



Declan's Cross

Carla Neggers

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Rediscover this riveting novel by master of romantic suspense Carla Neggers, where an escape to an idyllic Irish seaside village is about to turn deadly.

For marine biologist Julianne Maroney, two weeks in tiny Declan's Cross on the south Irish coast is a chance to heal her broken heart. She doesn't expect to attract the attention of FBI agents Emma Sharpe and Colin Donovan, who are in Ireland for their own personal retreat.

Ten years ago, art was stolen from a mansion in Declan's Cross, but it has never been recovered, and the elusive thief never caught. Now, from the moment Julianne sets foot on Irish soil, everything goes wrong. The well-connected American diver who invited her to Ireland has disappeared. And now Emma and Colin are asking questions.

As a dark conspiracy unfolds amid the breathtaking scenery of Declan's Cross, the race is on to stop a ruthless killer...and the stakes have never been more personal for Emma and Colin.

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Declan's Cross Details

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From Reader Review Declan's Cross for online ebook

Sarah says

I really felt I had to finish listening to this audiobook, because I'd listened to the other two. But it was not enjoyable at all, apart from some descriptions of Ireland.

The pace is SO slow, and the author feels obliged to repeat things several times but in dialogues between different people - just in case we didn't quite understand the first time.

The storyline is inadequate and even unlikely, especially the link between a 10-year-old art theft and a present day "probable accidental death". It just drags on and on... I thought this was a murder mystery, but it turns out to be "Romantic Suspense", a genre that I must try to avoid at all costs from now on.

Mina De Caro (Mina's Bookshelf) says

My full 4.5 star review (REVIEW OF DECLAN'S CROSS AND A SIP OF IRISH SWEETNESS) available on MINA'S BOOKSHELF <http://minadecaro.blogspot.com/2013/0...>

A serial art heist, a thief on the loose, a murder mystery that had me scratching my head to the very end, a light touch of romance, and all the breathtaking beauty of an old Irish village tucked on the Celtic Sea cliffs...the visual impact of this third installment of the Sharpe & Donovan series is simply spectacular. A master of her craft, New York Times best-selling author Carla Neggers delivered in all the crucial aspects of the romantic suspense genre. I only wish I had taken the time to read the prequels (Saint's Gate and Heron's Cove) as the three books are loosely connected and character development of the lead couple has an arc that originates in the first installment.

[...]

One of the aspects that intrigued me the most about this complex, plot-driven murder mystery is that all the members of the Irish village seem to be an ideal suspect. Almost in the vein of a cozy 'whodunit', the author chooses a small, secluded, and socially intimate community as a setting for her crime story. While downplaying the gritty elements of a thriller and avoiding the sensual intensity typical of a romance novel, Carla Neggers banks on a rich stock of supporting characters in order to keep her readers on their toes and mislead them on a trail of red herrings from the first to the last chapter. Not all the loose ends will be tied up at end, a clear indication that we will hear again from the serial art thief and from Sharpe Fine Art Recovery. All in all, Declan's Cross is a clever combination of compelling and well thought-out suspense plot, highly descriptive narrative, atmospheric setting, and subtle romance. With its thematic focus on the stunning beauty of coastal Ireland, complex and mysterious connection between a serial art thief and a charming seaside village, Neggers' new novel will transfix armchair sleuths as well as lovers of all things Celtic.

Ayny says

Made it to page 160, and just could not finish. TOO repetitious and predictable. The book could be edited by a third, easily.

AH says

Declan's Cross by Carla Neggers was a nice, relaxing read. First, I was transported off to a very green Ireland (as I look out at the snow-covered lawn), to the fictional town of Declan's Cross where the sheep outnumber the two legged inhabitants. The story revolves around an art theft that had taken place 10 years earlier. Everyone in the story seems to be attached to this art theft to some degree. The main characters are in US law enforcement. Emma Sharpe works for the FBI where her specialty is fine art thefts. Her love interest Colin Donovan is an undercover agent. They are in Ireland on a much needed romantic vacation which ends up being a murder investigation/art theft.

I thoroughly enjoyed this book and literally devoured it over 2 nights. This is book 3 in a series and while I have not yet read the earlier books, I did not feel lost at all. I will be going back to read the earlier books.

I won this book in a Goodreads First Reads giveaway.

Meg says

I have been a fan of Carla Neggers' books from way back when, and after a few years' break happily jumped into this one. Unfortunately it didn't "sing" to me as I'd hoped it would. The great setting of a small seaside Irish village was a big plus for this one. A good mystery storyline was another. However, these were overshadowed by repetition, such as the gross overuse of "FBI agent", constant rehashing of the art theft stuff, and the rehashing of various relationship problems. Maybe this was an aberration, as I'm not quite ready to give up on this old favorite author. I have some older titles still to check out.

Julie says

Declan's Cross by Carla Neggers is a Harlequin MIRA publication due for release in August 2013.

This is the third installment of the Donovan/Sharpe series.

Set in Ireland, Colin and Emma are still looking into a decade old art theft, while being on a vacation of sorts.

