



Dark Murder

Helen H. Durrant

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A gripping new detective series from a best-selling crime writer

A woman is found dead by a canal . . . why have her eyes have been viciously poked out?

Detective Stephen Greco has just started a new job at Oldston CID and now he faces a series of murders with seemingly no connection but the brutal disfigurement of the victims. Greco's team is falling apart under the pressure and he doesn't know who he can trust. Then they discover a link to a local drug dealer, but maybe it's not all that it seems.

Can Greco get control of his chaotic team and stop the murders?

If you like Angela Marsons, Rachel Abbott, Mel Sherratt, Ruth Rendell, or Mark Billingham you will be gripped by this exciting new crime fiction writer.

DARK MURDER is the first book in a new series of detective thrillers featuring D.I. Greco. Stephen Greco has moved to Oldston after his wife divorced him. He doesn't like the place much but he wants to stay close to their daughter, Matilda. He is a meticulous policeman with a touch of O.C.D. Easy to admire, but sometimes difficult to like.

The series is set in the fictional industrial northern English town of Oldston.

ALSO AVAILABLE: THE BEST-SELLING BAYLISS & CALLADINE SERIES which first introduced D.I. Greco

DEAD WRONG, book one featuring Detectives Bayliss and Calladine is available now!

"A bag of severed fingers is found in the playground by a rough housing estate.

DEAD SILENT book two in the series.

A body is found in a car crash, but the victim was already dead . . . Police partners D.I. Calladine and D.S. Ruth Bayliss race against time to catch a vicious serial killer.

DEAD LIST book three

An unlikely killer with a bucket list of victims . . . This book is the first to introduce D.I Greco

Dark Murder Details

Date : Published November 6th 2015 by Joffe Books Mystery, Crime Thriller, Suspense

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From Reader Review Dark Murder for online ebook

CL says

Detective Stephen Greco has started a new job due to his recent divorce and relocation to Oldston to be near his ex and their daughter. He is by nature a loner and has not decided if this relocation is for the best but he will make it work to be near his daughter. The body of a woman has been discovered along a canal with her eyes removed and shortly after that a second woman's body is also found in the same location. How are they connected? The two women did not know each other. As the team uncovers more and more clues Det Greco begins to think they are being lead by the killer and these clues are false leads. Great Read!! I would like to thank the publisher and Net Galley for the chance to read this ARC.

Lisette Kristensen says

This is my first Helen Durrant book, along with my first British mystery. I thoroughly enjoyed it. The main character is well developed and full of conflict within himself and those he works with. I also was impressed how the secondary characters were weaved through and had their own stories to tell. Add in the mystery and crime solving elements you have a well-crafted mystery.

Sue says

DARK MURDER by Helen H Durrant, is the fourth book that I have read this year by this author, and is the first book in a new series of detective thrillers featuring D.I. Greco. In this book, Durrant re-introduces us to Detective Stephen Greco, whom we met in Dead List (3rd. book in the Calladine & Bayliss Series). This series is set in the fictional industrial northern English town of Oldston.

Stephen Greco has moved to the town of Oldston after his divorce, in order to stay close to his daughter, Matilda. He had just started this new job at Oldston CID, and now found himself and his team involved in solving a series of murders, brutal in nature. After just three months, Stephen Greco was trying to settle in, and cope with the situation. Stephen is an excellent policeman, with a touch of O.C.D., a quiet mystery man, that didn't mix with anyone, and kept his private life close to his chest.

“A woman’s body had been found on Oldston canal bank...and her eyes were missing.”

Detective Stephen Greco was first on the scene, and while trying to work on this case, another body is found. Another woman, with her intestines pulled out and again her eyes are missing.

What is the link between the cases? Detective Stephen Greco now faces a series of murders with what seems like no connection of the victims. Then they discover a link to a local drug dealer.

Greco's team is falling apart under the pressure. He doesn't know who he can trust.

Greco must get control of his team and stop the murders.

Dark Murder allows the reader to guess the identity of the killer. The "Why" is not revealed until the end, which allows the reader more time to put all the pieces together.

