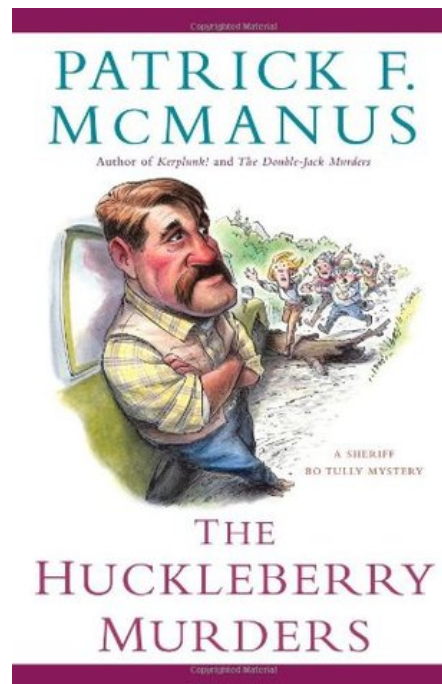




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The Huckleberry Murders: A Sheriff Bo Tully Mystery (Sheriff Bo Tully Mysteries)

The Huckleberry Murders Details

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Author : Patrick F. McManus

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From Reader Review The Huckleberry Murders for online ebook

R Vanklav says

A fun summer read. Characters are genuine, story line straight. Nice back porch no drama read.

Lisa says

This is the first and only book I've read by this author so I went into it with no preconceptions whatsoever....and it turned out to be one of the most ridiculous books I've ever read. I gather that this book is one of the later ones in a long series so maybe if you started out with the character of Sheriff Bo Tully in the beginning you can appreciate his "charms" or whatever, but speaking as a newcomer to the series, the sheriff is one of the least believable characters I've ever encountered. I only made it about 1/3 of the way through this book because it was just so terrible and I didn't sympathize with the Sheriff's character at all. I normally don't post reviews of books I haven't finished but when I saw how many 5-star reviews this one had gotten I thought I'd perform a public service to anyone else who isn't already in the Bo Tully fan club and might unsuspectingly pick up this book. So for what it's worth, here's a review of the first 1/3 from the perspective of someone who HASN'T drunk the Kool-Aid.

The hero of the story is the sheriff in a small town in Idaho and he's investigating a triple-homicide that occurred in the local huckleberry patch. The plot is moving forward at a ridiculous pace with our bored-sounding sheriff suddenly getting these huge epiphanies, "feelings" and hunches that are based on absolutely no physical evidence but always turn out to be right. His methods of police work are questionable to say the least. He tells absolutely everyone he talks to, from criminals to his mother, exactly what's going on in the case right down to the fact that he doesn't have a clue who the killer could be, but then cautions them not to tell anyone. Well shoot, Sheriff, they won't have to tell anyone; you've already blabbed the whole case to everyone in town! And it's hard to root for our good old boy when he blithely instructed one of his deputies to attack a man for no reason and put him in the hospital just so the sheriff could question the man's girlfriend without interruption. And warrants? Who needs a warrant when you're the sheriff!

But the thing that really makes this story jump right off believability train is the people who inhabit this town. Every male character is described in vivid detail as being either old, crazy, dirty, or misshapen in some way...except the hero of course. While all the women, EVERY SINGLE ONE is described as being smoking hot. Even the hero's mom is a great looker. Every woman in town, whether old or young, rich or poor, is a 10 on the attractiveness scale. And guess what? They ALLLLLLLL turn to putty under the weight of the sheriff's "charms". This story is apparently one of a series and the back story tells us that the sheriff has slept with just about every woman in town already, and for those he hasn't quite gotten to yet, they all just can't wait for their turn. By about the 1/3 mark already 3 random women who had never met the sheriff before made incredibly bold advances on him right after shaking hands for the first time. They've all heard about his tomcat reputation, and that's apparently the world's best aphrodisiac. None of them mind that he's never going to be faithful to them because, gosh, mama's just gotta get her a piece a dat!

It's just so ridiculously unrealistic! The sheriff openly flirts with every woman in town, and sleeps around wherever he pleases, even going so far as to ask his former lover and secretary/deputy (sexual harassment in the workplace much?) to make reservations for him to take another woman out to lunch, and the jilted lover doesn't mind because our "hero" is just such a lovable scamp. Come on, GTFO of here. It doesn't matter how powerful and self-possessed the woman is supposed to be when we first meet her, in half a sentence she descends into a hormone driven airhead who can't wait to rip the hero's clothes off.

