



## Death Parts Us

*Alex Walters*

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## **Death Parts Us** Alex Walters

A chilling new crime thriller from a best-selling author

**Twenty years ago, Jackie Galloway was a senior cop with a bad reputation. Then he ended up on the wrong side of the wrong people, and his career was ruined. Sacked and with no pension, he ends up eking out his last days on Scotland's Black Isle, his mind lost to dementia, supported only by his long-suffering wife, Bridie.**

Then Galloway is found dead. The police assume the death to be accidental, until Bridie Galloway reveals that her husband has been receiving threatening letters containing only the phrase: **'NOT FORGOTTEN. NOT FORGIVEN.'**

DI Alec McKay is struggling to come to terms with life without his estranged wife Chrissie, and is living in isolation on the Black Isle. As a junior officer, McKay had been allocated to Galloway's team and has bad memories of the man and his methods. Now he finds himself investigating Galloway's death.

But when suspicion falls on him and more police officers are murdered, the pressure is on for McKay to solve the case.

Why would the killer seek revenge twenty years after Galloway left the force?

**As McKay fights to link the events of past and present, he realizes that time is rapidly running out...**

## **Death Parts Us Details**

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Author : Alex Walters

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## From Reader Review Death Parts Us for online ebook

### Kate says

When I started reading this I wasn't entirely sure what to expect, but I am a huge fan of Scottish crime thrillers so was keen to try this book. Certainly the book description grabbed my attention, but I was also intrigued by the setting. The Black Isle and Inverness are places I've visited quite a lot, we recently holidayed up in Fortrose on the Black Isle so I was interested to see if the author could bring the place alive through the book. He certainly did, so many of the places mentioned brought memories of being on the Black Isle, and I could envision the winding roads and side streets so clearly.

DI Alec McKay is a character that I thoroughly enjoyed reading about, his cantankerous ways reminded me of a few male members of my family, and I loved his sense of humour. The sarcastic moments that played out in his head during conversations were hilarious at times and really made me like him that little bit more. There's something about the way he is described that brings such a clear image to mind, I found that after I'd finished reading this I was mentally casting actors to play in him a TV series.

The sheer brilliance of the plot caught me off guard, just about when I was beginning to feel smug about working out part of the "whodunit" I was left open mouthed and stunned that I'd got it so wrong, fair play to you Alex Walters, you laid a fantastic trail of red herrings to lead me astray! The idea of police officers being killed off makes for an interesting twist, you don't see that played out too often in crime thrillers. The way that the plot links up and plays out is wonderful, small details you might not think are key suddenly become wee light bulb moments and you find that you're racing through the book to find out how it all links up in the end.

A fantastic thriller that I would have no hesitation to recommend and will be keenly keeping an eye out for more books featuring Alec McKay!

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### Chris Nolan says

Having read and enjoyed Candles And Roses, the first DI Alec McKay novel, I was very much looking forward to reading the sequel; I am very grateful to Bloodhound Books for sending me an advance copy. The wait was worth it, as this is a tremendous read and even better than its predecessor. A series of suspicious deaths involving retired detectives living in the Black Isle presents Alec with an intriguing case which threatens to become personal. The writing is very good, the story itself is fast-paced and the descriptions and back stories of the detectives are fascinating. Alex Walters is certainly one to watch!

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### Shell Baker says

Looks like I have just found myself a new author and a new detective series to read! This is the second book in the DI Alec McKay series which I guarantee can be read as a standalone, because I haven't read the first one.

So here I am thinking oh boy not another detective book. After reading so many sometimes it gets a bit same

old for me. And to be totally honest I am more a crime thriller reader than police procedure. So for me there has to be that something different about it. Well I wasn't disappointed.... what can I say but I loved it! This story certainly has the thriller in it with a story line that will keep you guessing until the end.

The author grabbed my attention from the start and kept me there until the end. I read this in two sittings I couldn't put it down. I would of definitely read it in one go if it wasn't the fact that I had to get up for work.

This is a fast paced easy read full of twists and turns that I didn't see coming not to mention the OMG moments. Just when I thought I knew where the story was going the author would totally throw me off the scent!

Set in Black Isle Scotland, I could hear the characters accents jumping out the pages. DI Alec McKay isn't the happiest person in the world he is moody and straight talking but I did love his sarcastic sense of humour, I found myself having a chuckle throughout the story. He kind of reminded me of my dad lol

This has certainly ticked all the boxes for me and I am looking forward to reading Candles and Roses which I have just downloaded. I highly recommend this book giving it 4.5 stars.

