



## Whiskey Island

*Les Roberts*

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#16 in the Milan Jacovich mystery series . . .

An oversized appetite for fine dining, flashy suits, and Las Vegas call girls has made Cleveland councilman Bert Loftus the target of media scrutiny and an FBI investigation that may end his career. Now he says someone is trying to kill him. Eager to identify his attacker but not so eager to work with the cops, Loftus turns to private investigator Milan Jacovich (pronounced MY-lan YOCK-ovitch) for help.

A working P.I. can't afford to be too choosy about his clients, so Milan takes the job—though he's not inclined to take Loftus's story seriously. At least it will be an opportunity to break in his new employee, young powder-keg Kevin "K.O." O'Bannion.

Milan and K.O. quickly notice that something smells fishy—and it isn't just the Whiskey Island Marina, where local power brokers down pricey drinks in front of Lake Erie sunsets. Loftus and several Cleveland landlords appear to be involved in something much darker than a typical cash-for-favors trade.

After a kinky call girl is found dead near the Cleveland Zoo and secret sex tapes are discovered in her downtown high-rise, Milan and K.O. must follow a trail of bribes, bullet casings, and debauchery to find the killer and uncover the true menace amid the muck of local government corruption.

Luckily they have the help of Cleveland police detective Tobe Blaine, a tough-as-nails officer recently relocated from Cincinnati. She and Milan team up in their search for clues and discover they have much more in common than crime . . .

## Whiskey Island Details

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## From Reader Review Whiskey Island for online ebook

### Monnie says

Wish I could remember who got my husband Jack and I started reading books by Les Roberts, but all I know for sure is that it happened many years ago (this latest one, *Whiskey Island*, is the 16th featuring cop-turned-private detective Milan Jacovich). Initially, our interest was piqued because the P.I. lives and works in Cleveland, Ohio. Since it's a little more than an hour's drive from our home, we're fairly familiar with the city, and it's fun to read about places, and sometimes people, we know about.

Over the years, we've enjoyed many of Roberts's other books (*The Strange Death of Father Candy* and *We'll Always Have Cleveland: A Memoir of a Novelist and a City* among them). The latter, by the way, offers an up-close-and-personal look at what brought Roberts from the sunny climes of California to the more dismal Lake Erie shores of northeast Ohio. Out west, among other accomplishments, he was a writer for the TV show "Hollywood Squares," "The Andy Griffith Show" and others and has been a professional actor, jazz musician and teacher.

It is the books in the Jacovich series that remain our favorites, though, and *Whiskey Island* doesn't disappoint. The topic of disappointment *does* crop up in the context of Roberts's books, though, since none are available for the Kindle (if you've got a Nook ebook reader, you're in luck, but we have to settle for a hard copy, and that does *not* make me a happy camper. The only reason I'm willing to consider that option, in fact, is that so far, at least, I enjoy the books so much that I don't want to miss one.

Here, Jacovich - who's pushing 60 - takes on a brash young apprentice who's trying to make his bones as a private investigator and maybe earn a full-time job as well. Sometimes, their relationship mixes no better than oil and water, but for the most part, they get along fairly well. Even before Kevin O'Bannion - known as "K.O." - gets a desk and computer, the firm is hired by a city councilman who's been indicted on many counts of bribery and other deeds unbecoming a public official and is looking at serious jail time. Apparently, or so he claims, someone is trying to murder him - and Jacovich and K.O. take on the job of finding out who that someone is before it becomes mission accomplished.

All that leads the dynamic duo through a maze of dishonest politicians and businessmen, a call girl who turns up dead and hanky-panky on Cleveland's Whiskey Island - hence the name of the book. Along the way, both Jacovich and K.O. get lucky in the female department, although it's hard to tell which of the guys is more surprised.

The chapters alternate from the point of view of Jacovich and K.O., and interestingly (well, to me, anyway), the Jacovich chapters are written in the first person just as in past books, while K.O.'s are written in the third person. I'm not sure what the significance of that is other than to keep things changed up a bit, but the thought certainly occurred to me that perhaps K.O. has a future in a spin-off series - perhaps even taking over when Jacovich decides he's too old for the private eye life and calls it a day.

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### Evelyn says

Milan Jacovitz is back with a new partner Kevin "K.O." O'Bannion. When they are hired to find out who is

trying to kill a city councilman under indictment for bribery, they uncover the deep roots of corruption in the city.

This whole storyline is so similar to the recent Cleveland/Cuyahoga Co. corruption scandal it is funny. Roberts lays it out how business is done in no uncertain terms. Best to read the series in order and those who are familiar with Cleveland will enjoy all the local references.

(an aside--Turney Rd is in Maple Hts., not Middleburgh Hts.)

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### **Judie says**

Milan Jacovich, Cleveland PI, has been featured in most of Les Roberts' books. For those who have read earlier ones, he hasn't changed (though he's slowed down a little). The format has changed in that the chapters alternate between his perspective and that of Kevin "K. O." O'Bannion who was introduced in THE CLEVELAND CREEP and is now Milan's assistant. I found the change refreshing.

