



The Last Dance

Ed McBain

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In this city, you can get anything done for a price. If you want someone's eyeglasses smashed, it'll cost you a subway token. You want his fingernails pulled out? His legs broken? You want him hurt so bad he's an invalid his whole life? You want him...killed? Let me talk to someone. It can be done. The hanging death of a nondescript old man in a shabby little apartment in a meager section of the 87th Precinct is nothing much in this city, especially to detectives Carella and Meyer. But everyone has a story, and this old man's story stood to make some people a lot of money. His story takes Carella, Meyer, Brown, and Weeks on a search through Isola's seedy strip clubs and to the bright lights of the theater district. There they discover an upcoming musical with ties to a mysterious drug -- and a killer who stays until the last dance.

The Last Dance Details

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Author : Ed McBain

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From Reader Review The Last Dance for online ebook

Steve Goble says

Not the best in the 87th Precinct series, but even a sub-par McBain is a pretty good read. The problem with this one, compared to better McBains, is that the central mystery itself is not terribly compelling, and most of the people the cops run across in their investigation are kind of bland. The saving graces of this book are McBain's prose, the immersion into gritty big-city life, and the feeling that these are real cops on the job. This novel also features a heavy dose of Fat Ollie Weeks, from a neighboring precinct. Ollie is a contemptible human being, but he's actually an effective cop. Reading about Ollie, you are simultaneously appalled by his thought processes and behavior and inspired by the seemingly fearless way he goes into dangerous places in pursuit of clues.

This novel leaves some loose ends, not because McBain is a sloppy writer, but because, damn it, that's how real life works.

Fans of the series will enjoy this, though it won't likely rank among their favorite McBains.

Cathy DuPont says

I've read bunches and bunches of McBain (and his other pen names) but not sure if I'm liking the 87th Precinct series.

I'm giving it one more book then I'm moving the ones I have on the shelf, out...out to the thrift shop to be replaced with some books that I know I will love to read.

So there, 87th Precinct.

Tony Gleeson says

Number 50 in the 87th Precinct series, this one came as a pleasant surprise after its slightly disappointing predecessor, "The Big Bad City." A nondescript old man dies in a threadbare apartment. His daughter claims he had a heart attack but it quickly becomes obvious that he was killed by hanging and taken down. A broad and odd cast of suspects emerges, around the revival of an old Broadway play. McBain has great fun with a serpentine plot and his usual wry observations of show business personalities.

Skip says

The weakest book in this series, as far as I recall. Could not wait for it to end. An elderly man, is found dead in bed by his daughter, but is fully clothed. As it turns out, he inherited the rights to a play, which a director is trying to revive, and has offered a share to the daughter. Then a series of other seemingly unrelated parties start dying. The pairing of the detectives keeps switching, and too many parties. Did not like this one.

David Mast says

Good crime mystery. Would like to read other books by Ed McBain.

Doris says

This book in the long running tale of the 87th Precinct had me wondering where the tale was going. As is usual with a McBain story, I was never quite sure who to doubt or condemn as the villain. When the story concluded the villain, and the reason, were both a surprise.

One thing that I do enjoy in these stories is that McBain seems to delight in the unexpected, and in twisting the usual into the unusual.

Another tale well done from the master of suspense. (note - did not receive 5 stars due only to the resolution needed a bit more fleshing out.)

Vicky D. says

This is my 3rd book by this author, I loved that he referenced an old book/movie he wrote in the story in very coy way. I love these Characters

David Highton says

A great story from the 87th - Carella and Meyer investigate the apparent suicide of an elderly man and the plot gets deeper, with Kling and Brown and Willis plus Fat Ollie Weeks picking up a potentially linked murder in the 88th Precinct. Published in 2000 this is near the end of the series.

James Thane says

The fiftieth novel in the 87th Precinct series may not be the best of the bunch, but it's still a pretty good read. When a woman named Cynthia Keating calls the 87th Precinct to report that she has found her father, Andrew Hale, lying dead in bed, apparently of a heart attack, Detectives Steve Carella and Meyer Meyer respond.

