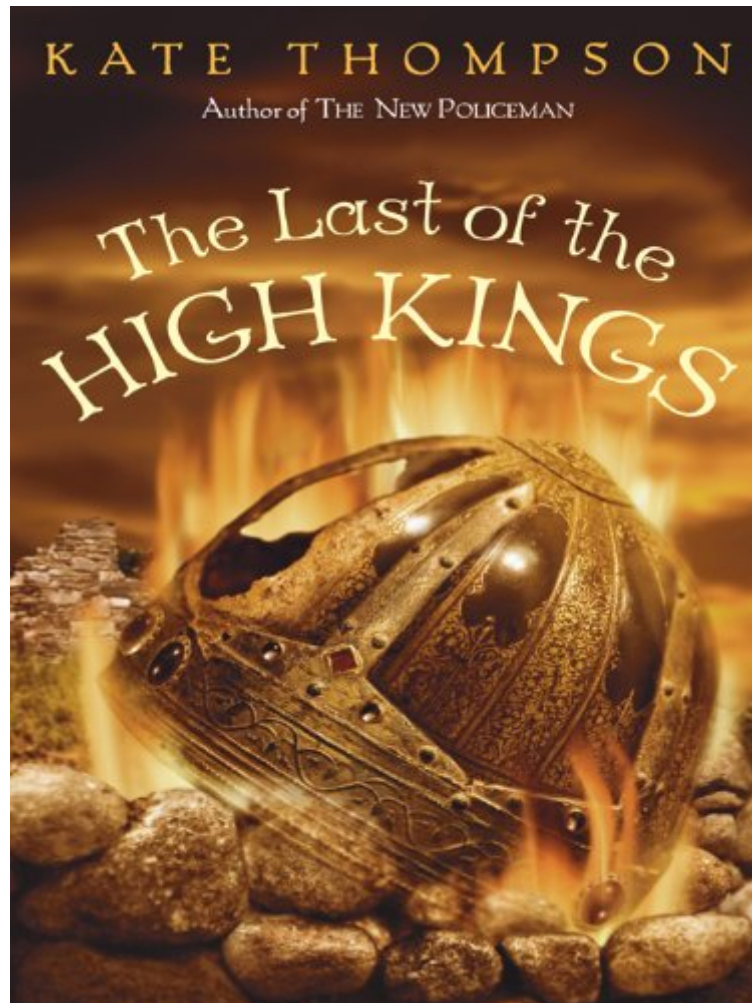




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# The Last Of The High Kings (New Policeman Trilogy)



## Synopsis

Traveling to the land of eternal youth was the only way J.J. Liddy could stop time from leaking from his world to T'ir na n'Og. But fifteen years after returning from the land of the faeries, J.J. wonders if that long-ago visit is responsible for the strange things now happening to those around him. Why does his daughter Jenny roam barefoot through the wilds, when she should be in school? When did the mysterious white goat begin to patrol the hillside? What is the secret project that J.J.'s son Donal is attempting? And who is the ghost guarding the stone beacon at the top of the mountain?—and why has Jenny befriended him? Finding answers to these questions will take J.J. and his family on the most important and dangerous journey of their lives. If they fail, it will undo all the good that J.J. accomplished fifteen years ago. But if they succeed, they will defeat the forces that are gathering to destroy all of mankind, and finally secure the future of the last of the high kings.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Not my usual reading fare but the story was interesting if a bit chaotic at times. I am happy to have

this in my library and to recommend it to others.

I enjoyed the book and the setting in Ireland, also the development of the characters introduced in the 'New policeman'. There was a good plot twist at the end that I did not expect. Wonderful writer, I read the first book because I was curious about what the middle school children found so fascinating and found it a great setting and interesting plot; for myself it was a relaxing and enjoyable read but I also read to evaluate books for my school library. I will be donating my copy. Students have worn out the New policeman and will surely follow suit with the Last of the High Kings.

As I wrote in my review of the White Horse Trick, it's an important part of a very good series. Read them all. In order helps. but I read them out of order and they still worked.

This second book in a trilogy follows the extremely intriguing The New Policeman. Readers might be disappointed that this sequel is entirely different from the first book, especially since the main character, J.J. Liddy, age 15 in The New Policeman, is now age 40 and has children of his own. Oh, but give it a read for Irish folklore tweaked into a modern day fantasy! New important characters dominate the story: J.J.'s children Donal, Aidan and Jenny, a changeling fairy child. The puka returns, just as mischievous as ever, but much more menacing. Questions are left unanswered: who was the boy whose ghost guarded the beacon, and by what merit did Mikey become the last of the High Kings? Perhaps Irish readers, having grown up among the myths aren't troubled by the story's seeming lack of definitude. No matter; Thompson soars to the head of the class with artistic license.

