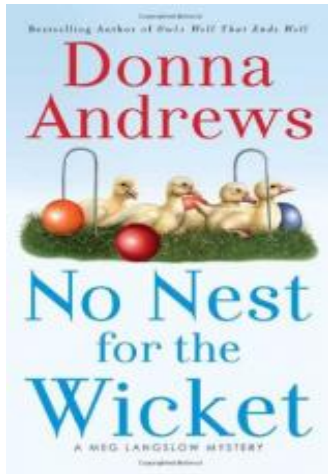

No Nest for the Wicket: Meg Langslow Mysteries

by Donna Andrews



About the Book

Meg Langslow would rather be overseeing the drastic work on the house she and her fiancé Michael have bought, but she has been shanghaied by her relatives into joining a croquet tournament. While looking for a lost ball in a briarpatch, she finds a woman's body. Who is she? And who gave her those lethal blows on the head that could have been made by a sledgehammer? Or a croquet mallet. There are several suspects, most of them a bit bizarre.

If anyone can make a delightful romp out of a murder case, it's Donna Andrews, as the myriad admirers (and bookbuyers) have proven.

Discussion Guide

1. Does the author play fair with reader by showing all the clues and giving the reader a chance to solve the mystery at the same time the sleuth does? How important do you think that is in a mystery?
2. Why do you think Meg got so involved with solving the murder? Nosiness, the need to protect her family, guilt....?
3. Do you think Meg is really a good sleuth, as her father thinks? Do you think she helped or hindered solving the murder? Does she find out things because she knows a lot about her family, friends, and neighbors or because she knows a lot about human nature? Or does she just find things out by snooping until she stumbles over something?
4. Meg discovers that many of the townspeople and croquet players are hiding secrets. Do you think it's realistic that people would do this if they were caught up in a murder investigation?
5. Caerphilly, where **No Nest for the Wicket** takes place, is a fictitious Virginia town. Why do you think the author created a fictitious town instead of using a real place, as she has in some of her previous books? Does it make any

difference to you whether the setting is real or fictional?

6. Meg is upset when she suspects that a developer wants to build a giant outlet mall on the farm next to the house she and Michael have bought. Do you agree that she has cause for concern, or do you think she's too quick to condemn the mall project before she even knows much about it?

7. Did you guess the identity of the murderer before Meg did? How important do you think it is in a mystery to fool the reader about "who done it" until the very end? Is more important, less important, or about the same in a comic mystery when compared with a serious one?

8. Do you think the story behind the Battle of Pruitt's Ridge is something that really could happen in a small Southern town?

9. **No Nest for the Wicket** is the seventh book in the Meg Langslow series. How does the author tell you about events in Meg's life before this book begins? Do you think you can read this book without having read the previous ones?

10. Is Meg a reliable narrator--do you find yourself agreeing with her assessment of characters and situations, and do you feel confident that when you're seeing things through her eyes, you're getting the whole story? Or does she have blind spots and biases--and if so, what are they?

11. Did you find the killer's motive plausible? Why or why not?

12. Combining humor and murder in a book is a difficult balance. Comic mystery authors have said that while you can't make fun of murder, the things people do to cover up the fact that they're guilty, either of murder or of lesser crimes, are fair game. Do you agree? Do you think the author succeeded in balancing the serious and funny moments?

13. **No Nest for the Wicket** has an ensemble cast--in addition to Meg, the sleuth, a number of other characters--Michael, Rob, Mother, Dad, Rose Noire, Mrs. Fenniman, Chief Burke, and others--all play small parts in solving the murder. Do you think Meg would be as effective in solving crimes if she didn't have her family and friends around? Do you think she would care as much about solving crimes if the weren't worried about them?

14. How do you feel about Meg's relationships with her parents? Does she seem to like her father more than her mother? Do you agree with her? Are her attitudes toward them changing in any way?

15. In what ways does Meg resemble the detectives in other mystery books you've read? Does she remind you of any particular earlier sleuth? In what ways is she unique?

16. Do you think a humorous mystery can also serve as a vehicle for exploring serious issues? What issues do you think the author was trying to raise in **No Nest for the Wicket**?

Author Bio

No Nest for the Wicket is the 7th book in the Meg Langslow series. Donna Andrews also writes the Turing Hopper series, which was partly inspired by her experience serving as a translator between the marketing and systems departments at her day job. The first in this series, **No Nest for the Wicket**, won the Agatha for Best Mystery of 2002. She lives in Reston, Virginia.

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Publication Date: August 8, 2006

Hardcover: 272 pages

Publisher: Minotaur Books

ISBN-10: 0312329407

ISBN-13: 9780312329402