I enjoyed this new detective book, it's characters and I look forward to reading more in the series.

Many thanks to the author, Net Galley and Joffe books for providing me with a digital copy of this book in exchange for a honest review.

LaShana says

This was a lifeless book. The characters had no life, the story/plot had no life, and the killer had no life. This book had the potential to be so much more, with the DCI with OCD tendencies and a killer who loved to mutilate his victims, however, neither character was fleshed out and the book just became dull.

CD {Boulder Blvd} says

3.5 Stars

This is the first Helen Durrant book for me and the first book in the DI Grecco "Dark" series which is a spin off the Ms. Durrants "Dead" or "Calladine and Bayliss" series. It worked well as a stand alone book. Thanks to the author, Net Galley and Joffe books for providing me with an ARC in exchange for a honest review.

A murder and mutilation, a missing person and other crimes are taking place in the fictional town of Oldston. Oldston is an industrial down that has suffered an economic downturn which has increased the drug and petty crimes. This in turn has stretched the police department thin and creates the need for them to work on multiple crimes even though they are focused on the murder and missing person.

DI Grecco, our MC, has to develop his investigative team which is a little bit of a rag tag group of misfits to pull together the clues and find the unknown person behind the crimes. Ms. Durrant has developed a good cast of both law enforcement characters and criminal characters. The law enforcement characters each have a personal problem that reduces their effectiveness on the job but also provides some realism to the story. They aren't perfect - thank goodness. DI Grecco is dealing with his own OCD problems as well as domestic issues with an ex-wife. The characters are given their strengths and weaknesses, but still don't feel fully fleshed out to make you truly vested in them.

I really liked the plot of this book and I liked the way Ms. Durrant pulled the prologue into the crime. She has created an excellent setting for this story. I had too much of a vivid imagination on the particulars of the crime, but Ms. Durrant actually kept the details low key and out of the "horror" zone. Although I don't know if I will ever look at a potato peeler in quite the same way. I won't go into spoilers - you'll have to read the book.

I love epilogues, but this story doesn't provide that and does more of a quick ending. There is enough foreshadowing and clue dropping that the reader knows where the story is going which keeps the suspense low key. This is a good book but just failed to meet its full potential and really pull this reader into the story.

Still, it's a good story and I recommend the read.

Richard says

A new writer to me and the first of a new series, made Dark Murder by Helen H Durrant an idael choice to read for me.

I was please with the idea of a divorced cop being re-located to be closer to his daughter after his marriage broke up and his ex moved away. This also play out well when he has to juggle his hours at work at the height of the investigation to sort out childcare.

The plotting is tight and laced with a degree of suspense to keep the reader's interest throughout but I felt it was a little two-dimentional in terms of ideas and their progression.

There are delays in the human processing of clues yet forensics keep coming up with gems to keep the case ticking over.

Lots to like and enjoy but not all consuming and never deep enough for me to become totally absorbed into the story or care for the characters.

Lynn McCarthy says

A well written book and a page turner.

I couldn't piece it together.

I liked the backstories as well and the ending perfectly tied everything together.

Thank you Netgalley the Author and publisher for a chance to read this book.

Brenda says

This book is a spinoff from Helen H. Durrant's Calladine and Bayliss series. DI Stephen Greco first appeared in the author's third book, Dead List.

I didn't like Greco as much as I did Calladine. Greco doesn't relate to people well. He has obsessive-compulsive disorder and has been treated for it. He doesn't accept hunches and prefers facts and forensics. With the return of his ex-wife and their daughter into his life, he becomes a little more likable.

Greco's team are a mixed lot. They seemed inept because they worked as individuals instead of as a team. DS Quickenden is a drunkard with gambling problems, and I really wish he'd received a serious bollocking instead of more chances. Grace is a single mom, and I thought the author did a great job portraying the challenges she faced. I liked that Greco was put into the single working parent position to experience those challenges first hand.

The investigation felt too convoluted in this book. Drug and cigarette running, terrorism, murders, and corpse mutilation were somehow all related. I eventually got a bit bored with it and was glad to see the resolution.