In one scene, a female FBI agent arrives to tear the sheriff a new a**hole for deliberately not informing the FBI of the triple-murder that occurred on federal land. That's not just a lack of courtesy, that's an actual violation that he could be reprimanded for. She's described as wearing a no-nonsense pants suit with her hair in a tight bun and a by the book, take no prisoners attitude. She even tells the sheriff that she's impervious to flattery and she knows all about his "wiles" and that they won't work on her so he shouldn't try.....and 30 seconds later all he has to do is drawl that she's the purtiest FBI agent he's ever seen and call her sweetheart and she melts into a meek girlie girl who smiles at him showing dimples and asks if she could please accompany him on HIS investigation, where she hangs back and watches him violate people's Miranda rights and break into houses without a warrant and then compliments him on how efficient his methods are!

It's just all so ridiculous and unbelievable that I can't even pay attention to the rest of the story, which isn't that great anyway. Once I realized that the town was entirely populated by misshapen men and gorgeous women, I just couldn't stop noticing it. What the heck kind of town is this anyway? Are the boys all exposed to radioactive industrial waste right after birth while the girls are shot up with an instant beautification potion?? And why is everyone in town so in love with the sheriff? He's not a nice guy. He's a bully, a womanizer, and kind of a jerk. He assigns derogatory nick-names to every man he meets, especially those who might otherwise be seen as semi-attractive. For example, the genius-level lab tech working for the sheriff's office was nick-named "Lurch" because he's tall, and the former special-ops deputy who put the aforementioned boyfriend in the hospital with only one blow to the kidney has been nick-named "Pew" for reasons that aren't adequately clear. Yet neither of these guys is the least bit offended by the names, and all good-naturedly joke about how the sheriff gets all the women...even the ones they themselves are interested in dating!

Once we got introduced to the sheriff's father, the former sheriff, though I finally figured out what this town is. A fascist monarchy. We're told that the sheriff's office has been held by a member of the hero's family for over 100 years. It passes from father to son like a damn crown. It's also proudly touted that our hero's father was corrupt and abused his power....much like our hero does himself. So it's not too much of a stretch to realize that the townsfolk are all terrified of their tyrannical sheriff's apparently unstoppable power and rush to please him in every way lest they waken the beast. I know that might sound a little hysterical but seriously, what else could possibly explain the bizarre appearance and actions of the people in this quaint little town?

Oh, wait, I know what! We're reading the author's personal self-insert fantasy fiction, and this has to be the worst, most blatant example I've ever seen.

Marfita says

Patrick McManus makes even huntin'n' fishin' look like fun. I've read his story collections for years and would hurt myself laughing. He has since included mysteries in his arsenal and while they aren't as gut-wrenchingly hilarious as his shorter works, this one was fun to read.

Bo Tully is the sheriff of Blight, Idaho where law is not done by the book as much as by the seat of the pants. Characterization in these is a more toned-down version of those in the short form. Eddie Muldoon appears, but he too seems to have had the edges rubbed off him. Everyone seems more ... adult.

There is still plenty of humor in Tully's "animal magnetism" and his bevy of female admirers who must be juggled with care. His teasing of the FBI agent is not at all mean-spirited and he remains likable to the reader.

In this particular story, he starts out to pick huckleberries from his secret huckleberry patch and some other pickers rush to him to tell him about some dead bodies nearby - shot execution-style. Other odd things are happening: Marge Poulson is still insisting that her ex-husband Orville was murdered by the man watching

Orville's house for him while he went to Mexico. Just because Marge couldn't stand to live with him doesn't mean she doesn't care.

There's a new woman in town and folks say she's a psychic, but she just seems to be an intelligent and attractive woman who is happy to dispense business advice she accrued through her MBA and her experiences on Wall Street. Then again, she is prone to gnomish utterances.

Tully enlists his regular deputies as well as his infamous father, Poke Wimsey (the guide, former high school teacher, and - dare I mention - poet), Dave (the tracker-martial arts specialist), and even a motorcycle gang. And no monologizing killer!

Second reading: I have absolutely no recollection of reading this. I don't even remember writing the review. So, it only takes 5 years and my reading clock is reset? It was just as entertaining and didn't go where I expected it. This reminds me of the Agatha Christie novel I read and guessed the solution but the second time I read it I was stymied. Now, explain that!

Jim Becker says

Good basic mystery with humor.

Megan says

I feel a little bad marking this only three stars. After all, I read it, and enjoyed it, and would happily read another from the same series. At the same time, I feel like there were some fairly large flaws.

McManus writes these really funny outdoorsy tall tales. His tone is tongue-in-cheek, and the humor can be quite broad. It seems to me, though, that this book is so tongue-in-cheek that I can't get a handle on who the characters are meant to be, or how they are meant to be interacting. Maybe this doesn't bother everyone, but, I hang my hat on appreciating the characters, so, it bothers me.

