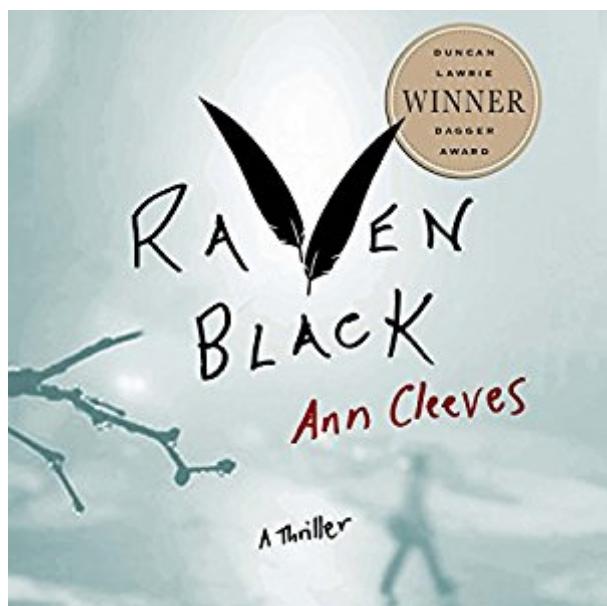


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# Raven Black: Book One Of The Shetland Island Quartet



## Synopsis

Long a celebrated crime writer in Britain, Ann Cleeves' fame went international when she won the coveted Duncan Lawrie Dagger for this amazing suspense novel, *Raven Black*. Like Colin Dexter's Inspector Morse or Peter Robinson's Inspector Banks, Cleeves' new detective, Inspector Jimmy Perez, is a very private and perceptive man whose bailiwick is a remote hamlet in the Shetland Islands. It is a cold January morning, and Shetland lies beneath a deep layer of snow. Trudging home, Fran Hunter's eye is drawn to a splash of color on the frozen ground, ravens circling above. It is the strangled body of her teenage neighbor, Catherine Ross. The locals on the quiet island stubbornly focus their gaze on one man - loner and simpleton Magnus Tait. But when detective Jimmy Perez and his colleagues from the mainland insist on opening out the investigation, a veil of suspicion and fear is thrown over the entire community. For the first time in years, Catherine's neighbors nervously lock their doors while a killer lives on in their midst. Ann Cleeves is sure to dazzle US mystery listeners with this unforgettable series debut. This series is the basis for the hit BBC show *Shetland*, starring Douglas Henshall, which attracted over 12 million viewers in its first two nights on the air.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The first of Ann Cleeves' Shetland Island Mysteries, *Raven Black* is an outstanding classic British detective tale. I love the characters in these books, but it is the atmosphere and remoteness of the Shetland Islands that really make this story unique. It is like the islanders live in the modern world,

but at the same time they are always 25 years behind the times. It takes time to get bodies off the island to the medical examiner, a storm can delay evidence testing for days, internet and cell phones can be unreliable. These conditions increase the plot's tension. I have read all of the Shetland Island books and loved them. If you are new to the series make sure to read them in order. Read this one first.

SETUP: Place: Mainland Island, Shetlands. Time: Present. Crimes: Two - suspicious deaths committed years apart. Were they connected? Principal suspect in both murders: An elderly man who now lives alone. Resident Detective: James Perez, assisted by special team from Scotland. Characters: Too numerous to list, but not too many to remember. Your reviewer did not follow this series on TV. is my first 'Shetland' mystery by Ann Cleeves; though I did read my first Vera Stanhope book by the same author days earlier. In my opinion is a polished, eminently readable and interesting detective mystery. For me it flowed right along. 'Couldn't put it down' is the usual term. Low-key Detective Perez is a likable character. And by me the guilty party or parties was/were not suspected. I have another 'Shetland' mystery here and ready to begin. I have ordered more of them. They are en route. I look forward to reading all. Having read the book which contains Shetland Islands descriptiveness of sociology, terrain, sea, climate and weather, I'm sorry that I never even once considered them as a place to visit. I never travelled north of Scotland. Now I am too old to go - and am sorry. On the other hand those islands are rural in makeup. As a 'city boy' I have lived in rural places in the U.S. for periods of years. I suspect that Shetlanders are similarly unenthusiastic about receiving such outsiders except for the favorable economic results that flow therefrom. This I gather from reading .

It's a good, entertaining book in the series with a location I in the Shetland Islands. The book "Shetland" should be read before reading any of the other books in the series. It has a map of the island group but unfortunately, most of the place names in this book cannot be found on the map. I also wonder what the translation is of the "Up Helly Aa" words that are the title of the annual festival on that name.

The story takes place on Shetland Island... a small scottish town. A young girl 16 years old is found murdered in the snow Detective Jimmy Perez is the investigator on the island. He grew up on the neighbouring Fair Isle and is familiar with the locals and the way of life. Detective Perez begins questioning the people involved right away so that he will have all the necessary information when

the detectives from the larger city arrive on the scene .We learn about all the local people and their relationships and feeling about the murder. It seems that 10 years previously another young girl went missing - she was never found. The towns people blame Magnus of the murder though. Magnus is a simple man who lives alone. He lived in the same house with his mother his entire life - but she recently died and now he lives there alone! love the character development - the intricacies of people. Ann Cleeves is an amazing writer

If you became besotted with the Shetland series through the BBC series you may be disappointed by the books. The personality of Perez is different enough in the novels to perhaps disappoint. As others have noted the stories are told from enough different points of view to become disconcerting and to disrupt a smooth narrative flow.

This was a good mystery, with many characters to choose from, to be the murderer. Island life, or small town life, was well represented, with its strengths and challenges for adults and children. I enjoyed the characters and the way the story was told from many of their perspectives, without giving away the murderer until the end. Well written. I'll be reading the rest of the series.

Since I have read Ann Cleeves' "Vera" books, I knew I'd like this Shetland Islands series book. It took me to a place I had no knowledge about and I enjoyed that. The story line is great and I like the main character, D.I. Perez.

I'll definitely read the rest of the Shetland Quartet and maybe check out some of her other stuff. I really liked the characters, everyone has depth, you can understand them even if you don't like them. This is very well paced, it's hard to find a well paced murder mystery. It's also a good balance of personal information and the mystery, often I find I'm bored by the personal side stories in a mystery novel but I didn't find that here. Great twist at the end; as an avid detective novel fan I assumed the murderer wasn't one of the top suspects (or at least not for the obvious motives) so I was waiting for the shoe to drop - Cleeves hits you hard and fast with the reveal in the last 10 pages. Overall great good fun.

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