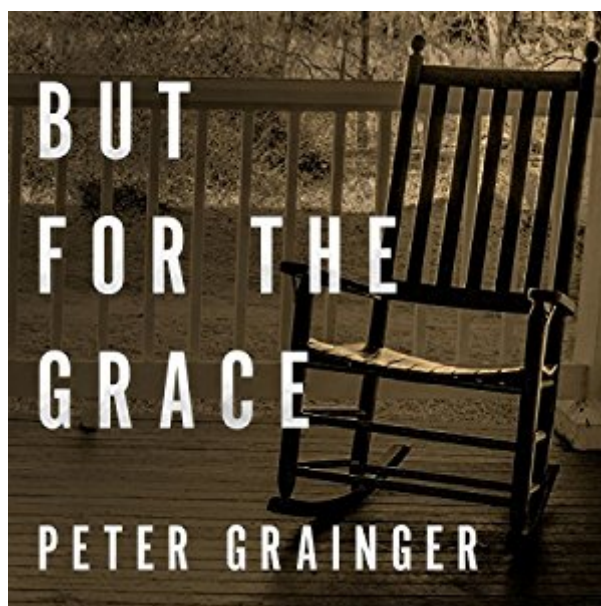


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But For The Grace: A DC Smith Investigation Series, Book 2



Synopsis

"We are living in the departure lounge," said Ralph Greenwood, "and flights leave with monotonous regularity." So when another resident of the Rosemary House care home is found dead in her chair one Saturday evening in December, no one is very surprised - not until the results of a routine post-mortem reveal something extraordinary. Sergeant DC Smith and his team have to tread carefully as they investigate what took place, and Smith himself has to confront some difficult memories. Others, meanwhile, seem intent on getting him to leave the force altogether, while, despite his best efforts, his social life also becomes a little more complicated. To top it all, Kings Lake has been waiting weeks for the snow to fall, in a winter that seems as if it will never end.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is the second DC Smith book I have read in the last two days. I had to keep reading and am starting the third one today, putting aside a stack of JoBannister mysteries I just checked out at the library - try her books if you have not done so yet. Sergeant Smith again gets an ambiguous sudden death case, this one a month after the death when lab results come back. Not the time line of the TV show cases as he says ! An elderly care home resident found dead in her chair. She was in frail health, but no one expected her death. It turns out she was not the first of a group of five friends to die suddenly. Smith and his team have to try to solve the case = suicide, assisted suicide or murder ??? the old fashioned way - investigation without any forensic evidence. Along the way he has other issues to concern him - an attempt to get him to transfer to a area crime unit, an offer of a job by an

old friend (the father of his trainee DC Waters) and a writer wanting to do a book on an old multiple murder case that has haunted him for ten years. There is no sex, violence or gutter language here. No gangs or psychopaths. Just a sudden death and questions of law and morality as a good policeman follows his instincts to solve the case. There are very real and interesting characters and a thoughtful story line. Looking forward reading the next installment in the Smith series!

The first book in this series, "An Accidental Death," was thoroughly enjoyable, and this second installment is even better. DC Smith is a likable, decent and engaging character. If you want the usual morose/drunken/depressed protagonist, look elsewhere. Smith has his issues, but they are all issues any reader can relate to. The other thing that strikes me about these books is that the plots do not involve the crimes usually associated with the police procedural genre. Rather, they all involve some aspect of moral ambiguity, so that there is some question about how "bad" the "bad guys" really are. A shame this series is available only on Kindle. It deserves a wider audience.

Please, Mr. Grainger, write more about DC Smith - your books about this gentle, intelligent detective are outstanding. I've read both of your novels and can't wait to find another one to enjoy. This particular book deals with a subject that is painful but important - should we be able to choose our own exit from life? I'm coming to my most senior years still with excellent health, but friends and family have had to deal with their own or other's deaths and whether or not to prolong suffering. There is no easy answer but your story handles this issue with dignity and compassion. I eagerly look forward to discovering more of your novels.

This is the second in the DC Smith series. Both started slowly, to the point that part way in I was thinking 'kind of boring', but kept reading. About the 40% mark I realized I was having a good read and well before the ending I found myself anticipating pouring myself back into it for that greatest pleasure of a book worm-immersion into a master story teller's world. Very traditional structure for a British mystery read. Where Peter Grainger excels is in execution. Slowly step by step he weaves very human characters trying to do their best in challenging situations as the plot gradually unfolds and engulfs the reader. Recommended.

For whatever reason, I found the first book and this one hard to review. I like the books and fully intend to read the rest of the DC Smith series, so wish I could be more articulate either pro or con. In some ways, the books are very simple and the deaths somewhat mundane. Still..... There is

something about DC Smith and the characters who surround him that draws you in and makes you want to know where he finally ends up and how he got there. What road did he travel, what clues did he find, how did he interpret those clues to lead him to come up with the eventual conclusion? Very subtle, but oh, so enticing. DC Smith is not a one-dimensional character. There are, again, subtleties that entice--hints that make you want to find out more. That is true of many of the other repeat characters as well. Grainger writes well--doesn't try to be cute or insinuate that his are great literary works. Just straightforward, interesting--to me at least--mysteries to be solved.

Yes the life of seniors, those people who are no longer out and about. What's it like? You imagine the worst, right? How could you live like "that"? Yep this is the question we all face. We often find unpleasant answers, so unpleasant we just move on to more pleasing thoughts. DC gets an up close and personal look into senior life with results that confuse him and reinforce our thoughts. Not the best way to end a life full of fun, accomplishments and of course setbacks. Yep we'll all get there sooner or later. This story gives us a peak into that future.

Again, a fine smoothly written mystery. Most of the same likable main characters., could stand alone but I think builds gently on the previous. The first two books have a theme of questioning the black and white nature of law enforcement, but DC Smith balances the line intelligently and with a light melancholy. Another recommended mystery for the intelligent reader.

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