



Death on the Downs

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While out exploring the South Downs of a wealthy town, Carole discovers the bones of a human skeleton. Jude fears it may be the remains of a young woman who once practiced her alternative therapy. It turns out the woman is alive-and living with a charismatic New Age healer. Now Jude and Carole have two mysteries to solve. Why is the woman hiding out? And if the skeleton wasn't hers...whose was it?

Death on the Downs Details


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Author : Simon Brett

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From Reader Review Death on the Downs for online ebook

Ruth says

I was initially dismayed to find this audio version of Death on the Downs wasn't narrated by Simon Brett as I enjoy his narration so much and I thought another reader might not convey the story as well or capture the characters in the same way an author can.

But I found once I'd got used to it, a different narrator didn't spoil my enjoyment at all and I was soon engrossed in the story as usual.

Paula Schumm says

I listened to the audiobook from the library. I like this little mystery series. The two female sleuths are interesting and fun. Not really rocket science; more mindless entertainment. Recommended

Carly says

****edited 01/27/14**

There are some mystery stories that you treat like a puzzle: you guess and deduct and try to figure out who the criminal and motive and method are. And when you get to the end, you either feel incredibly smug or quite foolish, because it all seems obvious in retrospect. And then there are others where it just doesn't matter, because the mystery is just the framing for the story.

Simon Brett's books fall into the latter case. All of the Fethering books that I have read follow precisely the same pattern: the two main characters poke around, they don't end up figuring out who the villain is, one stupidly steps into the villain's hands and is captured and subjected to monologuing, and the other comes to the rescue. But you know what? I don't care, because the books are just too much fun.

...

Due to my disapproval of GR's new and highly subjective review deletion policy, I am no longer posting full reviews here.

The rest of this review can be found on Booklikes.

Lesley says

I knew there was something hinky about that terribly friendly and concerned cop, even if he wasn't actually the killer.

This comes of having read far too many mysteries and thrillers in which the gratuitously helpful person with no apparent connection to the central crime turns out to be in it up to their eyeballs.

Jan C says

Another enjoyable "read" by Brett. This is the second in the series. Our heroine, Carol, stumbles upon a bag of bones in a barn on the "downs". Not really sure what downs are. Maybe we don't have them here. Certainly not around Chicago.

I think this is a relatively short series, unless he's still writing them.

But I got hooked listening to this on one of our first sunny days in a long time. The next thing I know it is evening.

Bill says

This is the 2nd book in Simon Brett's Fethering mysteries, featuring amateur sleuths, Carole Seddon and her neighbour, Jude. I liked this one more than the first; Brett has found his way now that he's got over the introduction phase of the series. The characters are familiar and interesting and the case was also enjoyable. Carole finds a cache of human remains while taking shelter from a walk on the Sussex Downs. This starts an investigation into possible suspects by the two friends, which ultimately leads to threats on Carole's life. Well-paced and most entertaining and I'm looking forward to reading more in the Fethering series and also giving a start to Brett's Charles Paris and Mrs. Pargeter series as well.

Jack Heath says

Synopsis: set in the town of Fethering. Carole Seddon finds human remains while walking on the Sussex Downs.

Cynthia says

It had more momentum than the previous book in the series. Delightful, though with the same abrupt sort of ending.

M. says

A return engagement to the seaside village of Fethering reveals more about Simon Brett's plans for this series. It seems that the Fethering series will have definite continuity, making it best for readers to follow in order. That is not necessary, but preferable.

This tale, oddly enough, only briefly takes place in Fethering. Most of the plot takes place on the downs in nearby Weldisham, where neighbors and (very) amateur sleuths Carole Seddon and Jude...uh, we still don't know her last name...try to discover the origin of a set of bones left neatly in a barn. Carole and Jude, on their

own, become better acquainted with certain residents of Weldisham in order to collect and assemble the pieces of the puzzle. Success becomes more likely, although one of the two may not live to see it!

The fondness Simon Brett has for his lead characters is evident, as they both grow in this installment. The "odd couple" of Carole and Jude are rubbing off on each other, leading to subtle changes in their lives. Carole is my favorite, and she is the main beneficiary of character development in this book. Jude's past is still a mystery, to the point of its becoming annoying, but a read between the lines near the end of the book suggests the opacity of her personal life is not deliberate.

