a sequence of shocking events in motion. Will Kubu catch the killers in time ... and find justice for his father?

Review Short Takes

“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

“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

“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

“*A Death in the Family* is fast paced and gripping; Kubu’s frustration at his exclusion ups the tension, while his final lines offer a superb eulogy for Wilmon as a father and as a man.”

Lavender Magazine, October 1, 2015

“The Stanley novels deliver intricate plots and a cast of regulars well worth following.”

Kirkus Review

“...engrossing...As always Stanley brings to life a Botswana different from the one familiar to Alexander McCall Smith readers.”

Publishers weekly

“This is an involving and inventive series that introduces modern South Africa through the eyes of an endearing protagonist.”

St Paul Pioneer Press, October 23, 2015

“...a fantastically complex and artfully crafted plot that brings together political corruption, the incursion of foreign powers and companies in search of Botswana’s mineral wealth and the chilling, dangerous paths taken to satisfy greed.”

MumblingAbout, September 15, 2016

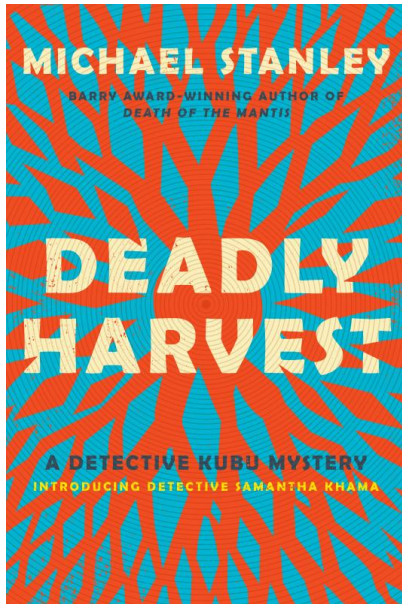
“I am loving this series!!!”

Bibliophile Book Club, September 1, 2016

“...the writing duo of Michael Stanley have already established a firm place on my 'must read' list.”

Rachel Hall Reviews, August 13, 2016

Deadly Harvest (2013)



In *Deadly Harvest*, Kubu teams up with a new recruit to the Botswana Criminal Investigation Department, Samantha Khama, to take on the belief in witch doctors and magic - particularly black magic. Samantha is the CID's first female detective, and she battles to define a role for herself in the male-dominated culture.

Girls have been disappearing. The rumor is that they are being abducted for *muti*, but the cases are allowed to go cold. That's not good enough for Samantha, for whom the issue is personal. She persuades CID director Mabaku to let her dig into past cases and enlists Kubu's initially rather unenthusiastic help. But together they discover a pattern to the disappearances.

Meanwhile, the father of one of the missing girls becomes fixated on the idea that his daughter's abduction is linked to the recent amazing success of the leader of a new political party, and he takes the law into his own hands. Investigating, Kubu and Samantha find *muti* containing human material in the politician's home, confirming their worst fears. They are told of a witch doctor, widely feared, whose power is believed to be drawn from the use of human body parts. But he is thought to be invisible unless he chooses to take physical form.

There is another victim, and Kubu and Samantha are thrust into a harrowing race to stop the serial murderer and his influential and unscrupulous clients.

Awards

Finalist for the International Thriller Writers Best Paperback Original for 2013

Accolades

The Strand Magazine Top 12 Mysteries for 2013

Review Short Takes

"...a fascinating police procedural," and "(it) is 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

"*Deadly Harvest* is number four in this fascinating crime series. 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

"This book took me to a world I didn't want to leave. It kept me reading, it kept me guessing, and it kept me gasping at its many twists and surprises. Highly recommended."

R.L. Kline

"...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

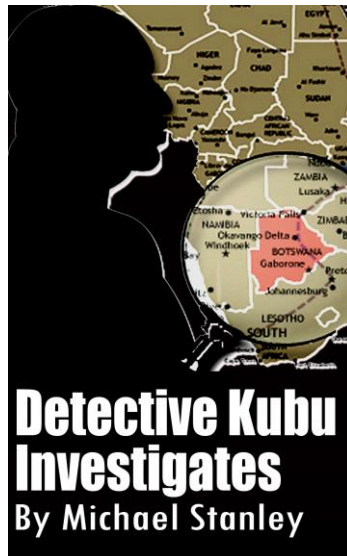
“...a brilliantly written police procedural with a cast of chilling characters who draw you in from page one until the very end.”

Damp Pebbles, August 14, 2016

“... the authors have delivered a captivating and insightful novel.”