Thank you to Sarah Hardy at Bloodhound Books for inviting me to take part in this Blog Blitz.

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### **Breakaway Reviewers says**

An engaging crime thriller with interesting characters and an atmospheric setting

When ex-police officer Jackie Galloway is found dead having fallen from his back garden down a steep hillside, the police assume it to be an accident brought on by his increasingly fragile, dementia-addled state. DI Alec McKay, still recovering from a recent separation from his estranged wife, is brought in to investigate what seems to be a fairly simple case. However, the deceased's wife, Bridie Galloway, reveals that for the years leading up to his death, Jackie had been receiving letters from an unknown source containing only the phrase 'Not forgotten. Not forgiven.' As Alec begins to dig deeper into Galloway's background, he tries to talk to some of his old colleagues and shortly afterwards, another ex-policeman winds up dead. Now a suspect, Alec is told to stay away, but as more bodies start turning up, he realises that Scotland's Black Isle is being stalked by a dangerous murderer obsessed with revenge. He and DS Ginny Horton must discover why someone is seeking out and executing ex-officers 20 years after they have retired before they find themselves and the other current members of the police force in the killer's sights.

This was a well-written, easy to read crime thriller novel with a fast-paced and engaging plot. The setting of the Black Isle in Scotland is extremely well portrayed, and the author manages to convey the atmosphere in both his descriptions and the character's dialogue, with the dark, rainy, windswept landscapes creating an excellent mood for the story and heightening the tension in many of the scenes. It also makes for a refreshing change from crime thrillers that are set in the US and even differentiates this story from similar novels that take place in UK settings such as London. The ending was unexpected and dramatic and managed to tie together all of the fairly complex strands that the author had woven throughout the story in order to create a satisfying conclusion.

DI McKay is an excellent creation – part rebellious maverick, part cantankerous old man – and quite unique as a hero in this sort of detective story. I found his personality to be likeable, entertaining and believable, and

his relationship with his police officer colleagues was interesting and multi-layered. I did find myself feeling a little detached from the subplot about his wife, but then I haven't read the first instalment in the series which may well expand on their relationship more thoroughly. Additionally, I thought that the secondary characters were all quite well-developed and had the depth to their personalities, with none of them seeming to be just bland one-dimensional figures that the author had created as filler.

Overall, whilst it wasn't the single best or most exciting novel I have ever read, *Death Parts Us* was an excellent crime thriller that I would highly recommend to any fan of the genre. Its unique setting and strong characters make it a highly entertaining page-turner and I would be keen to get hold of the previous book in the DI McKay series.

Daenerys

Breakaway Reviewers received a copy of the book to review

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### **Craig Gillan says**

Brilliant second book in the series, great characters and a fantastic setting on The Black Isle

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### **Gary Moreau says**

As serial murder/detective novels go, this is a good one. Alec McKay has it all. He's a surly old war horse detective who rubs a lot of people the wrong way, has a troubled marriage, has been known to drink heavily, has suffered tragic personal loss, and has an unfailing ability to get into trouble with his superiors. In the end, however, he is a decidedly "good" man with a warm, if not radiant, heart.

The story is set in Scotland where, once again, we're reminded that the landscape is awesome and the weather is never nice. There is something about the Scottish setting, however, that seems to lend itself to serial murder mysteries. You feel cold and damp just reading it. It's the perfect frame of mind for the genre.

The writing is very sound. There are no discernible issues with continuity and the pace is consistent throughout. You won't find yourself wondering if you could overcome the guilt of jumping ahead. You won't want to.

The characters are developed well and if not overly complex they are a diverse lot. The "old school" detectives who are serially murdered all seem to share a weakness for drink and rough-hewn mistresses, eliciting little sympathy upon their deaths from anyone, least of all their wives. The current crop of crime solvers are, however, generally redemptive in nature; sometimes a bit overly so.

The mystery is maintained throughout. The author sets up a magnificent ending but, unfortunately, never quite delivers. The resolution is totally unpredictable, but far more complex than the tale itself and, unfortunately, leaves a lot of loose threads hanging loosely.

I do have to say that I tip my hat to the author and publisher in setting a reasonable price. When best-selling

Kindle editions are routinely priced in the double digits and often represent little to no discount over the hardcover edition, the price that I paid for this Kindle edition on its publication date was a pleasant throwback to those sunny days of reasonable prices. (Ironic for a mystery set in Scotland.)