Additionally, the set up of this book could be the farcical mimic of at least one other detective series - grizzled rural detective, morally strong, but legally fuzzy. Other side kicks slot in nicely. Now, obviously, no one has been completely unique since Shakespeare, but, it still seems like there wasn't something entirely new in the set up.

Jan Polep says

Kind of a cozy good-old-boy mystery, the 4th in the Bo Tully series. Tully is small town Idaho sheriff in a town of off-kilter characters and as a sideline is a chick magnet. 3 young fellas murdered in a huckleberry patch lead to adventures in swamp stomping, camping, and backwoods hiking to figure out who did what. If you like your mysteries with a touch of dry humor, try this series .

Gary says

finally made it to library and found this book sitting on shelf waiting for me. had not read any books by

patrick mcmanus in many years but he is excellent writer and i soon will look for others he has written with this character.

Eric_W says

This is a marvelous series: delightful characters, humor, a decent mystery. What more could you ask for.

Sheriff Bo Tully is off to collect huckleberries so his mother can bake him some pies when he meets three hysterical women who have discovered three bodies. There are three hard looking men in town worth investigating. And a local wife who insists her ex-husband has been murdered. Because the bodies were found on federal land, the FBI sends an agent to verify that the investigation is done properly. She soon falls under the spell of doing things the "Blight" way.

Series keeps getting better.

Ellen says

The Huckleberry Murders by Patrick F. McManus.

This was fun listening to it on CD. The narrator Tom StechSchulte did a wonderful job with the voices and especially the humorous parts of the book.

Sheriff Bo Tully is a western law man who is way ahead of the pack on both sides when it comes to understanding what the truth really is. The Sheriff is searching for a sociopath in the murder of a local rancher, when he comes across the execution style murder of three men on Scotchman Mountain in an area called Huckleberry Patch.

What made me keep listening to this CD was the humor in it. It truly is a fun read. The mystery part of it is not there as in most mysteries but the humor made it worthwhile.

If you're looking for an enjoyable read that's more fun than mystery...this is the book for you.

Carolyn Rose says

Amusing with a stripped-down feel.

Bonnie says

Loved it! Read in one day! Great read, tongue-in-cheek humor, quick, but enjoyable read about Sheriff Bo Tully & Blight County, he had more deputies than I expected for a backwoods Sheriff. Interesting story about him going huckleberry picking so his Mom would bake him a pie, & discovering 3 dead bodies. Poke, Pap Tully, FBI agent Angie, Rose, Daisy are a few of the colorful characters in this book. Enjoyed the story & plan to read more about Sheriff Bo Tully's adventures!

Kris says

This is probably one of the worst books I have ever read. Patrick McManus may be wonderful at writing non-fiction (I wouldn't know, this is the first book I have ever read by him) but writing mystery fiction and especially dialogue is not one of his strengths. I was especially taken aback by the dialogue between the sheriff and the women in the novel. The dialogue that he wrote for the FBI agent could not have been more ridiculous. I would expect FBI agents depicted in books to be more technical and not sound as though their vocabulary consisted of a couple of hundred words and phrases. McManus's depiction of small town life may be close to the truth but the Sheriff's relationships with his female co-workers as well as the women in the town were downright stupid and sexist. I am a serious mystery fiction fan and this does not even come close to comparison with some of the wonderful mystery series out there. BLAH!

Maddy says

PROTAGONIST: Sheriff Bo Tully

SETTING: Blight, Idaho

SERIES: #4 of 4

RATING: 2.75

Although local rancher Marge Poulson and her husband Orville are divorced, she has enough feelings for him to be concerned when he goes missing. She reaches out to Sheriff Bo Tully, who immediately concludes that Orville is a victim of the ranch caretaker, Ray Crockett. Crockett claims that Orville is alive and has just gone on an adventure. Meanwhile, Crockett claims that he sends Orville's Social Security check to him every month. Something is not right in Blight (Idaho); Tully feels that Crockett is a sociopath and it's just a matter of time before Orville's body will be found. I wondered how Tully came up with his judgment about Crockett's mental health; there was nothing substantial for him to come up with his conclusions.

Against his better judgment, Bo is convinced by one of his deputies and former lover, Daisy Quinn, to meet with a local fortune teller to see if she has a vision of where to find Orville. Etta Gorsich, destined to be a new love interest, claims not to be a psychic, although she sometimes has psychic flashes. When Bo finds three bodies near his secret huckleberry picking patch, the Orville investigation is temporarily put aside. FBI agent Angela Phelps, also a possible romantic interest, is sent in to help, as the crime took place on federal land. Eventually, everything connects and the mysteries are solved—all except for the mystery of why every woman that Bo meets falls hard for him.

