



Mud, Muck and Dead Things

Ann Granger

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The first instalment of the Campbell and Carter mysteries

When the body of a young woman is discovered in the cowshed of Cricket Farm, the tranquility of the British countryside is shattered. Inspector **Jess Campbell** is on the case, but with few leads, a grumbling partner, and the new Superintendent **Ian Carter** piling on the pressure, she's beginning to wonder why she chose to be a detective in the first place.

The shifty land-owner Eli Smith seems to have something to hide, and as Campbell delves into the gruesome past of the dilapidated farm, the mystery deepens. A flashy Mercedes spotted fleeing the scene of the crime leads to a suspect, but when another body turns up, it looks as though Campbell's lead is nothing but a dead end...

Book one in the Campbell and Carter Mysteries, *Mud, Muck and Dead things* will thrill fans of **M C Beaton**, **Joy Ellis** and **The Midsomer Murders**.

Praise for Ann Granger:

'Characterisation, as ever with Granger, is sharp and astringent' *The Times*

'The story just gets more complex, **mysterious and chilling**' *Good Book Guide*

'For once a murder novel which displays a gentle touch and a dash of wit' *Northern Echo*

'A **clever and lively** book' Margaret York

Mud, Muck and Dead Things Details

Date : Published May 14th 2018 by Canelo USA (first published 2009)

ISBN :

Author : Ann Granger

Format : Kindle Edition 352 pages

Genre : Mystery, Crime, Fiction

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From Reader Review Mud, Muck and Dead Things for online ebook

Mizloo says

Very much enjoyed this cozy. Likable Brit Inspector, new boss coming immediately after the murder was discovered, a cast of interesting and varied characters. I had no idea whodunnit, and I usually pick up the clues before the end. Clues to the villain er subtle, although in retrospect, I see them.

I'm pretty sure I'll be buying the whole series.

Plum-crazy says

This is the first in a new series from Ann Granger, & having enjoyed all the Mitchell & Markby books, as well as the Fran Varady series, I was expecting to enjoy this too.

This series features Inspector Jess Campbell & Superintendent Ian Carter, though there seemed little interaction between the two, indeed Carter seldom getting a look in at all. Although it took me a couple of chapters to really get into it, I found it a decent read, nothing spectacular & very similar in style to her other Cotswold series, although this had a supernatural touch that I did like.

Alissa says

Looking through the recommendations on my Kindle I found this gem of a book. I started it last evening and finished it this morning. I love a good mystery.

After reading just the first chapter... I was hooked. This book pulled me in and would not let go! The mystery was intriguing... every time you thought you had answers something new popped up. I'm telling you I had no idea 'whodunit' until the killer was revealed.

While the supporting cast and their stories was STELLAR, I will say I was a tad bit disappointed with the development of the main characters. I'm hoping the author is just setting the groundwork for the series and all the juicy details will be revealed over time. I must know more about Inspector Carter. I can only describe as enigma wrapped in another enigma or however the quote goes.

And I hope there will be more than just a professional relationship between Inspector Campbell and the aforementioned Carter... she did not notice those green eyes for nothing.

Great start to the series. On to book two.

4 stars

Nikki says

Somehow I had missed this newer series by Ann Granger, whose Meredith and Markby series I enjoyed so much. What a gift to discover it! Inspector Campbell, who appeared in the previous series, has transferred to a new police station since then and is getting well settled. She is getting a new superintendent, a Mr. Carter, and isn't quite sure how this will work out.

Granger excels at setting a scene and peopling it with interesting characters who often surprise you. Some of them in this book include a young woman trying to make a go of a horse-boarding and riding lesson stable, the crusty old farmer from whom she rents land, an accountant who occasionally helps out at the stables, and some rather sleazy characters with more money than is good for them. How they, plus the police, all deal with the discovery of a young woman's body in a disused cowshed makes for a compelling mystery with a surprise ending. I had to get the second book in the series right away. Highly recommended for lovers of British country police procedurals.

Alisha Henri says

Fascinating, Creepy, and Rewarding

Ms. Granger has written a complex mystery with fascinating odd characters, interesting turns and twists of plotlines, and satisfying resolutions. I felt myself an observer involved in the book, liked the forward movement that didn't rush but steadily moved, and didn't know the murderer until Inspector Campbell discovered the identity unpleasantly. Kudos. I'm off to read the next in the series.

Ivonne Rovira says

I absolutely adored Ann Granger's Mitchell and Markby mysteries; I was heartbroken when she abandoned the series after No. 15, *That Way Murder Lies*, was released in 2004. So I've been in withdrawal ever since. (Don't judge!)

I hadn't realized that Granger launched a spinoff series in 2009, featuring Inspector Jess Campbell, who had worked with Detective Superintendent Alan Markby in the Cotswold. Thankfully, Canelo is re-releasing the debut novel in the series (and presumably the rest) in an ebook format, bringing it to my attention.

Now relocated to rural Gloucestershire, the feisty Campbell investigates the death of a pretty 19-year-old girl whose corpse was left at an abandoned farm. As always, Granger makes her characters, with their quirks and foibles, come to life. I was immediately riveted! Alternately amusing, offbeat and suspenseful, *Mud, Muck & Dead Things* will fill my Mitchell and Markby void quite nicely! I've already gotten the second in the series, *Rack, Ruin and Murder*. After 14 years without my Ann Granger fix, I've got a lot to make up for.