The Last of the High Kings (2007) is Kate Thompson's sequel to her wonderful debut novel The New Policeman (2005). Some time has passed since J.J. was last seen visiting Tir na n'Og to discover where all the time was going. In fact, quite a bit of time has passed. J.J. is now grown with a wife and children of his own. At first, this time lapse was a jolt as was the changed tone between this book and its predecessor--there was something inherently Irish-sounding in the narrative of The New Policeman that was lacking in Thompson's new book. At least, I thought it was. Upon re-reading it became apparent that the "Irish-ness" was equally present in both novels. J.J. and his wife Aisling have made a fine home on the Liddy family farm even though J.J.'s music career keeps him too busy for any actual farming. The Liddy children, teen Hazel, eleven-year-old Jenny, nine-year-old Donal, and the destructive two-year-old Aiden also keep their parents busy. Jenny is

particularly difficult to reign in with her willful nature and predilection for skipping school to wander the fields with a mysterious white goat. Although at the core of the story, none of that is where the story starts. Instead the story begins with a young man, now many, many years dead, waiting on a hill of stones to learn where his future lies. Years later, on that same beacon, a ghost stands guard over the hillside for reasons long forgotten. Throughout the novel this ghost's fate will intertwine with those of the Liddys in unexpected ways that will change the family forever. *The Last of the High Kings*, as the name might suggest, integrates a lot of Irish lore into its plot. Fairies, pukas, and of course ghosts, all play important parts in the story. These magical elements work in strange contrast with the commentary on global warming and other man-made maladies that run beneath the surface of the storyline. In terms of plot, *The Last of the High Kings* was not always as enchanting as *The New Policeman*, partly because readers will already know all about Tir na n'Og and Aengus Og but also because this book had to tread different ground and, at times, made J.J. much less clever than readers of the first book will remember. These problems became less bothersome as the plot moved forward and the story began to move along quite nicely by the halfway point. The characters found within these pages really are just as charming as those found in *The New Policeman*. Written in the third person, the narrative follows many characters' points of view. At first this might make the book seem scattered, but it gets easier as the characters become more familiar. Donal, the quiet and introspective member of the Liddy clan, is a particularly delightful addition. This technique also allows Thompson to look at the family as both individuals and a larger unit. While *The New Policeman* was largely about the land of eternal youth and fairy lore, *The Last of the High Kings* is firmly grounded in this world dealing with fantastical elements but also especially with the Liddys reconnecting as a family. (This book will stand alone without its prequel, however to get the full picture it is really vital to read both titles.)

The ghost of a young boy guards a pile of stones on the top of a mountain in the Irish countryside, and the only person who has spoken with him in the last three thousand years is Jenny. The daughter of J.J. Liddy, who traveled to the timeless world of T'ir na n'Og when he was a young man, Jenny feels dreadfully out of place in the human world, preferring to roam the rocky fields of the Burren barefoot and converse with the Párláka than go to school. The Párláka, a spirit disguised as a white goat, understands, and teaches her many things that she would never learn in school, such as how to read the winds of change. The Liddys have long accepted that this is what Jenny was like, but only J.J. and his wife, Aisling, know why that is. J.J. has been waiting for years for a deal he made in T'ir na n'Og to come to fruition, and his patience is wearing thin. Once he decides

to put his plan into action, he finds that there are many factors that he did not consider, or even understand. The ghost, the PãfÂka, and even Jenny have a major part to play in what could very well be the unmaking of the human world. As Jenny learns of her own significance, she must work out a plan of her own to save the people that she has grown to love. Although I did not read the prequel to this book, THE NEW POLICEMAN, I found this story very easy to follow, with only a minimal feeling of perhaps having enjoyed it more had I read the first book. That factor grew very unimportant as the story drew me in with its mystery and mythology. Reviewed by: Allison Fraclose

fine. my sister, comfortable, nice . Love! Sharp, cuts well, and feels balanced. good product with high quality.

It is a juvenile novel. The plot flowed through O.K. The characters developed well and stayed true. I read it to the exclusion of the 4 or 5 other works I had available because a decent/good is somewhat hard to find.

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