



## Vertigo 42: A Richard Jury Mystery

*Martha Grimes*

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## Vertigo 42: A Richard Jury Mystery Martha Grimes

In her latest Richard Jury mystery, Martha Grimes delivers the newest addition to the bestselling series *The Washington Post* calls “literate, lyrical, funny, funky, discursive, bizarre.” The inimitable Scotland Yard Superintendent returns, now with a tip of the derby to Alfred Hitchcock’s *Vertigo*.

Richard Jury is meeting Tom Williamson at Vertigo 42, a bar on the forty-second floor of an office building in London’s financial district. Despite inconclusive evidence, Tom is convinced his wife, Tess, was murdered seventeen years ago. The inspector in charge of the case was sure Tess’s death was accidental—a direct result of vertigo—but the official police inquiry is still an open verdict and Jury agrees to re-examine the case.

Jury learns that a nine-year-old girl fell to her death five years before Tess at the same country house in Devon where Tess died. The girl had been a guest at a party Tess was giving for six children. Jury seeks out the five surviving party guests, who are now adults, hoping they can shed light on this bizarre coincidence.

Meanwhile, an elegantly dressed woman falls to her death from the tower of a cottage near the pub where Jury and his cronies are dining one night. Then the dead woman’s estranged husband is killed as well. Four deaths—two in the past, two that occur on the pages of this intricate, compelling novel—keep Richard Jury and his sidekick Sergeant Wiggins running from their homes in Islington to the countryside in Devon and to London as they try to figure out if the deaths were accidental or not. And, if they are connected.

Witty, well-written, with literary references from Thomas Hardy to Yeats, *Vertigo 42* is a pitch perfect, page-turning novel from a mystery writer at the top of her game.

## Vertigo 42: A Richard Jury Mystery Details

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Author : Martha Grimes

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## **From Reader Review Vertigo 42: A Richard Jury Mystery for online ebook**

### **Paul Pessolano says**

“Vertigo 42” by Martha Grimes, published by Scribner.

Category – Mystery/Thriller Publication Date – June 03, 2014

This is Martha Grimes’s twenty-third book featuring English detective Richard Jury. The book is a typical English mystery, more on grey matter and less on blood and guts. It is also typical English in that there is an incessant drinking of tea and a more than necessary description of one’s surroundings. As in all her books there are numerous references to Hollywood movies that pertain to the story.

Richard Jury is asked to look into a case that is over seventeen years old. Tom Williamson believes his wife was murdered even though the facts indicate that it may have been an accident.

Jury finds that the facts lead him to a party hosted by Tess Williamson for underprivileged children. A young girl is found dead in their empty pool and it is believed that she fell to her death. The girl was not liked by the other children at the party and although the death was considered an accident Jury feels the coincidence of both deaths may be too much. These deaths come to the forefront when another girl, now woman, who was at the party, is found dead from a fall from a tower. It is believed she may have had an accident, may have committed suicide, or the outside possibility may have been murdered. Jury must sort through the few clues and intense interrogation of the children who were at the party seventeen years ago. He is also confronted with the fact that his main suspect has what appears to be an airtight alibi.

A good mystery that will have the reader sorting through the clues that may or may not point to the murderer. A good read for those who prefer a cozy who dun it.

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### **Lela says**

As much as I love the Jury & Plant characters and all the other wacky familiar folk in this series, this one was weak. It was as if everyone was too distracted to just get on with figuring out the mysteries. Yes, more than one -- with a couple of them being very cold cases indeed. But, what I think is really going on here, Ms Grimes is too distracted by all her other irons-in-the-fire to put her massive talent to work on her Jury mysteries. Come on, Martha, they're your best sellers and your fan base. On the other hand, distracted Grimes and Jury are better than none. 3.5

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### **Larraine says**

I really MISSED Richard Jury and his oddball friends and associates - Wiggans, Plant, Trueblood and more.

