



The Last Policeman: A Novel (The Last Policeman Trilogy)

By Ben H. Winters



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"[The] weird, beautiful, unapologetically apocalyptic Last Policeman trilogy is one of my favorite mystery series."—John Green, author of *The Fault in Our Stars* and *Paper Towns*

Winner of the 2013 Edgar® Award Winner for Best Paperback Original!

What's the point in solving murders if we're all going to die soon, anyway?

Detective Hank Palace has faced this question ever since asteroid 2011GV1 hovered into view. There's no chance left. No hope. Just six precious months until impact.

The Last Policeman presents a fascinating portrait of a pre-apocalyptic United States. The economy spirals downward while crops rot in the fields. Churches and synagogues are packed. People all over the world are walking off the job—but not Hank Palace. He's investigating a death by hanging in a city that sees a dozen suicides every week—except this one feels suspicious, and Palace is the only cop who cares.

The first in a trilogy, *The Last Policeman* offers a mystery set on the brink of an apocalypse. As Palace's investigation plays out under the shadow of 2011GV1, we're confronted by hard questions way beyond "whodunit." *What basis does civilization rest upon? What is life worth? What would any of us do, what would we really do, if our days were numbered?*

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The Last Policeman: A Novel (The Last Policeman Trilogy) By Ben H. Winters Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #64424 in Books
- Brand: Quirk Books
- Published on: 2013-05-13
- Released on: 2013-05-13
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 7.99" h x .91" w x 5.28" l, .70 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 336 pages

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Amazon Best Books of the Month, July 2012: It's not often you hear a book described as a pre-apocalyptic police procedural. But in the hands of Ben Winters (*Sense and Sensibility and Seamonsters*), the mash-up of murder mystery and gloomy end-of-world melodrama works perfectly. Detective Hank Palace knows the world will likely be destroyed in six months by the meteor headed toward earth like a bullet. But unlike those who are giving up, quitting jobs, doing drugs, running away, or killing themselves, Palace has a job to do. He's got a murder to solve. So he keeps plugging away, unwilling to let the looming apocalypse distract him from finding the killer. Palace is an appealingly off-kilter character, more goofball than hard-boiled. So it's a very good thing that this is the first in a planned trilogy. --Neal Thompson

Amazon Exclusive: Q&A with Ben H. Winters

The Last Policeman is set in a world in which a massive asteroid is hurtling toward Earth, but the novel centers on one detective's murder investigation. Where did you get the idea to combine these two disparate elements of storytelling?

Well, you know, story ideas are like giant planet-dooming asteroids: they always take you by surprise. But I've always had a soft spot for certain kinds of science fiction, books that imagine one grand change to the human situation and tease it out. P. D. James's *Children of Men* is a marvelous example, or Philip José Farmer's *Riverworld* series.

The "pre-apocalyptic" side of this "pre-apocalyptic murder mystery" definitely came first. I thought it would be fascinating to imagine my way into the sad and terrifying last months of civilization. Then I set about imagining the right hero for this kind of book, and I thought that what I needed was someone who is extremely dedicated to his work, who cannot let the world end before solving the puzzle before him. That's where the character of Detective Henry Palace came from, my intensely, even bizarrely dedicated public servant.

The obligatory question: What would you do if Earth would be annihilated in six months?

Well, I'm under contract with Quirk Books to write the sequel to *The Last Policeman*, so first I'd get that done.

Just kidding. I think, honestly, that I would spend time with my children. I'd read them a lot of books, and take them to beautiful places, and try to prevent them from hearing anything about what was coming. (The idea of that, by the way, makes me tearful, as it did periodically over the course of writing this.)

Can you give us any details about the upcoming second and third novels in the series?

Like *The Last Policeman*, each of the sequels will have at its center a crime that Palace is trying to solve. But, also like this one, each will be at least equally interested in the details of the disintegrating world, and in plumbing the psyche of this lawman: how and why he remains "on the job" even as the job, along with the rest of civilization, crumbles around him.

Review

“A genre-defying blend of crime writing and science fiction.” —Alexandra Alter, *The New York Times*

“*The Last Policeman* books offer an appealing hybrid of the best of science fiction and crime fiction.” —*The Washington Post*

“In his acclaimed *Last Policeman* trilogy, Masters showed off his mastery of edgy, sardonic wit — there’s nothing like an asteroid speeding toward Earth to bring out the black humor in people.” —*Newsday*

“Sharp, funny, and deeply wise.” —*Slate.com*

“Darkly intriguing.” —*Discover*

“I’m in the middle of it and can’t put the dang thing down.” —*USA Today’s Pop Candy*

“Ben Winters makes noir mystery even darker: his latest novel sets a despondent detective on a suspicious suicide case—while an asteroid hurtles toward earth.” —*Wired.com*

“In his *Last Policeman* trilogy, for which he won both the Edgar Award and the Philip K. Dick Award, Winters took a standard science fiction trope — the final months before an asteroid slams into Earth — and mixed it with some of the conventions of the detective novel, imbuing his apocalyptic scenario with an extra measure of urgency and poignancy.” —*The San Francisco Chronicle*

“Winters’s writing is funny, surprisingly tender, and thoroughly human.” —*Ellery Queen Mystery Magazine*