Julianne and Andy Donovan, Colin's brother, went through a bad break-up. Now, Julianne is off to Ireland to Declan's Cross as well. She was to meet up with a new friend of hers named Lindsey, a fellow marine biologist enthusiast. But, when Julianne arrives in Ireland, Lindsey is MIA.

When Lindsey's body is found after what looked like a fall from a cliff, Julianne's plans are disrupted. Colin and Emma are there to help Julianne deal with the death of her friend, thank goodness, since it turns out that Lindsey may have been pushed off the cliff.

When Lindsey's father shows up, it's discovered that he may have had a connection to the stolen art that Colin and Emma are investigating.

Could Lindsey's death have a connection to the stolen art?

Meanwhile, there are several romantic entanglements going on. Colin and Emma are still trying to sort out the occupational roadblocks in their relationship, Julianne is suffering terribly from a broken heart, and Andy still loves her even if he thinks they are on two separate paths in life.

The owner of the Inn in Declan's cross, Kitty, and Sean, a local policeman and sheep farmer have a history together and may at last have found a way to be together.

I have enjoyed this series so far. This is one of Carla's better efforts. I love Ireland and the descriptions of area has me daydreaming of a romantic getaway.

Mysteries involving stolen art is also a favorite of mine, and so I was intrigued from the beginning of this one. The story moves at a good pace, no boring lulls. You may have the killer figured out, but you won't put the whole story together. The romance was more about healing broken relationships and making them work than about sexual content. There was a really nice HEA for everyone and the promise of more adventures in the future for the characters in this series. Thanks to Netgalley and Harlequin for the DRC of this novel.

Overall a B+

Becky Condit says

Declan's Cross was somewhat repetitive and the book was stretched where it didn't need to be. The mystery of the art thief is not resolved by the end, which was a bit frustrating. I liked the characters but the writing style and the plot development were not satisfying. I think another reader may enjoy it more than I did but it was a stretch for me.

Jonel Boyko says

This is one of those novels that make you want to go to Ireland. Neggers' describes the countryside so vividly and eloquently that you're just dying to be there. You can see and feel everything that happens. Everything flows so well that you are never caught off guard, even if the storyline does take a few twists and turns. I was quite intrigued by the way that the author played with the story's pacing to match with the current events. The pace varied throughout, along with minute changes in the writing style to highlight various emotions and activities. I also appreciate the fact that this novel, although part of a series, can be read as a standalone without missing a great deal of detail. There are certain aspects that the author assumes the reader knows from past stories in the series, but it is quite easy to follow along in this one without having read them.

The characters in this novel are quite intriguing. You get to know each as an individual, a family member, and as part of a couple, however rocky the road they may be on. It's quite an intriguing look at the inside of a close family when things are less than perfect on the outside. I also enjoyed how Neggers developed the characters. Everything was laid out so naturally. As a reader you never feel like she is throwing information at you just so that you have it. Each character is developed in the manner that you would get to know someone in person. The supporting cast is developed in the same manner. You get to know them in the aspects that are relevant to their role in the story.

This is an absolutely fantastic romantic suspense. It sets the bar for the genre. Each aspect is kept in proportion to the whole while creating a completely unforgettable whole. As a reader, you find yourself trying to put the puzzle pieces together, right alongside the characters. I wouldn't hesitate to recommend it to anyone.

Please note that I received this novel free of charge from the author/publisher/blog tour company in exchange for an honest review.

Kimberly says

I finished the book and said, "ugh, finally". I think the plot was drawn out. There was mention of an art thief throughout the book. I thought they might catch the art thief by the end, but no. I guess that's how the author gets someone to read the other books in the series. This was my first book I read in the series and I don't think I will be reading books by her in the future.

Steven Walle says

Declan's Cross is a great read. Declan's Cross is a fictional town in Ireland. It is set near Artmore in the hills of Ireland. The book concerns art thieves, murderers, divers and many lovers. The plot is very stacked and fun to work out who done it.

If you look up "Declan's Cross" on youtube you will see some beautiful slides of the area of Ireland.

Enjoy and Be Blessed.

Diamond

The Lit Bitch says

3.5 stars.

The first thing I have to say about this novel....the author makes the assumption that you have read the other books in the series. There was a limited recap for new readers. For me, I really struggled with the first part of the book because I didn't understand the dynamics of Emma and Colin's relationship or any of the references to past books etc. I was a little lost, but that said the story was still engaging.

For me, not having the author fill in the gaps or at least give a little more of a recap was distracting. I spent too much time trying to figure out how things fit together so the first half of the book was slow and tedious for me. However once the actual story started to develop I was fully engaged in what was happening.

Neggers does a nice job with the complex story line. I wasn't ever really sure where things were going and how everything was going to come together. I loved how thought out all the plots were. She obviously had a very detailed idea of where she wanted things to go and the execution of those ideas was spot on!

This novel was hard for me to rate. I don't want to give the book a lower rating simply because I haven't read the others in the series, but at the same time I struggled with the book because of that.

The writing and plot was well researched and solid but the pace was a little slow in spots and I really felt a little lost without having read the other books. I think it would have helped if the author provided a little more background for new readers of the series.