More Fethering books await on my bookshelf...I look forward to another visit to Fethering, which is taking on that "fictional place I'd love to visit" quality!

El says

I read (well, listened to) this with my mouth hanging open. An amateur sleuth gets her information by simply asking complete strangers personal and intrusive questions ... and they all reply without so much as a raised eyebrow! And, when a potential murderer (and total stranger) stops her and asks her a load of similar questions, she just responds to his questions without so much as a by your leave. Am I living in a different world?! If a total stranger asked me where I was on the night of whenever and who I'd been married to before and whatnot, I'd tell them to mind their own business! I am now going to have to find another one in this series and see if she has learned some better sleuthing skills.

Alison says

Brilliant combination of very gentle story-telling with humour and crime. Another great read from Simon Brett. Occasional minor irritants e.g. when the post arrived with a relevant letter to Tamsin and Jude felt that it was an auspicious moment, and looked at the post, but definitely a strong 3.5 stars, rounded up to a 4 star rating.

Marfita says

Who dunnit? Seems like everyone dunnit. Everyone seems to be guilty of something in this story. You just need to fit the crime to the suspicious character.

I am continually surprised how amateur sleuths can just ring someone up and ask if they can come over and talk about the murder ... and it *works!* Carole's early attempt at dating ("How interesting!") was amusing. Gawd, have I been there. I once laughed at every single thing some guy said, as if he were some deadpan comic. Anyway, enough of my dysfunctional past love life ...

Brett actually includes the obligatory Two Bad Guys Discussing Their Crimes In Front Of the Sleuth so that they have to say, "Oh, now we've said all this in front of her - what do we do with her?" And, in true cozy fashion (although I've seen the same murderer-as-doofus scheme in *Stalin's Ghost*), the sleuth is left in a position she can either escape from or be rescued from, so the would-be killers don't have to trouble themselves with actually and personally killing a person. Oh! Oh! And let's not forget the old Policeman And Bad Guy Battle It Out On the Cliff While the Others Watch Helplessly From a Distance!

So, why do I read these books if I find these conventions so annoying? Oh, because I love to complain! I love to regale my poor husband (who wouldn't read one of these with a gun pointed at his head) with these

lunatic stories and make tea come out his nose when he can't take it any longer and finally starts laughing. Watching him laugh is the greatest delight in my life.

Of course, books like these also make me look at him warily. I was close to telling him that if he ever wanted a divorce that I would happily grant him one just so he wouldn't strangle me with his bare hands, but when I say things like that he just looks so hurt - as if I'd actually *think* anything like that about him.

Would I read another one? Oh, sure - let me at 'em! Let's see what bone-headed thing comes up in *Blood At the Bookies*, which seems to be in at the mo'.

Simon says

I like Brett's Charles Paris series. Those books are a bit edgier than this one, which is the first of the Fethring's I have read. I will read the others based upon this mystery. If the crime itself slips neatly into the cozy detective story genre (think the *Rosemary and Thyme* television pairing), Brett is a competent writer who lets you know early on in the description of the village setting that he is aware of the usual tropes. He even upends some of them, although in the end the mystery itself seems fairly obvious. However, he cheerfully follows Agatha Christie's footsteps in casting a gimlet eye upon English village life. In the end, the plot twists do revolve around the fact that while the traditional village may appear picturesque, the cost of living and tarted up renovations have irrevocably changed it. And not for the better. But Brett is honest enough to allow Carole Seddon, one of his two heroines, to see the hypocrisy. When she visits the home of a person without the standard gentrifying taste, even as she judges the woman's style she recognizes that what has replaced it everywhere else --- gleaming country surfaces, studiously chosen antiques, standardization of a pub to meet pretty expectations --- is not genuine. Moments in the book like that made the read better. Will try the rest in the series. I want to see how Carole and Jude's friendship develops.

Bhavya says

You know you are doing something wrong if the reader is not even interested to find out how the mystery is solved, isn't it?

Margaret says

An enjoyable little mystery for some easy leisure reading.