For the price paid, this was a real find. It's not a literary masterpiece, but it is a darn good read for the money. And I think that makes it well worth our support.

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### **Gordon Mcghie says**

If you live in London, Manchester or New York you will not bat an eye if you pick up a book set in the city you live. Happens all the time. You may smile a little if you recognise a street name or if your old school is mentioned; it is a familiarity you would enjoy spotting.

I grew up in the Highlands of Scotland. I went to school in a town called Fortrose, I drove through the neighbouring town of Avoch\* and walked to Rosemarkie. Ever heard of them? Unlikely. They are not often selected as the setting for serial killer thrillers so we don't get to experience that wee smile of familiarity.

But Death Parts Us by Alex Walters is set on The Black Isle and features all these towns (well...villages) and I read this book with a huge smile on my face. I walked these streets, I went to that beach, I have crossed that bridge more times than I can count and I have tromped through the Fairy Glen. This is a book set in my wee part of the world and I bloody loved it.

But you are now thinking – I have never heard of these places, is this book one I will enjoy too? YES. If we move beyond my love of the locations in the book there is also my love of great crime novels and Death Parts Us is a slick and highly entertaining thriller.

Retired police officers are dying. Initially their deaths are considered tragic accidents, old men in poor health who reach the end of their days. However, the frequency of sudden and unexpected deaths of old colleagues soon points to some sinister faction at work. Then it becomes clear that each of the dead men had been receiving letters "Not Forgotten. Not Forgiven" DI Alec McKay wants to investigate, however, some unfortunate timing means he will be sidelined as Alec finds himself in the wrong place at the wrong time. Can Alec have any influence on an investigation if he just asks a few questions around the villages?

The responsibility to investigate will fall to his younger colleague Ginny Horton. But Ginny has problems of her own. An unwelcome visitor from her past has tracked her down and Ginny is not prepared to face those old and unwelcome memories. Not that she can turn to McKay, he is trying to adjust to life alone after a recent split from his wife and has his own problems to contend with.

Death Parts Us is the second novel to feature DI Alec McKay (Candles and Roses was the first book). I had not read the first book in the series so I can state with assurance that you can read Death Parts Us without needing to read Candles – the book is very enjoyable as a stand-alone novel.

I really enjoyed Death Parts Us and I cannot wait to go back and read the first book in the series. I urge you to seek this one out, a police procedural in a whole new setting and a cracking murder mystery to enjoy.

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## **Clair says**

Death Parts Us is the second book in the DI Alec McKay series – I stupidly had forgotten that this was book two therefore went straight in without reading book one, Candles and Roses, first. However, whilst there are references to events in the first book, this can be read as a standalone. Although, I'd recommend reading book one to get a sense of the setting and the characters – I was planning on going back to book one but think the 'whodunit' suspense may be obvious following comments at the end of this one!

DI Alec McKay is back but struggling to adjust to his separation but is trying to give his estranged wife the space that she needs by finding alternative accommodation. At the same time, an old policeman is found dead, presumably from a tragic accident as he is suffering from dementia and appears to have drifted off into the garden alone. That is until another member of his team is found dead in suspicious circumstances...is there a connection. Unfortunately for McKay, before he can truly get his teeth into the case – he is taken off it and put on enforced annual leave as it turns out that he was the last person to see the next victim alive. This results in McKay's team having to work without him and for Alec to deal with his enforced rest and isolation.

I thoroughly enjoyed this book, the story line which kept me gripped right through to the end. It is extremely easy to become immersed in the investigation as the narrative is fast paced and full of twists and turns. Whilst it is clear that Galloway and his team were not the nicest of cops back in the day and therefore these murders are linked, what isn't clear until Walter's is ready to reveal it is why? Why would someone wait twenty years for their revenge which is what this is pointing too?

Death Parts Us is set in the Black Isle and Inverness areas of Scotland which are brilliantly brought to life through Walter's use of local dialect and the descriptions of the landscape. At times you really feel the cold and darkness which brilliantly contributes to the overall plot.

A great detective thriller and I look forward to McKay's next investigation!

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## **Sandy says**

4.5 stars

The one New Year's resolution I made was to put a serious dent in my TBR pile, specifically my kindle. As I flicked through the covers, this one caught my eye & I thought right, here goes. My only regret is finding out I had a great book sitting there all this time.