In the interest of full disclosure, I received this book from NetGalley and Canelo in exchange for an honest review.

Deb says

I really enjoyed this new-to-me author and the first book in a series. The body of a young woman is found in an rundown cow barn. Who is it? How did it get there? Who murdered her? These are the questions that

Inspector Jess Campbell must find answers too. The main suspect seems to be the owner of silver Mercedes who was seen leaving the area by several neighbors, and paint scrapings from the car were near the barn. The owner, Lucas Burton, is a rags-to-riches shady businessman, living in London, trying to hide from involvement in the case. The plot is a bit convoluted, and it takes a while to get through all the twists and turns. While the character of Inspector Jess Campbell isn't totally developed, there appears to be great potential especially as she gets to know her new boss, Superintendent Ian Carter. I am looking forward to the next book in the series.

Bruce Gargoyle says

Ten Second Synopsis:

City wheeler-dealer Lucas Burton discovers a dead girl on the spot where he was to conduct some wheeler-dealing. As he scarpers rather quickly, he doesn't stop to ask the important questions like "who is she?" And "how did she get there?"

Having not read a non-fantastical police procedural for a while, I was quite refreshed to discover a cast of reasonably ordinary country-mouse/city-mouse suspects in this cosy police procedural. There's Lucas Burton himself, a shady, wheeler-dealer, working-class-kid-made-good who finds the body and is none too pleased about it. There's old farmer Eli, upon whose land the body was discovered and who is beholden to a long-ago family drama; Penny Gower who owns the struggling stables down the hill from the farm; Andrew, accountant and admirer of Penny; and a collection of rich horsey types, owners of country pubs and new money blow-ins hoping to weasel their way into the locals' good graces.

As this is a police procedural, with "proper" detectives on the case (as opposed to unqualified but enthusiastic old ladies, school girls or verbose travelling professors), the hunt for the murderer/s is thorough, comprised of many tangents and replete with "friendly chats" with locals who are repeatedly assured that they are not suspects. There's also quite a lot of "right, let's get the London boys onto that" sort of talk. In fact, it was very like watching one of those British murder mystery shows on TV. There were enough twists and shocking reveals about characters' pasts to throw the cat amongst the pigeons and keep my interest hearty and my little grey cells ticking over. As is the case in this type of story, the reader generally stumbles upon the culprit at the same time as the main characters, so there isn't quite so much of that "outwitting the author" game that I enjoy in Agatha Christie's work, but the reveal here is satisfying (and rather action-packed) and encased in that most engaging of narrative formats: the police interview.

I also quite enjoyed the playful, supernatural twist that Granger injects into one of the character's back stories. It doesn't have any particular significance to the outcome of the tale, but I felt it was a fun inclusion that made this story stick out a bit from the crowd. I will definitely be keeping a keen eye out for the other books in the Campbell and Carter series and Granger is going on my "authors to watch" series.

Monica says

A really good first book in the series...featuring Jess Campbell and Ian Carter...even though Carter's role is as of this book quite small. I enjoyed the writing, the strong and interesting characters...and the plot. A solid mystery, which is no small feat for the first novel in a series. Will for sure be reading more.

Elizabeth says

This was fairly interesting. I liked the characters very well, the plot not so much.

C.G. says**Like a mediocre British mystery show...in book form**

Twists and turns, multiple character plots, murder and gore, some action... it's not entirely my cup of tea (thus the 2 star rating), but others might like it more. I found it a bit boring in spots, and not as light-hearted as I was expecting. Not one I'd necessarily recommend, but I got the Kindle set for cheap, so I'll keep reading and see if they get stronger as the series goes on.

Jeannine Stewart says

Finally, I get to start a new series by reading book one. DI Jess Campbell is called to investigate the murder of a young woman found in a cowshed on Cricket Farm in a small English village. The farm was the scene of a double murder many years prior and now most of the buildings are abandoned and left to ruin. There are few clues other than the sighting of a silver Mercedes near the farm the day before the body is discovered. Enter the second protagonist, Jess' new boss, Superintendent Ian Carter. Few clues and lots of red herrings for the Jess to unravel while trying to get to know her new boss. The two characters show promise for future mysteries.

Toni McKilligan says

This is one of those light reads, that satisfy the mystery lover in me without the gore and graphic violence that seem to dominate books a lot these days. Just a good, old-fashioned British mystery - quite enjoyable.

Joan says

Interesting read. Takes place in the Cotswolds. Inspector Jess Campbell meets her new boss, Carter.

The body of a Czech girl who has been working in a local bar is found on an unworked farm belonging to an elderly misfit, Eli.

Eli's neighbour, Penny Gower is struggling to keep her horse stables afloat. She gets help from two friends, one the wife of a nasty rich man, the other a man who constantly declares his love for her, despite being still married, although he and his travelling wife lead separate lives.

Nancy Wilson says

New series (well to me) so far so good. The main character Jess Campbell is just starting to take shape.
