



The Grave Maurice

Martha Grimes

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"Chew on this," says Melrose Plant to Richard Jury, who's in the hospital being driven crazy by Hannibal, a nurse who likes to speculate on his chances for survival. Jury could use a good story, preferably one not ending with his own demise.

Plant tells Jury of something he overheard in The Grave Maurice, a pub near the hospital. A woman told an intriguing story about a girl named Nell Ryder, granddaughter to the owner of the Ryder Stud Farm in Cambridgeshire, who went missing more than a year before and has never been found. What is especially interesting to Plant is that Nell is also the daughter of Jury's surgeon.

But Nell's disappearance isn't the only mystery at the Ryder farm. A woman has been found dead on the track-a woman who was a stranger even to the Ryders.

But not to Plant. She's the woman he saw in The Grave Maurice. Together with Jury, Nell's family, and the Cambridgeshire police, Plant embarks on a search to find Nell and bring her home. But is there more to their mission than just restoring a fifteen-year-old girl to her family?

The Grave Maurice is the eighteenth entry in the Richard Jury series and, from its pastoral opening to its calamitous end, is full of the same suspense and humor that devoted readers expect from Martha Grimes.

The Grave Maurice Details

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Author : Martha Grimes

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From Reader Review The Grave Maurice for online ebook

IslandRiverScribe says

We pick up Jury's story a little over a week after he gets shot at the end of the last book. This is an unusual tactic for Martha Grimes as she usually sets the timeline of her next murder case (otherwise known as a new novel) about 9 to 12 months after the last one in which Jury and Plant have been involved.

Plant believes Jury needs something to occupy his mind during his convalescence. When he accidentally overhears a conversation in a pub about the teenage daughter of Jury's surgeon being abducted almost 2 years previous and never returned, he thinks this cold case will be just the ticket for Jury's intellect and his emotional state. Little does he know that what he thinks will be simply mental rehabilitation for Jury will turn into deadly circumstances three times over as Jury's investigation begins to hit all the right - or wrong - spots.

The writing is, as always, excellently paced and the plot well-constructed. All the usual secondary characters are in place (except Fiona, Racer and Cyril the Cat since Jury is not cleared to go back to his office as yet). But the chapters told from the POV of the abducted girl, Nell Ryder, and her step-uncle, Vernon Rice, are exceptional in their ability to evoke anger, fear, hope, smiles and tears. You simply want both of them to make it through.

And, to that end, the last 50 pages will rivet you to your seat.

Sylvia Dugan says

I thoroughly enjoyed the humorous comments between Melrose Plant and Richard Jury as the story progresses during Jury's recovery from being shot at the end of *The Blue Last*. We also get a bit of an inside into Jury's personal life in this story. The mystery is a bit convoluted but its unravelling makes a good read.

Dorothy says

This book started out as a sort of homage to Josephine Tey's *The Daughter of Time*, sometimes referred to as the best mystery ever written. Like the protagonist in that book, we find Superintendent Richard Jury laid up in a hospital bed and unable to pursue his usual occupation. He needs distraction. Sergeant Wiggins brings him Tey's book to read and his doctor provides him with a much more current mystery.

When last we saw Jury (in *The Blue Last*) he was lying grievously wounded on a dock. He was found there by a dog and his boy and by his friend Melrose Plant. His life was saved and now he's in recovery, soon to be released. But in the meantime, his mind needs something to occupy it.

His surgeon catches his interest with a mystery from his own life. Two years earlier, his fifteen-year-old daughter had vanished without a trace along with a champion thoroughbred that she was tending at her grandfather's stud farm. Both the horse and the girl disappeared from the barn one night and no one has seen them since.

Jury reviews the known facts of the case and determines to investigate. He's not cleared to return to duty and so he will have some time to look into the matter unofficially.

While still in the hospital, he sends his friend Plant to the stud farm to reconnoiter the place and find out what he can. Melrose arrives to find the local police already there. The body of a woman has been found on one of the training tracks. Everyone at the farm claims not to recognize the woman. How did she happen to end up on that track?

Plant's excuse for going to the farm in the first place is to pretend that he's interested in buying a horse. As these things usually turn out when Melrose Plant is involved, he winds up actually buying a horse. A very expensive stallion.

Once Jury is released from the hospital, he heads to Northampton to convalesce at Plant's home and then he begins his own investigation into the girl's disappearance. Could it somehow be related to the murder of the woman who was found on the training track? There are few clues and Jury finds that he must attempt to piece together tiny bits of information and connections in order to try to get a clear picture of what has happened.