Billed as a "comic mystery", I found that the humor in this book was spread mighty thin. Every once in a while, Tully came up with a wry observation; but other than that, the laughs were in short supply. The author seemed more interested in presenting Bo as a lady killer, who hit on every woman that he met and was always successful in his romantic endeavors. Frankly, I saw this as wish fulfillment on the part of the writer. Perhaps being female has made this particular aspect of the books distasteful to me. What was the purpose of having four women lose their heads to him?

I'd love to see McManus reduce the emphasis on the romantic elements in these books and focus instead on some of the potentially interesting characters that he has created—Bo's father, Pap, and several members of the police department in particular. Barring that, this is not a series that I will continue to follow.

Lucinda says

The Huckleberry Murders (Simon & Schuster 2010) finds Bo Tully, sheriff of Blight County, Idaho, picking huckleberries at his favorite remote spot in the hills. His solitude is disturbed by the screams of several women who have stumbled across three bodies in a nearby huckleberry patch. The three young men, who look like farmers with their calloused hands and old clothing, have all been shot in the back of the head, execution style. Bo finds faint traces of a possible 4th victim who fled, and calls in his friend Dave, an expert tracker, to see if he can pick up the trail. Meanwhile, Marge Poulson keeps dropping by the office, insisting that caretaker Ray Crockett has killed her ex-husband. Bo can't find any evidence against Crockett, but he suspects there may be a connection between him and the three murdered men. FBI agent Angela Phelps arrives to help with the investigation, and Bo takes her deep into the swamp to try and discover what the murderers were trying to hide. Amusing banter, quirky characters, and Bo's unorthodox yet effective investigative style enliven this funny 4th in the series.

Patrick F. McManus page at SYKM

Carol says

This is the first I have read of the Huckleberry Murders Series, this is #4. The Huckleberry Murders (Simon & Schuster 2010) finds Bo Tully, sheriff of Blight County, Idaho, picking huckleberries at his favorite remote spot in the hills. His solitude is disturbed by the screams of several women who have stumbled across three bodies in a nearby huckleberry patch. The three young men, who look like farmers with their calloused hands and old clothing, have all been shot in the back of the head, execution style. Bo finds faint blood traces of a possible 4th victim who fled, and calls in his friend Dave, an expert tracker, to see if he can pick up the trail. Meanwhile, Marge Poulson keeps dropping by the office, insisting that caretaker Ray Crockett has killed her ex-husband. Bo can't find any evidence against Crockett, but he suspects there may be a connection between him and the three murdered men. FBI agent Angela Phelps arrives to help with the investigation, and Bo takes her deep into the swamp to try and discover what the murderers were trying to hide. Amusing banter, quirky characters, and Bo's unorthodox yet effective investigative style enliven this funny 4th in the series.

Recommend

Dean says

I'm a huge Patrick McManus fan, and have read most of his short story collections. When I saw this novel for sale, I picked it up. Okay, it's a bit entertaining, but it's not near the romper room of laughs as his other books. McManus presents some memorable characters, a grade B- mystery (on a scale of A-F), and some interesting dialogue.

The book is an entertaining read, but perhaps, knowing his other works, my expectations were setting the bar pretty high. This is the first "Bo Tully" series of his that I have read. I may, at some point, read another, but if it's par with this one, I won't read another. There are too many good books out there waiting to be read, and so little time, so little time...

However, his other books are not only worth reading, they're worth re-reading, which I have done, which is

why I'm such a big fan of his.

Greg says

I've been a long time fan of Patrick McManus' humor columns in *Outdoor Life* and *Field & Stream*, which I used to read in my younger years. When those magazines came each month in the mail, I would immediately turn to the last page, and read the latest about Pat and his exploits. When I learned that he was writing novels, I checked this one out. The humor is similar to what I remember, and for that I enjoyed it. However, as a novel it leaves much to be desired. Really, it is simply a vehicle for his humor. The plot wouldn't stand on its own and the characterization is woeful. Nonetheless, it was a nice reminder of the humor I remember so well, and for that I gave it a three rating.

Cathy Cole says

I enjoy McManus's Bo Tully mysteries. Even though they're played more for laughs than police procedure, I'd still like to get Tully together with my other two Stetson-wearing sheriffs, Walt Longmire and Bill Gastner. Tully is so busy in this one, that it appears that he's ignoring a woman who insists that her ex-husband has been murdered. Notice how I say "appears."

McManus's humor is reminiscent of Mark Twain, and I loved how all the pieces of the puzzle fit together in this one. I recommend this entire series to anyone with a fondness for light-hearted mysteries featuring a good old-fashioned lawman who believes in using cunning and guile to solve crimes. Good stuff!

Ralph Carlson says

Damn, I love these Sheriff Bo Tully mysteries.

John Bess says

I enjoy the author's humor. OK book to read and I'll have to pick up others in the series. I do prefer Pat's books of funny stories over this one though.