The woman insists that she walked in the door and found her father lying just as the detectives see him, but the detectives wonder why the dead man is lying under the covers, fully clothed except for his shoes. They wonder why Cynthia called the cops instead of simply phoning for a doctor or an ambulance. Mostly they wonder why the corpse's feet and lower legs show signs of postmortem lividity, an indication that the man was almost certainly hanged.

Things are obviously not as they appear and the more the detectives dig into the case, the stranger things appear. The investigation will take Carella and Meyer into the world of the theater and into a couple of seedy strip clubs as well. Along the way, a long-time character in the series will be lost, creating yet another investigation that must be pursued. It's another very good read that nonetheless leaves any long-time reader of the series more than a little depressed, knowing that there are only four books remaining in it.

LJ says

The Last Dance - VG

Ed McBain - 50th in series

The hanging death of a nondescript old man in a shabby little apartment in a meager section of the 87th Precinct is nothing much in this city, especially to detectives Carella and Meyer. But everyone has a story, and this old man's story stood to make some people a lot of money. His story takes Carella, Meyer, Brown, and Weeks on a search through Isola's seedy strip clubs and to the bright lights of the theater district. There they discover an upcoming musical with ties to a mysterious drug -- and a killer who stays until the last dance.

More complex than some, a true police procedural

Mimi says

I was randomly given this book and decided to give it a chance. My lower rating should not indicate that I did not like it, because I did.

For me it was far too simplistic, predictable and left loose ends I would have preferred to tie up. It was blatantly obvious who was connected to the murders in the very beginning and the "twist" wasn't too very exciting and was also very predictable.

Spoilers ahead in this section somewhat, please do not read further if you have a desire to read in the near future. The death of the female entertainer, in my opinion, was thrown in as a red-herring but never properly explained. The detectives sort of guessed at what happened but there was never any confirmation and it annoyed me immensely. I was waiting up until the last few pages to find out why she was murdered for sure but never had that curiosity fulfilled.

I will probably never read this book again, but that is not to say I won't seek out other books by this author. Although it was predictable it was not unpleasant and his writing style was not horrible. This book just wasn't for me.

Lance says

Closer to four and a half stars, this 87th Precinct novel has the usual detectives - Cartel, Weeks, et al at work again. This time, what starts off as an insurance fraud investigation turns into multiple murders over the rights to a play written many years ago. McBain writes in his typical character driven method that makes the reader care about each detective...And some of the suspects as well. The only reason this isn't five stars is

that it wasn't the usual nice clean ending to a McBain story. Still a great read. Or in this case listen as I listened to the audio book.

John Irby says

McBain has earned every award ever given for cop genre writing. He's also a master at writing dialogue that always rings true. I've read and enjoyed maybe six or seven others of his, and though they are all similar, they're all very well written and always quite interesting. I heartily recommend this story and any other of McBain's if you like good murder mysteries solved by the men and women in blue. Rarely is there sex in his stories, but when there is, it's well told. John E. Irby

K says

The 50th novel in the series and just as enjoyable as the first. Perhaps there are other issues of our gang at the 87th precinct that were more compelling, but this was still classic McBain-- and no one writes police procedurals and dialogue better.

Some reviews are a bit more critical, but when the author gives us a story that includes Fat Ollie Weeks-- the best cop you will ever loathe-- plus Carella and Meyer, and the interracial couple of Kling and Sharyn Cooke, the department's deputy chief surgeon, and on & on. Come on, have some fun with one of the best authors of the genre, or of any genre for that matter.

Ron says

Well, not the best offering by Mr. McBain, but, still a very readable book. By now, the 87th Precinct detectives are so well engrained into my psyche that I don't even pay attention to how their characters are developed. But, the others, the victims, the perps, those are the characters that I look at now. And, I didn't get that good of a hold on either of them here.

As I said, not one of his best. But, then, a bad 87th Precinct novel is better than a lot of other writers best. Just not up to the standards of Mr. McBain, in my opinion.

But, still, a readable novel. Or, listenable, in my case.
