



Dead Man's Puzzle

Parnell Hall

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Sherry is off on her honeymoon when Chief Harper comes to Cora Felton, asking her to solve a crossword puzzle found on the body of Old Man Overmeyer. Small problem. Cora is the Milli Vanilli of cruciverbalists. Her niece, Sherry, writes the crossword puzzle column for her.

Cora pokes into Overmeyer's death, hoping to prove he died of natural causes. She learns the cranky hermit was the sole surviving member of a forty-year-old stock pooling agreement, and before she can say "capital gain," the town is full of heirs. Complicating things is Sherry's ex-husband, Dennis, who is playing detective in the hopes of impressing his ex-wife. With Sherry out of town, her restraining order against him is moot, and he is taking full advantage of the fact.

Parnell Hall delivers another stellar, puzzle-packed entry in this entertaining series.

Dead Man's Puzzle Details

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Author : Parnell Hall

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From Reader Review Dead Man's Puzzle for online ebook

Anthony Yvonnica says

These books are screaming to be made into a TV series

Sarah says

With her cruciverbalist niece Sherry on her honeymoon, Cora Felton is just hoping to lie low and maintain the fiction that she herself is the grandmotherly Puzzle Lady, rather than a hard-boiled amateur investigator who can't solve a crossword puzzle to save her life. Instead, the police chief presents her with a corpse (her favorite thing!) and its accompanying crossword (her least favorite thing!). Soon an abundance of idiosyncratic heirs, contradictory clues, additional corpses, and unauthorized leaks to the media turn what seemed to be a natural death into utter chaos. Light, speedy, and unabashedly enthusiastic about its frivolous place in the mystery genre.

Becky says

I didn't enjoy "Dead Man's Puzzle" quite as much as the other books I've read in this series. I think the main reason is because Cora's niece Sherry is not in the majority of the novel; she's on her honeymoon with her new husband Aaron. However, Cora is just as feisty as usual and the ending is satisfying.

Abigail says

This is another fun mystery written about our amateur sleuth, Cora Felton. This time her niece, Sherry is on her honeymoon in Africa and Cora has to fend for herself. Of course there is a murder, which first looks like a death caused by natural causes, since the victim is very old. Cora investigates the death and does discover a few puzzles along the way, which are clues, that lead to the murderer. This is a very enjoyable book that is a quick read and great for taking to the beach. I look forward each year for another puzzle lady mystery.

Kathy says

Loved the story...read really fast...lots of funny dialogue. However at the end I became a little confused with exactly who did what, so that is frustrating, however I will read another of these books to see if it was just me not paying close enough attention or reading too fast.

Iris says

I found this book in my library's overlooked book section and I've never heard of the author before, so it was a great introduction. I absolutely have to go add the other books to this series. I love mysteries and I love the

way the puzzle lady takes over the case from the police chief as though it's her right and no one seems to stop her. And the puzzles are an extra bonus for me too.

Karen says

The protagonist is a little annoying and the police procedures are a bit off the rails, but the plot and characterizations are reasonably entertaining.

Susan says

Cora is excited when the police chief tells her about a recent death--she loves nothing so much as a good murder. But the police chief is sure that the 92-year-old victim died a natural death--he's just curious about a cross-word puzzle he found in the dead man's house. Unfortunately, Cora's niece (who is secretly the only person in their family who can do the puzzles) is in Africa on her honeymoon. Cora and the police chief soon learn that there's a lot more behind this puzzle--and death--than meet the eye.

Clyde says

finished reading in Albequ N.Mexico

Janice says

I liked this book more, and it was funnier, than the last 'puzzle lady' book I'd read. Cora was the main character throughout because Sherry was on her honeymoon. All the characters contributed to the humor in the book, but there's still 'murder a foot'. I confess I don't take time to solve the crossword and Sudoku puzzles along the way. This series is one that I will not read back to back d/t needing a break from the author's humorously distracting dialog.