The story reads like the lead story from the Cleveland media for the past few years: Politicians and their cronies being arrested, indicted, and facing long jail terms for corruption. The main one is a Cleveland councilman, Bert Loftus. He has become so powerful that he thinks he can do and get anything he wants and doesn't see anything wrong with dispensing and demanding "favors" and "gifts." The favors include trips, meals, house improvements, and sex in return for jobs and contracts. Loftus comes to Milan with the story that someone is trying to kill him and wants Milan to find out who it is and protect him. As much as Milan dislikes him, he takes the job partly to see if the story is true and find the perp and partly to give his new associate, K. O., some on-the-job training.

The body of one of the people they speak to turns up in Cleveland Metroparks Zoo and her murder. They are now working with/against the law enforcement departments from Cleveland, Cuyahoga County, and the FBI.

It does not go overboard with violence or sex. In addition, Milan finds a new love interest.

I loved the following dialogue:(To avoid any spoilers, I am omitting the identities of the speakers.) One of the characters is asked to meet with a police sketch artist and is asked if he/she has ever worked with one before.

"Never met one--just seen them on TV."

"Those are actors."

"But we're all actors, aren't we? Trying to be what people think we are, or what we should be."

The book is a good read. I've been looking forward to reading it for several months and was not disappointed.

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### **Janice says**

This is the 16th book in the Milan Jacovich series. Cleveland councilman Bert Loftus is being investigated by the FBI for corruption in office. He goes to Milan for help because he says someone is trying to kill him. Milan and his new assistant K.O. start working on the case and but aren't sure if Loftus is to be believed. They think he may be involved in something much darker than just a cash for favors business. Milan and

K.O. end up looking for a killer and to uncover the corruption of the local government. I'm still not sure I like Milan having this assistant. I also have this feeling that Les Roberts may be setting up to have Milan's last book published after his death like Christie did with Poirot - can't say exactly why but partly d/t something he said in his memoirs and partly d/t Milan's age and health. It's a disturbing thought, and I hope I'm being a little nutty. :[ Rated 3 1/2\* because don't like Milan changing because of age/health nor his assistant.

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### **Sam Sandra says**

Loved visiting Milan again. Laughed how it parodies our Cuyahoga County shenanigans. Les Roberts is an excellent author with a giant sense of humor.

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### **April Helms says**

The latest in the Milan Jacovich series. This was a fun read. One, the storyline is taken straight from the local headlines. One of those situations where the names have been changed, but you'll still recognize where the influences came from, especially with Bert Loftus. Loftus, a longtime Cleveland Councilman, approaches Jacovich and his new assistant Kevin O'Bannion about providing protection for him. Loftus is in trouble with the federal government for a lot of bad behavior while holding office - and now Loftus is convinced someone is trying to kill him. Jacovich very reluctantly agrees to take the case, but doesn't take the councilman seriously until a call girl connected with Loftus is found dead near the zoo. I couldn't figure out whodunit until the end. What I really liked though was the rapport between the old-school and veteran Jacovich and O'Bannion, and the chemistry between Jacovich and Cincinnati transplant Tobe Blain, a detective who now works for the Cleveland police in homicide. I'm very curious to see how things pan out with both O'Bannion and Blain. I'm not sure whether Jacovich and O'Bannion are going to become strong allies, rivals or even adversaries. I noticed one prominent character missing from this story who has been in most (if not all) of Roberts' other books, and I wonder if that character might be a factor. Time will tell. Blain is a great addition to the series, a fun character who Jacovich can banter with - and possibly be happy with. It was nice seeing things end on a more or less positive note for Jacovich; he was rather dumped on in the previous two books (although to be fair, a lot of the dumping in The Cleveland Creep was his own darn fault.) All in all, I think fans will really enjoy this latest installment.

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### **Jerry B says**

“Whiskey Island,” a Cleveland suburb, is the setting for Roberts’ 16th in his 19-book set featuring Slovenian private eye Milan Jacovich. The dogged leading man, despite his foibles, is a fellow we really like – our reason for sticking with this relatively straightforward mystery series. This time his new intern “KO” gets almost as much ink as his aging boss, as he continues to learn the ropes of mostly interrogation of any person the two can find that bears on their current case. {We note that

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Another Milan Jacovich crime novel. Well paced with lots of Cleveland landmarks. Roberts has done well with Milan's new young assistant Iraq vet KO Bannion who is not just a mini-Milan. But Roberts can't help interrupting his cynical, hard-boiled fairly realistic tone about corrupt city politics with the occasional PC moral thrust in like a silent movie title card. Roberts introduced a couple called Ogres (their name is Ogrin) two minor characters always described as ugly, fat, repellent in every way. Spoiler alert: we all finally learn that they are not husband and wife but two sisters, one of whom is a trans-something and then KO makes the kind of remarks that any young man would make (though not in front of the Ogres), only to be upbraided by the ultra sensitive Milan for being cruel. Winding the book up on a silly note.