Apparently Grimes struggled with this book. I'm glad she finally wrote it. She is in her early 80's, and one can't help but wonder how many books she has left. Like other favorites, I always enjoy revisiting her characters. They've become almost like old friends. I guess they really are when you think about it! In this book, Jury is asked to revisit a twenty plus year old case of a woman who fell to her death. Her death was never fully declared although suicide was one theory. Her husband didn't believe it was suicide nor did DI Macalvie, a friend of Jury's, and the investigator at the time believe it. As a favor to an old friend who is a friend of the widower, Jury investigates it on his own. Then another murder takes place. Then there's the case of a missing dog that is acting very oddly. In the middle of it all, we have Jury, a handsome, reasonably paid civil servant, who has established a close friendship with a former Lord who trots out his title when it suits him, but still lives in the way he did as a Lord Ardry. The pub gang who constantly interfere with Jury's investigations make a couple of appearances, but this is mostly about Jury's quest to help the widower find peace. There are a number of red herrings here, and they are all interesting. There is an interview with her that was recently published in the Washington Post. If you thought she was British, think again. She's a native Marylander. <http://www.washingtonian.com/blogs/ca...>

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## **Jaksen says**

This story went back and forth so many times my brain went numb.

I have been a huge fan of Martha Grimes' Richard Jury mystery novels, until that is, I read a few which seemed HUGELY incredible and sort of boring, to be honest. I always loved the cast of characters Grimes works with, however: tall, handsome Richard Jury, police superintendent in London; Wiggins, his sidekick; Carolanne who lives upstairs from Jury and though she appears to be scatter-brained, def. is not. There's also Melrose Plant, a Lord who gave up his title, and Melrose's truly scatter-brained Aunt Agatha. There's a host of other minor, supporting characters, with each a little nuttier than the one before it.

So I thought I'd give this newer book a chance. It was so complex, though, so rife with characters and side-angles and side-plots, I honestly had a hard time keeping track. (Another book for which I needed a character cue-card and a blank notepad for taking notes.)

In this one the death of a little girl twenty years ago - found dead at the bottom of a drained pool during a children's party at an English country cottage - and the death of a woman seventeen years later found at the bottom of a stone staircase at the same cottage, seem connected. Maybe. Somehow. At the party there were six children, and later, as young adults, they are each carrying around their own secrets. It's up to Jury to find the connection - if any - between the two deaths and...

Two more deaths which come later, and...

A dog named Stanley which may or may not be connected with a dog-fighting ring...

It's witty and complex, plausible and at times it's only Jury who carries this one. (Good old Melrose has just a supporting role here, dang it!)

An engaging mystery, esp. for those who follow the series.

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## **Tasula says**

This is the most recent Richard Jury mystery, and as always it is enjoyable- a good mystery, interesting minor characters, and tragic deaths.

Minor quibbles (which for some readers are alternatively points of enjoyment): none of the characters seem to care about or regularly have sex, which seems strange in this day and age; Grimes manages to bring into almost every book her (and readers') favorite recurring characters- his buddy Melrose Plants' fellow village residents (rich eccentrics, shop owners, barkeeps), fellow cop from another jurisdiction Macalvie, and denizens of London (the Crippses, lovely CaroleAnn) even when there is little to contribute to the story; and Jury and Melrose seem to spend a lot of time meandering into reveries about cathedrals, hermits, former girlfriends (with whom they never had sex, of course), prior murders, etc.)

Nevertheless, still and enjoyable book and I liked that the dog turned out OK.

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## **Linette says**

The books in this series have been must-reads for me for years. The storylines are generally good but where they really shine is in the quirky supporting characters and the amusing banter that flows so easily between them. There is a recurring set of characters that I eagerly look forward to spending time with each time I open a new book in the series, knowing that they will have me smiling and feeling right at home.

Vertigo 42 was a decent read but not of the same standard as most of the earlier books. The supporting cast of characters had only a small part in this story and it just wasn't enough for me. I missed them, and wanted more time with them.

The mystery itself was decent with good characters, starting out with a couple of older murders and a current murder to solve, all involving falls from a height, hence the name of the book. However, especially in the beginning, the storyline often got muddled or jumped around, which I found confusing.

All in all, a middle of the road story, but I did enjoy it and I loved being back with Richard Jury and his friends, and hope there will be future books published in the series.