Martha Grimes is up to one of her usual twisting and turning plots in this book. It becomes a rather dark story as we get further into it, involving the abuse of the abducted girl and the abuse of pregnant mares kept for the production of their urine that is used in making the hormone replacement therapy drug Premarin. Grimes paints an all too vivid picture of the lives of the poor mares that are kept tied up and without a chance to exercise, their every drop of urine collected. The reader intuits that this is not going to end happily. And it doesn't.

But (*spoiler alert*) at least the mares survive and move on to green pastures.

Craig Monson says

My first Martha Grimes mystery—rather late in the game, apparently: well over a dozen others await. It was not a book that I couldn't put down, though I was always happy to pick it up. The plot is a bit quirky and tangled, with the occasional excursus, presumably as an excuse to (re)introduce a stable of eccentric characters, likely already familiar to followers of the Richard Jury series, as Brits once again make fun of each other and themselves. Amusement at wittily (even generously) drawn characterizations in these sequences can eclipse readerly confusion about why exactly we've ended up amidst the clash of the hunting set in their pinks and the animal rights set. When the horses occasionally comment (in *italic*) early on, readers will either smile or roll their eyes. (For a time I was expecting Aqueduct to admit having intentionally caused a certain rider's fall, but we're not talking *Mr Ed*.) Dick Francis enthusiasts will presumably be right at home, but less equestrian readers shouldn't be overwhelmed by all the horse talk. (It's arguably less perplexing than some of the holdovers from previous volumes in the series.) Judging from book number 18, Grimes promises plots sufficiently engaging to keep one coming back, but especially, sympathetically drawn characters whom one would be happy to encounter once again.

Debbie says

ok my stars may be unfairly low but that is because I am so uninterested in horse racing that I found this entire story/mystery just a bit boring. However I enjoyed Plant hiring a hermit - very funny.

Also I am just really annoyed that none -NONE of the questions from the previous one - The BLue Last were answered. I repeat ...NONE.

This begins right when the Blue Last ends - Jury is in the hospital recovering from being shot by Mickey. Is there a trial? Is Mickey dead yet (or did he shoot himself after shooting Jury- it wasn't clear) - Benny, Gemma, Lizaall still unanswered. It just pissed me off.

Cyanemi says

One of the best ones. This had a lot of intrigue, passions and twists. Horses and animal rights were in the forefront. I loved this book.

Lynne Tull says

I think Ms. Grimes has entered a new chapter of her writing. First of all, the animals are starting to have thoughts that we can hear/read. I have the feeling that she is channeling herself into several of the characters. This book was really entertaining at the same time introspective. Melrose and Jury are continuing with their own stories. The mystery is in between. I thought I had it figured out with the possibility of two different endings. I selected the wrong one. Recommend.

(added note: I don't think there is a BBC series featuring Richard Jury. There should be. What fun it would be if these characters came to life.)

Kathy Davie says

Odd name, great story.

Marilyn Saul says

What a disappointing book. It was extremely thin on plot and was much more a treatise on what Grimes learned about horse racing. Ok, good to have ALLLLL that information that was mostly inconsequential to the plot. I think Grimes was more interested in bringing the problem of Premarin to the attention of her readers - which was fine for the times, but now a moot point. The "mystery" was not only secondary but tertiary, and, quite frankly was confusing - though that may have been because I started speed-reading paragraphs and chapters that were obviously just filler. The whole plot could have been condensed into the last 40 pages. I'm disappointed because I was only recently introduced to Grimes through her first Jury book.

I'm not likely to pursue any more of her Jury writings that are, say, more than five years beyond the publication of her first.

Lynn says

Finally finished! I found that I could put this book down and not read it for a week at the time. I didn't buy into the characters, and there were too many characters that didn't add anything to the story. By the end of the book I didn't care who was murdered or whom the killer was.

M Yeazel says

One of the best Jury novels, he spends personal time investigating the disappearance of a race family granddaughter, while recuperating from a gunshot wound. I like them all, pretty much, because I like the extensive collection of friends and acquaintances who help and affect him along the way. So many characters!

Jo Sternberg says

this is a little darker but still really good

Katie Hilton says

Jury, recovering from gunshot wounds, decides to investigate the disappearance of his surgeon's daughter, which occurred two years ago. Then a woman's body is found on the horse farm from which the girl vanished. This book set in horse country is a bit confusing. It's still a good read.

Julie Ramos says

I am actually rereading several Martha Grimes (Richard Jury series). If you are a fan of the english mystery and eccentric English characters you will really enjoy these.

Carmen says

Jury is in the hospital. He's going crazy with the inactivity. He decides to work on a cold case, the missing daughter of his doctor. This leads him into the race horse world, and into quite simmer twists and turns. As usual, great characterization and plot.