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### **Ellen says**

Reading a Les Roberts novel is taking a trip back to my hometown, Cleveland, Ohio. His Slovenian detective, Milan Jacovich, is another treat. I am married to a Slovenian and he writes about their quiet hardheadedness well. He also is letting is character age. Milan can no longer handle the rough stuff, due to concussions, so he hires a Afghan vet, KO or Kevin O'Bannion, who is small, of Irish descent, rough around the edges, and so much tougher than he looks. They are going to make a great pair.

Yes, I enjoyed the book. My husband and I said the same thing...now I need to visit and go eat!! The restaurants that appear in the book just touch the edges of the great food of all ethnicities to be found in Cleveland. Thanks, Les for another trip to the city I will always call home.

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### **Casey Hickman says**

Another easy local Cleveland mystery. Cracks me up to keep Milan's sex life interesting. A 60 year old large Slovenian man probably isn't capable of snagging a much younger pretty black woman. LMAO

Oh, and in every book, the author has to mention how Cleveland is not a sunglasses wearing crowd. Where this idea comes from, is absurd. If the sun is out, people wear sunglasses.

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### **Karen says**

I won this on Goodreads giveaway program. I have not read Les before and I am looking forward to getting started on it.

And I have not been disappointed. I love PI stories, and since I've printed out a map, I am following Milan and KO all over Cleveland.

This was a very professional writing job. I found the storyline interesting and the execution excellent. Some of the politicians were just a bit over the top, and the heavies were certainly mean. All of the main characters were well drawn. I enjoyed this adventure of Milan and KO and look forward to more in the series.

Recommended!

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### **\*Avonna says**

I was so happy there was another Milan book to read! He reminds me of all the great places in Cleveland I haven't visited lately. This book was especially interesting since it was told in alternating chapter point of views between Milan and K.O.(Scared me for a second when I didn't think one of them would make it to the next book.) Milan is Cleveland's greatest P.I. and may he work for many years to come!

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### **Marc Leroux says**

I received this as part of the GoodReads giveaway program.

I hadn't read Les Roberts before. I was wandering through a second-hand bookstore in Wickliffe a few weeks before, and noticed that they were showcasing a lot of Les Robert's work, so I moved this up to the top of the reading pile. I'm glad I did.

This is a throwback to the hardboiled detective, in the Spenser model. The story is fast paced and well written. Milan Jacovich takes a job protecting a corrupt politician. He doesn't like the guy; he doesn't have to. He just has to keep him alive. The story is believable, and very similar to real events. The story is told from the perspective of Jacovich and his partner Kevin O'Bannion, who have different takes on the case. Overall a very good read. I'll pick up some of the others in the series.

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### **Cheryl says**

I hate to say that initially, I did not want to finish this. I got to page 53 and swore someone else was writing the character & dialogue for the new assistant Kevin (K.O.) O'Bannion, as it just was not up to the exemplar writing I've come to expect and enjoy from Roberts. But I had to know what was happening in Milan's life, so I picked it back up and can honestly say, I am glad I did. Though not thrilled with O'Bannion's entrance, the story of corrupt politicians and the minions who dolt upon them, for them was dead on. Literally. Based on our own local headlines, albeit fictitiously, Jacovich proceeds to solve the case he is handed, get the woman and ..of course, ruffle a flock worth of feathers in doing so.

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### **Joe Young says**

Just a good old fashion Hard Boiled detective story with two Private Eyes alternating chapters, Milan Jacovich (Mylan) a first generation Slovenian P.I. with a Masters Degree pressing the edge of his career as he passes sixty and suffers from one too many concussions (one of the hazards of being in his business) and the apprentice he has taken on as a favor to a friend (and to help buffer his exposure to the rougher side of his profession), Kevin O'Bannion, a compact, tough, combat veteran with a juvenile criminal record, trying to gain enough sponsored P.I. experience to qualify him for a P.I. license. Milan takes a case trying to find out who is trying to kill a veteran city councilman who is being investigated by the FBI. Apparently, in Cleveland at least, any public employee may take or require bribes just to do his job an the big gun in Cleveland sponsors a prostitute who specializes in Kinky sex with those the big gun specifies. Mean time, the kinky gal has installed closed circuit equipment and recorders to gain a leg up on her retirement plan. She forfeits her life when the big gun finds out. K.O. is also kidnapped when it is found out that he had met with the crusty old prostitute even though he had no idea she was doing. I enjoyed the well balanced story with

romance for Milan and the new Homicide detective as well as K.O. and the pretty receptionist he had just met. Lots of action and involved relationships between characters. I enjoyed the story and the humor between the characters! Well worth the time to read. I intend to go back and read some of the previous fifteen novels that Roberts has completed in this Milan Jacovich Mystery series.

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