Rachel Hall Reviews, July 25, 2016

Detective Kubu Investigates (2013)

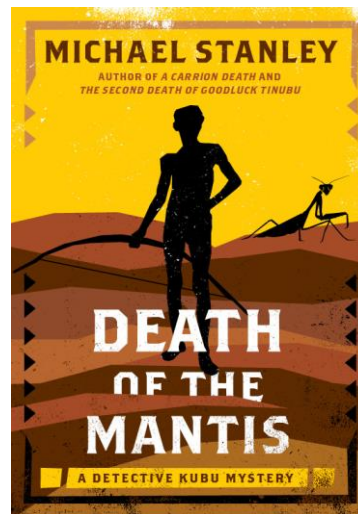
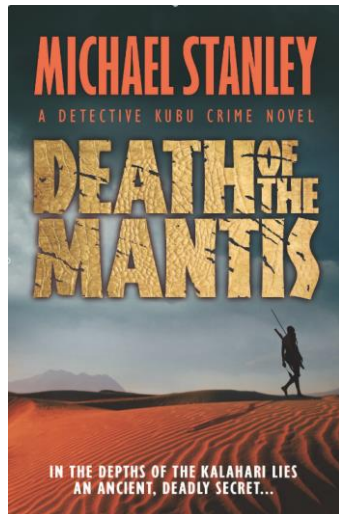


Twenty-first century Botswana is a country with real issues and real murders. In this collection of stories - one never previously published - Kubu investigates three mysterious deaths. A man is stabbed outside a bar. Is it just a jealous fight or is there something much more sinister behind it? A man suffers a gruesome death in a country town. Is it the result of witchcraft, or could there be another cause? A policeman is shot dead at close range in his own home. Is it the colleagues of a man he killed who was resisting arrest? And what of his wife's alibi?

In the last story of the collection, *The Haunting*, a very unusual detective in South Africa solves a strange disappearance and fraud in a most unconventional way.

The collection also features Michael Stanley interviewing Kubu about his cases and what it's like being a policeman in Botswana. We're pleased to include it, since neither of the two gentlemen actually exists!

Death of the Mantis (2011)



Surrounded by a group of Bushmen, a ranger at a game reserve in the Kalahari is discovered at the bottom of a ravine. At first it is assumed that he fell, but it turns out that he was attacked. Although they claim to have chanced upon the injured man, the Bushmen are arrested.

Khumanego, Kubu's Bushman school friend and now an advocate for the Bushman people, approaches Kubu and asks him to intervene. Khumanego claims the men are innocent and that their arrest is due to racist antagonism from the local police. Kubu investigates the case, resulting in the release of the suspects. But then another man is found murdered in a similar fashion – this time a visitor from neighboring Namibia. The body is discovered by another touring Namibian – an odd coincidence in Kubu's view – motivating him to follow the clues to Namibia.

Then a third man is murdered and Kubu realizes that the key to the mystery must lie in the depths of the Kalahari itself. And there it is unravelled in a most unpleasant way...

Awards

Winner Deadly Pleasures Barry Award for Best Paperback Original

Finalist Edgar Award for Best Paperback Original

Finalist Minnesota Book Awards in Genre Fiction

Finalist Anthony Award for Best Paperback Original

Accolades

The Strand Magazine 12 best mysteries of 2011

Library Journal top 10 mysteries for 2011

Review Short Takes

“...a must-read for anyone who enjoys clever plotting, terrific writing, and a fascinating glimpse of today’s Africa.”

Charles Todd, New York Times bestselling mystery author

“...the best book yet in one of the best series going... I loved this book.”

Timothy Hallinan author of *The Queen of Patpong* and *The Fear Artist*

“...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

“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, multi-layered 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

“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.”

Starred Review, Library Journal

“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 authors have created a solid plot and thrown in enough curved balls to keep you turning the pages. It is an absorbing read, made more enjoyable by a cast of characters you find yourself caring about from the beginning.”

Business Day June 21, 2011

“The authors have gone to great pains to achieve verisimilitude in this tale of misadventure in the Kalahari sands of Botswana ... Now with three Detective Kubu, aka Rra David Bengu, crime-fiction thrillers out, a firm foundation has been set for many more.”

Mmegi Online, June 10, 2011

“Kubu himself, intelligent, honourable, a fine detective, a loyal friend, and proud family man who delights in good food and drink, is always a pleasure. In him, Trollip and Sears have created a robust and believable series character... Full marks.”