In looking at the future of these characters, I see several directions the author can take them. Some would be more interesting than others, of course. I'm curious as to where she will go and I would read the next one.

Karen says

DARK MURDER is the first book in a new series built around the character D.I. Stephen Greco. Greco first appeared as supporting cast in an earlier series of books by Helen H. Durrant, but now he's mirrored his ex-wife's move to a new town after their divorce, wanting to continue a good relationship with his young daughter Matilda. His new job at Oldston CID starts off with a series of baffling murders, where the brutal disfigurement of the victims seems to be the only connection. Greco instantly has a number of problems when it comes to solving these cases - the lack of a clear motive or connection, and his own team. Made up of what seems to be the district misfits he's under no illusions that part of his new responsibility is to meld this group of detectives together. Or some of them may just find themselves without a job in the future. Not really knowing who he is dealing with on the side of the good or the bad isn't helped by his own particular quirks - including is a mild dose of OCD which he tries desperately hard to hide.

DARK MURDER has a lot of heavy lifting to do as it launches this new series. Introducing Greco, the complications of his personal life, and his personality traits and OCD is quite a lot to start off with. Start adding colleagues with child care problems, drinking, gambling and complete de-motivation as well as problems getting along with other team members, and you get a lot of background to build, establish and provide reader's a way to connect with along the way. Add to that setting up a fictional location, and building a community within that and there's an awful lot of balls in the air. Perhaps that's why it might be obvious that not all good people are perfect, and not all bad irretrievably evil, but it was hard to tell if Greco is intended to be a likeable character who didn't quite hit all his marks or somebody a little more edgy, tricky if you like.

The plot's got some very strong aspects to it, although some of those are let down a little by a tendency to over-explain and a lot of repetition which sucked the pace out at important points. It's obviously not supposed to be that difficult to pick a lot of the who and why in the lead-up to the conclusion, and that could be why the ending seemed somewhat deflated, lacking much in the way of climax or urgency. The concentration instead seems to be very much on setting up the cast and getting them into their location.

DARK MURDER is the first book by Helen H. Durrant that I've been able to read, and whilst there were some quibbles with this outing, some of the drawbacks make sense in terms of that heavy lifting of setting up for an ongoing series. Certainly it's a series this reader would be interested in following - especially if the central character turns out to be a tricky bloke to deal with - have a bit of a weakness for those prickly, difficult types.

<http://www.austcrimefiction.org/review/DARK-MURDER-Helen-H-Durrant>

Linda Strong says

DI Stephen Greco is just starting a new position in Oldston. His goal is to pull the existing team together.

His team consists of his sergeant, Jed Quickenden, who isn't sure he wants to be a detective anymore and has a drinking and gambling problem and who never quite makes it to work on time. DC Grace Harper is sharp

and has the makings of an exceptional cop, except that she is a single mom and there are times she must be unavailable because of child care issues. DC Graig Merrick is young and idolizes Quickenden and has picked up his bad habits.

On this bright morning, a woman's body has been found ... her head has been bashed in and her eyes removed. Before they could even get a handle on this one, another body is found. Another woman, only this time her intestines have been pulled out and her eyes are missing.

Trying to find the link between the two women and a killer lead the team into drug and gun smuggling, terrorists, and the case of an abused boy 16 years prior.

This is not my first Helen Durrant book and I really like this author. Her characters are believable ... the bad guys are really bad, the good guys are not perfect, but they are there for the victims. Oldston is a small town, dirty, with a lot of unemployment, and undesirable people hiding in the shadows.

This is the first of a new series, and I look forward to reading the next one.

Thanks go to the author / Joffe Books / NetGalley who furnished a digital copy in exchange for an honest, unbiased review.

Sandy *The world could end while I was reading and I would never notice* says

This is the second book I have read by this author. I remember being not very impressed by the first, but she has really found her stride in Dark Murder.

This is the first book of a new series featuring DI Greco, a detective who suffers from OCD and who is a bit of a fish out of water in his new work environment. Despite this, I liked him. He is a man faced with some difficult decisions, but who faces up to them.