( ARC received from Netgalley in exchange for an honest review.)

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## **Barbara says**

In this 23rd book in the series, a classic movie and two well-known novels provide clues for Detective Superintendent Richard Jury.

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Twenty-two years ago - at a children's party thrown by Tess Williamson - young Hilda Palmer was found dead at the bottom of an empty swimming pool. No charges were filed but Hilda's mother held Tess responsible. Five years later Tess was found dead at the the bottom of a steep staircase. The general consensus was that her vertigo resulted in a fatal fall.

In the present day, Tess's husband Tom - thinking his wife's death was no accident - asks Detective Superintendent Richard Jury to look into the old case. Meanwhile, other recent deaths come to Jury's attention: a beautiful blonde in a designer dress and shoes dies of a 'fall' from a tower; and an unidentified man who was looking for a lost dog is found shot.

As usual in Martha Grimes books Jury's friends in Northamptonshire - Melrose Plant and his eccentric cohorts - get involved in Jury's investigations; there are also two 'found' dogs in the tale, Joey and Stanley.

During their investigations, Jury and his tea-loving assistant Sergeant Wiggins question everyone who was at the party where Hilda died. They learn that Hilda was a bully, disliked by children and adults alike. They also discover some possible links behind the recent deaths of the blonde and the dog-lover with those of Hilda and Tess.

The movie "Vertigo" and the books "A Passage to India" and "Tess of the d'Urbervilles" keep popping into Jury's mind as he looks into the cases, which seem to provide him with clues to the crimes.

The plot meanders and the resolution of the cases seems unlikely but it's fun to visit with the familiar, well-liked characters in the series. An okay book to pass some time.

The novel can be read as a standalone, but readers familiar with the series would probably enjoy the story more.

You can follow my reviews at <https://reviewsbybarbsaffer.blogspot...>

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## **Mary Ellen says**

Of all the just-calling-it-in books in the latter half of Grimes's Richard Jury mysteries, none can have been more just-called-in than this one. What follows is a rant; my first sentence sums the review up nicely!

I loved the early books in the series, and the early Jury: slightly melancholy, with a devastating smile, the man smarting from the tragic turn of his boyhood. At some point, alas, Grimes gave us a more lighthearted Jury, trading in his melancholy (maybe because melancholy had become such a cliché in detective fiction?) for an almost sappy laughing-and-smiling-at-everything. Then there was the embarrassing Jury the Wild Lover, overturning furniture in his passion for the unfortunate Luz Aguilar.

In this installment, Luz has been gotten out of the way, and Jury's most distinguishing characteristic is his ability to name high-end brands of women's fashion: he recognizes Jimmy Choo shoes, a Lanvin dress, etc. What this adds to his character, I don't know. Given that he was a kid during WWII, and this book seems to take place in the early 2000's, Jury has to be in his 70's, and I find it creepy that he is taking such careful note of what some of the young women in this story are wearing.

But I digress...which is nothing compared to the digressions that pad this weak-plotted book. Grimes trots out the cast of Northants characters mainly for show, and to take up space; even Melrose Plant does little of any importance. But they all appear: his aunt, his butler, his hermit, his goat, his horse, his dog, the waiter at his London club, Vivian Rivington, still blushing, Diane DeMornay, now toting around a dog's water dish, Marshal Trueblood, etc., etc. She seems to bring them out to mollify the subset of her readers for whom they are the most attractive aspect of this series.

One of Grimes's greatest gifts has always been the ability to sketch memorable minor characters in just a few sentences. Alas, that gift is not much on display here. The most striking of these characters seems to be a cross between an extra from *La Cage Aux Folles* and The Food Network.

Then there is the mystery. The first third of the book just piles up the suspicious deaths....and the solving of all these murders is a murky mess at the end. Perhaps Grimes was going for an amazing fast-paced ending, one surprise after another, twisting and turning. It seemed more like she'd grown tired of writing this mediocrity and just wanted to get it over with. She doesn't even bother to give a straightforward reason for one of the murders.