The Witness, July 20, 2011

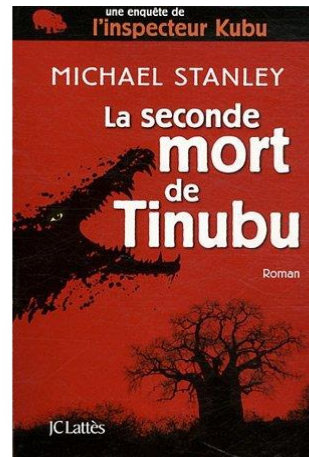
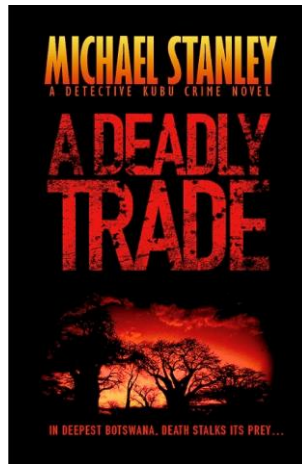
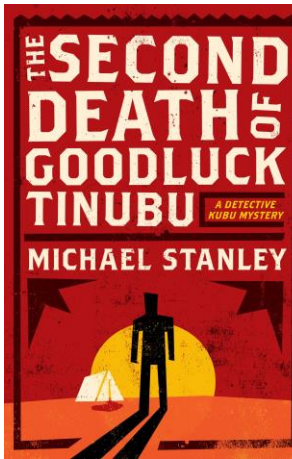
“Alexander McCall Smith fans interested in a different take on modern-day Botswana will find it in the intriguing third mystery (from Michael Stanley)... The cultural conflict between the Bushmen and their fellow countrymen lends color.”

Publishers Weekly, July 4, 2011

“As in the previous titles, Stanley creates a seamless and complex mystery, replete with the unique atmosphere of modern Botswana.”

Booklist, August 1, 2011

The Second Death of Goodluck Tinubu (North America) (2009)
A Deadly Trade (rest of the world)



Goodluck Tinubu, an ex-Zimbabwean who has taught in Botswana for many years, is viciously murdered in his tent at the Jackalberry bush camp, situated on an isolated peninsula in northern Botswana. Peter Sithole, allegedly a tourist from South Africa and a second guest at the camp, is found bludgeoned to death a few hours later. Detective “Kubu” Bengu is sent from Botswana’s capital, Gaborone, to assist the local Criminal Investigation Department (CID) in solving the crime.

Another guest at the camp – Ishmael Zondo - departed unexpectedly at dawn the morning after the murders. Now Zondo has completely disappeared, and the Zimbabwe police are unable – or unwilling – to trace him. Reports surface that he is wanted as a dissident in Zimbabwe. And, as a final enigma, matching fingerprint records reveal that Goodluck Tinubu was killed in the Rhodesian civil war thirty years earlier.

Review Short Takes

“...brilliant sequel to last year’s *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

“Detective Kubu is a real discovery: he already feels like an enduring classic to add to the mystery canon.”
Killer Book Reviews Vol 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 Reviews, 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

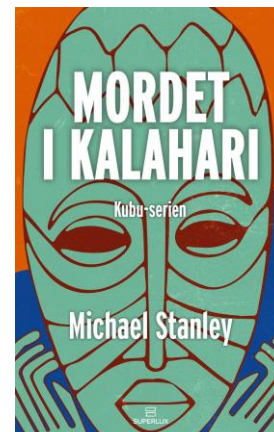
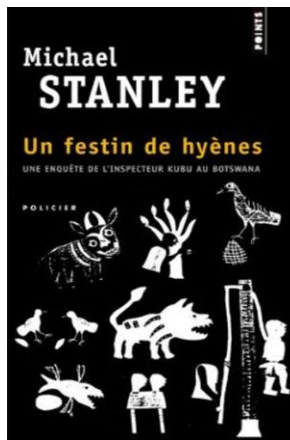
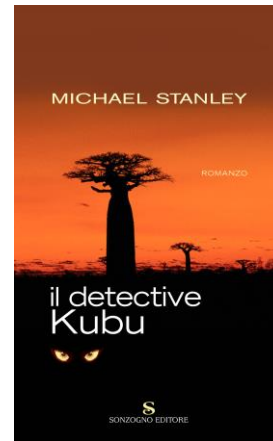
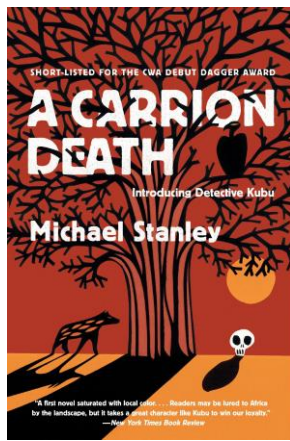
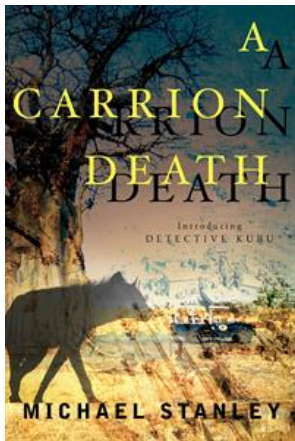
“It’s the same country as Alexander McCall Smith's wildly popular No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency series -- but hardly the same territory. Stanley offers a lot more action "out bush," while delivering a tale every bit as evocative in its sense of a place and the people who live there.”
The Times Picayune, June 8, 2009