See my full review [here](#)

Anita says

Fair warning - you really need to read these books in order if you want the full story on these characters. Julianne was a waitress at Hurley's restaurant in Rock Point, Maine. She is a graduate student in Marine Biology on a trip to Declan's Cross, Ireland to try and heal her broken heart and decide how to live without Andy Donovan. When she arrives, she finds her ride from the airport a no show. Since Julianne doesn't know Lindsey Hargreaves well, in fact, Julianne has just met the woman, she is concerned when two days later she still has not shown up. Julianne takes a walk and finds Lindsey dead on the rocks. Accident or foul play?

Emma Sharpe and Colin Donovan are in Declan's Cross, Ireland to try and repair their relationship and decide what their future holds. They were not there to solve a murder or a decade old art theft, but some things just don't go as planned.

Tough reading. A lot of rehash of the whole set up of the relationship of Emma and Colin. The mystery was very slow to take shape and the romance, well, not much of a romance, which was a real disappointment. 3 1/2 stars

Cardyn Brooks says

Declan's Cross is written in a style that assumes every reader has a memory disorder. Aside from the gorgeous descriptions of the lush Irish countryside and village, it's mostly dialogue in which the characters rehash the same information multiple times. Emma and Colin are referred to as FBI agents on practically every page.

An odd pattern of constantly referring to most characters by their first and last names (even when Emma is thinking about her own grandfather, with whom she's very close) combined with a strange emphasis on Sharpe Fine Art Recovery, and personality traits of the Sharpes versus the Donovans make this my least favorite in the series, which started strong.

Maybe reading the Rock Point e-short would have helped tie together what felt like a fantastical leap of logic about the art theft from a decade earlier and Julianne's trip to Ireland at the beginning of Declan's Cross.

My hope is that C.N. will return to her usual fast-paced, coherent thriller style in the next installment.

Jeffrey says

In Declan's Cross, the latest Sharpe Donovan novel, Carla Neggers increases the mystery element of this romantic suspense series, when Lindsey Hargreaves, a marine biologist, disappears in this idyllic Ireland

village.

Julianne Maroney has journeyed to Ireland to meet with Hargreaves and join her marine biology project and also to escape her latest misadventure in love with Colin Donovan's brother. But Hargreaves has disappeared.

Meanwhile, Emma Sharpe and Colin Donovan are in Ireland to try to re-kindle their relationship, which was strained in Heron's Cove. When Sharpe learns that Maroney is in Declan's Cross, the site of a mysterious art theft, she persuades Donovan to go with her to meet Maroney. What first seems like a chance to re-visit the site of a famous art theft and comfort a Donovan family friend soon turns into a murder investigation when the body of Hargreaves turns up.

Who would have killed the young marine biologist and why? Was it the thief from the prior art theft at Kitty O'Byrnes hotel who has returned to Declan's Cross to steal again? Was it Kitty O'Byrne's young son, who had a crush on Hargreaves? Or was it Hargreaves disengaged father, who refused to provide Hargreaves any more money for her marine biology project. There are other suspects that come up as well.

So while Sharpe and Donovan poke their way into the Irish investigation of Hargreaves death, Sharpe also investigates the past art theft at Kitty O'Byrnes hotel.

And not to leave out the romance, Maroney and Donovan do not seem through with each other. Sean Murphy, an Irish cop, who is on leave after suffering injuries in the line of duty, still hopes to find romance in his old flame, Kitty O'Byrne and Sharpe and Donovan have more than enough heat themselves.

Neggers keeps all of the investigations running apace, makes Julianne Murphy's struggles with her heart seem real, and keeps the Sharpe Donovan relationship at the romantic center. Their are red herrings a plenty, and the real villian is not so clear until the very last chapter.

Mary says

Declan's Cross is the third book in the Sharpe and Donovan series by Carla Neggers. While I haven't read the first two, I have read other books by the author in the past.

The good news is that you don't need to read the first books in the series but it might help with a little background information on the characters.

I wanted to like Declan's Cross. Set in Ireland with some mystery and some romance. Alas, it just didn't work for me. My two main issues were the details of the storyline and the pacing. The story is about a young woman who is found dead on the cliffs near the house where she was supposed to meet a friend. We all knew that she was murdered (how else would you have a story) but for the majority of the novel, it's still "probably an accident". I also felt that the continued forcing of a connection between current events and an art robbery that happened several years ago was unnecessary.

This goes to my issue with pacing. The story rehashed what we knew about this murder, what we knew about the art robbery and relationship issues between the major couples - OVER and OVER and OVER. I was sick of hearing about Andy not wanting to commit, Julianne feeling like she shouldn't have fallen for him, Colin not knowing what to do about his FBI future, Emma unsure about her long-term plans with Colin, Sean and

Kitty. Blah, blah, blah. For page after page there was no forward movement with the story. I found myself just wanting it to end.

2/5 stars for a great description of the beauty of Ireland but a disappointing story.

Thank you to the publisher for providing an ARC through Netgalley in exchange for an honest review.