Harry Addington says

Amusing funny cozy series centered around crossword puzzles.

Mark Baker says

With Sherry out of town on her honeymoon, Cora will have to be pretty creative to solve the latest crossword related murder spree and keep her secret intact. I was happy to see that the character interactions that had grown beyond stale were revitalized here. I hope that continues with the next book in the series.

Read my full review at Carstairs Considers.

Diane Heath says

Sherry and Aaron are in Africa on their honeymoon so Cora is home alone. Her adventures rival those of McCauley Culkin. She is practicing her surveillance skills on random people when Chief Harper chases her down to give her a crossword puzzle found on a dead body. The dead man was over 90 and it appears to be a simple case of old age; however, the crossword puzzle is a hanging thread. How does Cora get this puzzle solved with Sherry out of town? When did Dennis return and why is he trying to be a private investigator? Will Becky really sue Chief Harper? Then there are the questions about three murders and how do they tie-in to a robbery over 50 years old?

Margaret says

Crossword puzzle columnist and amateur detective Cora Felton sees her niece, Sherry, off on her honeymoon chasing wildebeests in Africa. Then she immediately becomes involved in a murder investigation. A recluse known as Old Man Overmeyer turns up dead in his rundown cabin with a crossword puzzle lying near his body, along with a gun that was used in a forty-year-old gas station robbery turned deadly. At first, it appears as if he died of natural causes, but Cora insists on an autopsy, and the coroner discovers that Old Man Overmeyer was poisoned.

The last surviving member of a stock pooling agreement, Overmeyer had only one living relative, but the town of Bakerhaven quickly becomes overrun with professional heirs—people who comb the obits looking for someone who died without any known relatives and then swoop in to claim what's not theirs. Still, Cora and Chief Harper can't understand why anyone would want to fight over a worthless piece of property. And no one can find the stock pooling agreement, which means the so-called heirs will inherit nothing.

Since Sherry isn't in town, the restraining order against her ex-husband, Dennis, becomes moot, and he takes full advantage by showing up to complicate matters for Cora and Chief Harper, adding one more suspect to the increasingly long list.

Suspects, motives, and alibis run amuck as Cora tries to help Chief Harper solve a tangled, mind-boggling mystery that makes less and less sense as each clue is uncovered.

I so love a mystery that's laced with lots of humor and investigated by a quirky amateur detective—and Parnell Hall's *Dead Man's Puzzle* fits the bill perfectly. Cora will send your mind into a fun spin with her hilarious logic, keeping you laughing as you read. I haven't enjoyed an amateur detective this much since Dorothy Cannell's *Ellie Haskell* mysteries.

Author Parnell Hall has created a complex mystery plot that keeps you guessing. I honestly didn't have a clue as to who committed the murder, but I had a good time trying to figure it out. As the story gets more and more convoluted, it seems impossible that everything will be wrapped up with a plausible explanation. I actually worried that it wouldn't, but Mr. Hall brings it on home nicely with no loose ends—a skill I greatly admire in an author.

Dazzling, witty, and laugh-out-loud funny, this mystery will keep you entertained and wanting more. You not only get an intricate story, but you also get two to three crossword puzzles to solve right along with the mystery. What fun! I enjoyed the heck out of *Dead Man's Puzzle*, and I believe you will, too.

First appeared in NightsandWeekends.com: <http://www.nightsandweekends.com/arti...>

Teresa in ohio says

Been a while since I read this series, so it took me a moment to get caught up with the characters and their lives. Aaron and Sherry have gone on honeymoon to Africa. Her ex husband is still a pain in the neck. Becky is the town lawyer coming to terms that her ex love is now remarried. With all this going on, Cora is left in charge with a lot of instructions on how to do things.

This book was a quick read, with many LOL moments but how Cora convinces the Chief a natural death is really a murder was murky and I didn't get it. I also didn't get the ending with who did what and why. Still a decent read in a long series.

Some reason I abandon this series but plan on getting current with it.