In Dark Murder Greco is tasked with solving a series of murders where the only connection seems to be the brutal disfigurement of the victims.

A quick but engaging read from an author to watch.

Thank you to Joffe Books via Netgalley for providing a digital copy of Dark Murder by Helen Durrant for review. All opinions expressed in this review are entirely my own.

Petra says

Dark Murder is the first in a new British police procedural set in the NW of England.

Following his divorce, DI Greco has just moved to the area to be close to his young daughter and takes over a team that is not performing as well as it should. There's a sergeant with a gambling problem who mixes with the wrong crowd and a DC who is a single mother trying to combine motherhood with a career. DI Greco himself is not the most sociable person and has OCD tendencies.

When a woman is found bludgeoned to death and her eyes removed and another woman is missing, Greco

and his team have to find the connection between these women, which leads them to local drug dealers, gun smugglers and even some terrorist threats.

This was my first Helen Durrant book, and while I enjoyed it, it didn't really grip me and pull me in as I would have liked. This may have something to do with the fact that I have just had a fantastic run of 4 and 5 star books. I felt the writing was repetitive in parts and things were over explained. The ending was very abrupt.

However, it was by no means a bad book. It was a very quick read, and I liked how the characters developed throughout the book.

I intend to catch up with the author's other series, as I believe DI Greco made an appearance there, and I would certainly read the next in this series to see how Greco's team develops further. A solid 3 stars.

I received a free copy via Netgalley in exchange for an honest review.

Books n All Jill Burkinshaw says

This is the first book in the Greco series by Helen H Durrant

I read Dark Angel many months ago so I am able to confirm that these books work excellently as stand-alone although you will probably want to go back and read them all as I have.

Greco has had to uproot and move to a new area and new team in order to maintain a relationship with Matilda, his young daughter.

He is very fragile emotionally and feels he has been put in charge of a team of misfits which doesn't help his stress levels. He suffers from OCD which gets worse with stress and his cleanliness fetish means he finds some team members more difficult than normal.

When his newly divorced wife has to go and care for her sick Dad Greco is left with his 5 year old daughter to care for in addition to all his other problems. Grace steps up to the plate and helps him out but that means he has to let down a few barriers and let her in a little which could be misinterpreted. In short Greco is struggling every which way.

Speedy gets himself in debt to a dangerous man who is suspect in a murder investigation and we are treated to a unique fly on the wall view of life on the dark side of the law which brings a new dimension to the story.

Realistic characters all with unique quirks and a story with many strands makes this book a fast-paced, adrenaline pumping read with twist and turns everywhere. A great introduction to the series.

5 stars from me.

Gary says

This is the 3rd Helen H Durrant book I have read this year and I have found them all good solid enjoyable reads. This book begins a new series in which we are introduced to Detective Stephen Greco who has just started a new job at Oldston CID and faces a series of murders with seemingly no connection but the brutal

disfigurement of the victims.

The book is full of lively interesting characters who will only get better with familiarity. I found this book enjoyable and certainly worth reading but not a classic. This is a relatively quick read and a good opening to the series but I thought the ending let the novel down with it's lack of climax.

I enjoyed it enough to continue reading the series but the author needs to raise the bar a little next time.

I would like to thank Net Galley and Joffe books for giving me a copy of this book in exchange for a honest review.

Darkslyric says

This was the first time I read anything from Helen H. Durrant and I can say it was very enjoyable. This book had a little of everything. A murder, a kidnapping, drug smuggling and dealing, terrorism, child abuse, pedophilia and the makings of a serial killer. What more could a crime reader ask for.

The author kept me interested by having a verse of different investigators on the case. The lead investigator being Stephen Greco new to the area but not to the job. He is a good character who I look forward to getting to know better in future books. Newly divorced and a loner, he is driven by his job and unsure of his new investigating team. He wonders at times if they have what it takes to be great investigators. As the team works through all the puzzle pieces to the crimes at hand, it proves to be a tangled web leading back in history to the present day.