This book was a waste of time. Only glad that someone passed it on to me. Had I wasted cash for this I would have closed the book truly depressed

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### **Shirley Schwartz says**

It's been four long years since we've had a new Richard Jury book, and I for one am glad we had the wait. That made this book so very welcome. And it's an excellent book. The plot is intricate and there are plenty of surprises throughout. All of this interspersed with dry humour and truly wonderful characters. The case that Jury is working on this time is one not assigned by Scotland Yard. A man is certain that his wife's death was not an accident. The fact that the death happened 17 years ago doesn't deter Jury. As he begins investigating the story of Tess Williamson, he discovers a warm woman who he is strangely drawn too. There is tragedy and sudden death in Tess's life before her own. Then as Jury keeps digging new deaths start happening and these new deaths seem connected in some way to the death of Tess Williamson. I love Martha Grimes' books and Richard Jury in particular because they are so enjoyable, funny and poignant. She has long been one of my favourite authors.

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### **Carol says**

The book was quite a disappointment. It was too disorganized, vague and filled with superficial elements. I have been in Jury's camp since the beginning but there are so many references in the book that hark back to character traits and actions in previous books that I found did nothing to develop character or move the story forward. Also, the repeated comments on designer clothes and shoes seemed like product placement in a movie. I am longing for Richard Jury to develop as a character not as a fashion critic. There is a great deal to be said for books that make an impression for what they don't say but this book just reads like the notes for a good novel. I read it pre-pub on NetGalley so it is possible significant editing changes could be made... hope so.

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### **Jean says**

Usual humor and thoughtfulness. There were a few errors, not sure if intentional or editorial. One of the characters in the story has an alibi based on a mistaken memory of the day of the week, well each chapter of this book has the day of the week, time and location listed at the start of the chapter. One chapter claims to start a few hours after the previous one, but is dated a day later. Intentional, to see if I'd notice??? Then late in the book within three paragraphs, Jury's friend Phyllis sits down twice without ever standing up, as if the

scene was revised and the first version was not deleted. Never the less, I still enjoyed the story and the conversations about truth and simple kindness and caring.

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### **Mary Clark says**

A better Richard Jury than I've read in some time, but there was one baffling error. I kept re-reading the two pages to see if I'd read it wrong. I wish I knew someone who'd read it to see if they can explain:)

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### **Jim Graham says**

Silly plot.

Many people really like the characters circulating around Superintendent Jury; I think they are too twee.

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### **Sheila Beaumont says**

It's been quite a while since the last Richard Jury mystery, so I was overjoyed to discover *Vertigo 42*. Like the previous books in the series, this one has a delightful regular cast of characters (Melrose Plant, Aunt Agatha, Sergeant Wiggins, Carole-anne Palutski, et al.), a light touch, and literate prose. The author even uses the phrase "begging the question" correctly, a real rarity these days!

As with the earlier books, this one is hilarious, but there's also a substantial mystery plot, involving two possible murders in the past and two in the present. There are no talking dogs or cats in this one (not that there's anything wrong with that; I totally enjoyed Mungo and Morris in *The Black Cat*). But there are dogs and at least one cat. And there are several characters who were children when the mysterious deaths in the past occurred.

All of the Jury mysteries are great fun and well worth reading, and rereading (yes, I own them all). It's best to start with the first book, *The Man With a Load of Mischief*, but you can enjoy them in any order.

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### **Laura (Kyahgirl) says**

2.5/5; 3 stars; B-

I have long been a fan of this series and still enjoy the camaraderie and police work presented in each addition to the series. This was not my favorite but I still enjoyed it overall.

Things I liked:

-The much loved cast of characters from most of the Richard Jury books (Melrose, Carolann, etc)



- The narrator, Steve West
- The twists and turns of the murder investigation

Things I didn't like:

- Aspects of Richard Jury's character really seem 'out of character'.
  - some baffling things that might have been missed in the editing process (like an item left with one character in one scene, somehow finds itself in Richard Jury's pocket in the next scene)
  - The weird jumbled ending with the nail polish, the inexplicable light bulb moment, the arrest, the end. It just felt rushed and untidy.
-