Meet DI Alec McKay. He's a middle aged cop who's recently rented a cottage in Scotland's Black Isle to give his estranged wife time to ponder the state of their marriage. Good thing there's plenty to distract him. Yonks ago when he was a newbie, he worked with a senior cop named Jackie Galloway. Galloway was the last of a breed, known for getting confessions with his...uh..."exuberant" interview techniques. He was mean, bent & the station bully. Now he's dead.

McKay might believe he succumbed to declining health if not for the pile of threatening letters he'd been receiving. But it's been 20 years since Galloway was forced into retirement. Who waits that long for revenge?

A day later & he has even more reason to suspect something dodgy is going on in his new neighbourhood. In short order there is an unreasonable number of bodies littering the area & all have ties to Galloway. Of course if you go back far enough, so do McKay & his boss DCI Helena Grant. McKay ends up sidelined from the investigation but that's ok....he's living smack-dab in the middle of the action & got nothing but time to do some covert poking around.

One of this book's biggest strengths is its cast. And I can't tell you how refreshing it was to follow a small department of cops who actually like each other. No back stabbing, no personal politics. Just well fleshed out characters with enough history to make them feel like real people. Grant started out with McKay & is a smart, tough but fair boss who knows her DI's foibles & tics all too well. DS Ginny Horton rounds out the crew & features in a creepy subplot that runs along side the main story. Peripheral characters add colour & context as they pop up during the investigation.

But the book belongs to McKay & he's more than capable of doing the heavy lifting. He's a smart, intuitive cop who's just a tad down on his luck. We get enough of his failing marriage to understand what happened but I appreciated the lack of domestic drama/angst. His acerbic wit & black humour makes the dialogue sparkle, particularly in conversations with Grant & Horton.

The pacing & smooth prose makes for effortless reading, one of those books where you're surprised to see how far you've gone when you finally look up. And waiting at the end is a cracker of a finale. It's a great example of compelling police procedural crossed with good story telling. I've definitely been missing out & look forward to the next book.

Now, I wonder if I have any other little gems lurking in the pile.....

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### **Sarah says**

I'm not sure I should say this about a crime book but, I adored it. Why? I loved the fabulous setting which brought so much atmosphere to the story and I absolutely adored DI Alec McKay.

DI Alex McKay is such a brilliant character. He is a bit of a cantankerous old so and so but he brings a bit of humour into the story from being set in his ways and his off hand remarks. I could easily visualise him in my head and think he is crying out to have his crime series on television. Certainly can't wait for more in the series.

The story line of police officers being murdered certainly held my interest. I wanted to know as much as the police why someone would go around killing them and especially why these certain individuals. I have to say you could have blown me over like a feather when all is revealed. No way in this world did I ever get an inkling of who the killer was and it certainly made for a jaw dropping moment. I have no doubt unless you are Columbo that this story will shock and surprise you.

Death Parts Us is a highly entertaining and gripping read. Scotland's Black Isle is very much brought to life by the author and I felt like I was stood next to the characters absorbing everything that was around them. Great book and highly recommended.

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## **Diane Hogg says**

When I first laid eyes on Death Parts Us by Alex Walters, I was drawn to the cover, it is such an eerie scene of the rocks and the sea, it felt as though the sea was actually undulating in front of my eyes drawing into my very soul.

The cover was just the start to Alex's story....

Death Parts Us the second book in the Alec McKay series, the first being Candles and Roses. I wouldn't say it was necessary to read as part of the series as Death Parts Us does well as a standalone as it contains enough back story to be able to follow the characters.

The story is centred around the rugged Black Isle, Scotland where it's cold, damp but undeniably beautiful, a perfect setting for a serial killer based police procedural. Ex-police officers are being killed, the finger of suspicion points at one of their own, DI Alec McKay has more questions than answers, why kill them now and who wants them dead, what is the connection. All the clues steadily piece together, with red herrings thrown in to leave you feeling bamboozled, misleading signs which suddenly tear you off in another direction, but throughout it all, just when I thought I had the answers the conclusion blew me out of the water.

McKay is a family man, who's life is in crisis, a family tragedy and a breakdown in his marriage, now it appears he may lose it all including his career, Alec needs to find the killer and fast. It was funny imagining McKay, his accent, his sarcasm, his undeniable wit but one thing was for sure was that McKay settled in my mind in a clear and unobstructed manner. I could project him vividly as if I was standing in the pages with him, looking at the crime scenes, feeling it, seeing it, smelling it, being part of it.

When opening the book I didn't know what to expect, there is always apprehension when starting out with a new author. While reading Death Parts Us I didn't find it particularly fast paced but I didn't care, I actually savoured the story, like I was tasting something new with my eyes.

