MYSTERY NOVEL IN THE BEST MYSTERIES OF ALL TIME SERIES

My Personal Review:
Every time I finish reading one of Chandlers Marlowe novels, I end up feeling depressed, because its one less Chandler novel that I can read for the first time. In my mind, hes that good -- he is one of the only writers that I am consistently incapable of setting down to go to sleep... I finished the last half of The Long Goodbye at about 5:00 am -- I was so wrapped up in it, that I failed to notice the time. Alas. Now, as for that review...

IF YOU HAVEN'T READ ANY CHANDLER, you should stop reading this and go take a look at his first Marlowe novel, The Big Sleep. Its worthwhile to read them in order, or at the least, to read that one first... youll get a good feeling for whether or not you like Marlowe, and youll learn a bit more about him. Then, if you like that, come back and take another look at this review.

IF YOU HAVE READ OTHER CHANDLER, then you already know, to some degree, what youre in for. You know Chandlers style, and I can promise you that this book offers up more of it, in abundance. I was a little thrown off for the first 50-some pages, because Marlowe has moved out of his trademark apartment and into a small house in a quiet residential neighborhood, and that didnt jive with me... but it works. Marlowe is, in his way, maturing. (If youve read his unfinished final work, Poodle Springs, then you know Marlowe will eventually get married. Perhaps this evolution says as much about Chandler as about his beloved P.I.)

Once the plot starts moving, of course, youre just along for the ride. Like all Marlowe novels, you have that perfect feeling of riding shotgun in the mind and conscience of a fascinating and well-developed character, and its enough to sustain you through WHATEVER Chandler cares to write about. But, as I said, this is Vintage (no pun intended) Chandler -- some of his best work. Like several other books of his, I would give it more than 5 stars if I could, because nothing he wrote deserves less. The plot develops in three acts, which seem unrelated until he begins to pull them together, and when he does so, it is nothing less than amazing to behold. (I thought I was outguessing him, and knew what was going to happen. Stupid me -- he was still three steps ahead of me, and I had egg all over my face when I was done with the last page. I love him for that.)

If youre a mystery fan, or even a fan of good stylistic writing, this is some of the best stuff you could hope for. Call it pulp if you like, and say that...
Hammett outsold him if you must, but for my money, Chandler had more style than anyone else who's ever tackled the genre. Marlowe remains one of the best, most complete, and most enjoyable creations of literature that I have ever found, and I only wish that Chandler had left us more of him.

*sigh*

BOTTOM LINE: If you haven't read this one yet, I envy you. It's a hell of a ride, and it's got plenty of re-read value. Worth owning, and a must for Chandler fans.

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THE LONG GOODBYE by Raymond Chandler - 5 Star Customer Reviews and Lowest Price!