“Detective Kubu is a gift to mystery readers – he’s an instant classic.”
Ann Arbor Chronicle, 13 June, 2009

“Kubu...is without doubt the most engaging literary detective in Africa.”
The Weekender, 19 September, 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 (2008)



Smashed skull, snapped ribs, and a cloying smell of carrion. Leave the body for the hyenas to devour—no body, no case. But when Kalahari game rangers stumble on a human corpse mid-meal, it turns out the murder wasn't perfect after all. Enough evidence is left to suggest foul play. Detective David "Kubu" Bengu of the Botswana Criminal Investigation Department is assigned to the case. From the sun-baked riverbeds of the Kalahari to the highest offices of an international conglomerate, he follows a blood-soaked trail in search of answers. Beneath a mountain of lies and superstitions, he uncovers a chain of crimes leading to the most powerful figures in the country—influential enemies who will kill anyone in their way.

Awards

Finalist Crime Writers Association Debut Dagger Award
Finalist Minnesota Book Awards in Genre Fiction
Finalist Strand Magazine Critics Award for Best First Mystery
Finalist Mystery Readers International Macavity Award for Best First Mystery
Finalist Mystery News and Deadly Pleasures Barry Award for Best First Novel

Accolades

Los Angeles Times Top 10 Crime Novel for 2008

Review Short Takes

“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. . . . This is a marvelous debut, and 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 follows in the literary footsteps of ... brilliant male detective with a love of classical music, a palate for good food and fine wine, distant but compassionate, who solves crimes with reason and resolve. . . . This is a deliciously satisfying first mystery. I want seconds.”
Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, April 19, 2008

“This well-plotted debut introduces a new mystery series and will enthrall readers...”
Library Journal, March 1, 2008

“*A Carrion Death* is that perfect combination of ‘I don’t want it to end’ and ‘I can’t put it down’. Great African crime fiction.”
Deon Meyer, leading South African crime writer.

“*A Carrion Death* is a rip-roaring read.”
Eurocrime (www.eurocrime.co.uk/reviews/A_Carrion_Death.html)

Michael Stanley short bio

Michael Stanley is the writing team of Michael Sears and Stanley Trollip, both South Africans by birth. Both are retired professors who have worked in academia and business, Sears in South Africa and Trollip in the USA. Their love of watching the wildlife of the African subcontinent has taken them on a number of flying safaris to Botswana and Zimbabwe. On one such trip, they had the idea for their first novel, *A Carrion Death*, which introduced Detective Kubu. Kubu has now featured in eight novels and three short story collections. The eighth Detective Kubu mystery, *A Deadly Covenant*, was published in north America in 2022.

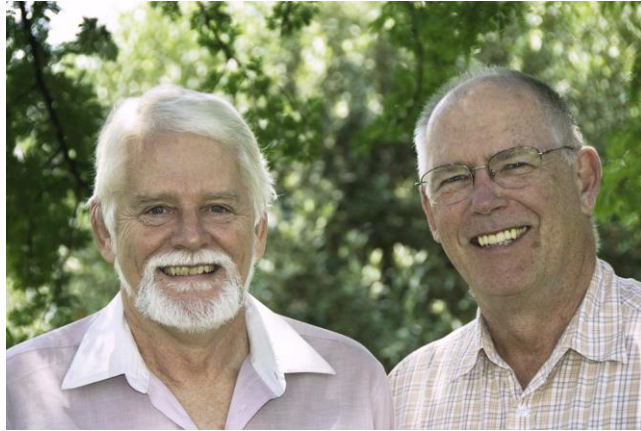
Dead of Night, released in 2018 in the UK, and in 2019 as *Shoot the Bastards* in the US is a thriller with protagonist Crystal Nguyen from Minneapolis. The back story is rhino poaching and rhino-horn smuggling.

Stanley Trollip short bio

South African born Stanley Trollip lived in the United States from 1971 until his retirement in 2003. Now he divides his time between Denmark, Minneapolis, and Cape Town, South Africa. As a professor he was interested in how computers can facilitate teaching and learning. He was also a pilot and has enjoyed many flying safaris through the countries of southern Africa.

Michael Sears short bio

Michael Sears was born in Johannesburg, and grew up in Cape Town and Nairobi, Kenya. He is a mathematician by training. At the end of 2007, he retired from the Anglo-American corporation where he managed a remote-sensing group. He has traveled widely in Southern and Central Africa, with Botswana always being a special favorite.



Michael Stanley



Michael Sears



Stanley Trollip