“Winters constructs a sturdy, functional, entertaining page-turner.” —Greg Cook, *WBUR.org*

“I’m eager to read the other books, and expect that they’ll keep me as enthralled as the first one did.” —Mark Frauenfelder, *Boing Boing*

“Normally, only Stephen King and Dean Koontz can suck me into a book and not release their stranglehold until I, exhausted from lack of sleep, have turned the last page. Now [Ben Winters] has joined their ranks...*The Last Policeman* is extraordinary—as well as brilliant, surprising, and, considering the circumstances, oddly uplifting.” —*Mystery Scene*

“*The Last Policeman* succeeds both as a mystery, with a quirky detective and an intriguing whodunit, and as a piece of apocalyptic speculative fiction. That’s good news. The even better news is that this novel is supposed to be the first of a planned trilogy, with each case occurring closer to the moment when, as Henry repeatedly notes, ‘Bam!’ And that is something we can anticipate with a good feeling.” —*Sacramento News & Review*

“Full of compelling twists, likable characters, and a sad beauty, *The Last Policeman* is a gem.” —*San Francisco Book Review*

“The best genre fiction holds a mirror up to society while also providing edge-of-the-seat excitement, and *The Last Policeman* did that and more.” —*Las Vegas City Life*

“This is a book that asks big questions about civilization, community, desperation and hope.” —*io9.com*

“An entertaining and well-plotted tale.”—*Wired.com’s GeekDad*

“*The Last Policeman* presents a fascinating portrait of a pre-apocalyptic United States.”—*Tor.com*

“A heck of a lot of fun.”—*Locus*

“Resonant and powerful.”—*Locus*

“Ben Winters vividly describes the decline of civilization in this pre-apocalyptic story, and spins a wonderful tale...This engrossing story is the first in a planned trilogy. It is a well-written mystery that will have readers eagerly awaiting the second installment.”—*New York Journal of Books*

“If the next two books are as good as this one, I can’t wait for the end of the world.”—*Asbury Park Press*

“Winter’s novel is a solid noir detective tale, set in a pre-apocalyptic world where the coming destruction is an unavoidable aspect of life.”—*Colchester Sun*

“Winters is masterful in crafting a plausible image of a society that’s hanging onto sanity by its fingernails as it teeters on the edge of mass hysteria...This is a novel that grabs ahold of you and doesn’t let you go until the very end.”—*The Nashua Telegraph*

“A fascinating character study.... This novel combines the best of detective investigation with philosophical debate and science fiction.”—*My Edmonds News*

“Absolutely outstanding, I completely loved it from start to finish and I’m already rueing the fact that there will only be two more in the series...this gets the highest recommendation I can give. Buy it.”—*In Search of the Classic Mystery Novel*

“A promising kickoff to a planned trilogy. For Winters, the beauty is in the details rather than the plot’s grim main thrust.”—*Kirkus Reviews*, starred review

“A solidly plotted whodunit with strong characters and excellent dialogue...This memorable tale is the first of a planned trilogy.”—*Booklist*

“This thought-provoking mystery should appeal to crime fiction aficionados who like an unusual setting and readers looking for a fresh take on apocalypse stories.”—*Library Journal*

About the Author

New York Times best-selling author **Ben H. Winters** won an Edgar Award for his debut mystery *The Last Policeman*. His YA novel *The Secret Life of Ms. Finkleman* was also nominated for an Edgar Award. He lives in Indianapolis with his wife and three children.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Eric Frances:

Do you have favorite book? When you have, what is your favorite's book? Book is very important thing for us to understand everything in the world. Each book has different aim as well as goal; it means that guide has

different type. Some people feel enjoy to spend their time and energy to read a book. These are reading whatever they have because their hobby is definitely reading a book. How about the person who don't like reading through a book? Sometime, person feel need book whenever they found difficult problem or perhaps exercise. Well, probably you will require this *The Last Policeman: A Novel (The Last Policeman Trilogy)*.

Karl Schueller:

Reading a book tends to be new life style in this particular era globalization. With reading you can get a lot of information that could give you benefit in your life. Using book everyone in this world may share their idea. Guides can also inspire a lot of people. Lots of author can inspire their particular reader with their story as well as their experience. Not only the storyline that share in the publications. But also they write about the data about something that you need instance. How to get the good score toefl, or how to teach your sons or daughters, there are many kinds of book which exist now. The authors in this world always try to improve their skill in writing, they also doing some exploration before they write to the book. One of them is this *The Last Policeman: A Novel (The Last Policeman Trilogy)*.

Kenneth Kelly:

Reading can called mind hangout, why? Because if you find yourself reading a book particularly book entitled *The Last Policeman: A Novel (The Last Policeman Trilogy)* your brain will drift away trough every dimension, wandering in each and every aspect that maybe unidentified for but surely will end up your mind friends. Imaging every single word written in a guide then become one form conclusion and explanation that maybe you never get just before. The *The Last Policeman: A Novel (The Last Policeman Trilogy)* giving you an additional experience more than blown away your thoughts but also giving you useful info for your better life with this era. So now let us present to you the relaxing pattern the following is your body and mind will probably be pleased when you are finished examining it, like winning an activity. Do you want to try this extraordinary shelling out spare time activity?

Timothy Quintero:

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