Where are Bloodhound Books finding the authors lately there has been some amazing books come my way and this one is no exception. Thank you to Bloodhound Books, Alex Walters and Sarah Hardy for the invite onto the Blog Blitz Tour to read and review an advanced readers copy of Death Parts Us in exchange for an honest review.

I hope to hear more from Alex Walters in the very near future, a new author who is now firmly on my radar.

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## **Books n All Jill Burkinshaw says**

20 years after being kicked out of the Police Force Jackie Galloway is in the latter stages of dementia when he dies. His long suffering wife finds him at the bottom of a steep drop at the end of the garden. Did he fall? Why would a man who rarely moves decide to take a walk in the garden? Why would someone decide to commit murder 20 years after the event? So many questions and very few clues Alec McKay is flummoxed. As more retired officers from the same era meet their deaths the team is struggling to find a way to fit all the pieces together. When McKay is the last person to see and speak with a victim he is removed from active

duty leaving the team even shorter staffed than normal.

When Alec and Ginny appear to be in the murderer's sights things start to hot up as the search to stop the killing is stepped up.

The story moves along at a steady pace as the reader is taken on a journey with many twists and turns. As the adrenaline starts to flow and the pieces begin to slot together we approach a dramatic conclusion that is totally unexpected.

This is my second outing with Alec McKay. He is a very realistic character damaged by family tragedy he is struggling with his personal life and when his career appears to be under threat his choices are go under or fight back. The latter always being the action of the detective we know and love.

Ginny comes more into her own in this story as her personal life becomes entangled with the case in ways nobody expected. She makes a good partner for Alec as they both have totally different personalities that combine to make a very effective team.

I loved this book it lacked the blood and gore I like and found it a little slow going in places but overall a very good read

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### **Mark Tilbury says**

Although this book is the second in the series, it makes an interesting and enjoyable stand alone novel. When retired policemen begin to be found dead, Alec McKay and his team start investigating. As they delve into the lives and final cases of those who have died, they begin to realise just how complex the case is.

I liked the setting of the story. I could picture the remote locations and hear the locals speak as I read.

McKay's team have their work cut out for them, with a number of threads overlapping each other, and team members being pulled in different directions. I enjoyed the working dynamics between the investigators, especially McKay's personality and how despite his best intentions, he'd still get in trouble with his superiors.

Despite the case being so complicated, the story remains enjoyable and doesn't become confusing due to Alex's clear and concise writing style. The pace was steady throughout, but sped up towards the end. I didn't work out how the investigation would be resolved, but the ending brought all the strands together well.

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### **LJ (On The Shelf Reviews) says**

This is the second in the series but like most crime books, it can be read as a standalone.

The book is set in the Black Isles in Scotland, which is a nice change from London or Manchester. DI Alec McKay has just moved to the Black Isles after a separation with his wife, when he stumbles on to the crime scene of notorious crooked policeman Jackie Galloway. It is dismissed as an accident until other members of Jackie's unit start showing up dead. Alec finds himself sidelined after being one of the last people to see one of the victims alive. It's then up to his colleagues DS Ginny Horton DI Helena Grant to investigate but Alec can't keep his nose out.

I loved DI Alec McKay, with grumpy exterior and his talent for getting himself into trouble. I also liked the supporting characters, DS Horton and DI Grant, they were well formed characters with their own voices and gelled well with Alec.

The story had me guessing quite a lot. I honestly had no idea who the killer was going to be until right at the very end, which turned out to be a surprising twist.

I liked the use of some Scottish phrases, like ach, hen and blethering but they were used quite a lot, it did get a little repetitive on occasion. I actually would have liked a bit more Scottish slang.

Also there was quite a few deaths, which it's a crime book I expect that, but I lost track slightly of the victims by the end.

Overall a fantastic book with plenty of action that will keep you turning page after page. After reading this book I actually went and brought the first in the series, Candles and Roses.

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### **Donna Maguire says**

[https://donnasbookblog.wordpress.com/...](https://donnasbookblog.wordpress.com/)

I thought that this was a brilliant book and as soon as I finished I knew it was going to have to be a 5 stars read and up there with my top crime reads of the year! I loved the pace and the twists and turns throughout the plot and the setting with it being somewhere I know and love - I always love a book that's set somewhere I've actually been! As soon as I finished the book I went and downloaded the first book in the series now as clearly I've been missing out on some excellent writing!! Definitely an author I'm going to be looking for in the future - a superb book!!!

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