



Cherringham: A Cosy Crime Series Compilation

Matthew Costello, Neil Richards

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Jack's a retired ex-cop from New York, seeking the simple life in Cherringham. Sarah's a Web designer who's moved back to the village find herself. But their lives are anything but quiet as the two team up to solve Cherringham's criminal mysteries.

-- This compilation contains episodes 1 - 3: MURDER ON THAMES, MYSTERY AT THE MANOR and MURDER BY MOONLIGHT. Here Jack and Sarah investigate a suicide in the River Thames - or was it murder? They investigate an "accidental" fire with deadly consequences, and they nab the culprit behind the Rotary Club choir poisoning.

-- Cherringham is a serial novel à la Charles Dickens, with a new mystery thriller released each month. Set in the sleepy English village of Cherringham, the detective series brings together an unlikely sleuthing duo: English web designer Sarah and American ex-cop Jack. Thrilling and deadly - but with a spot of tea - it's like Rosamunde Pilcher meets Inspector Barnaby. Each of the self-contained episodes is a quick read for the morning commute, while waiting for the doctor, or when curling up with a hot cuppa.

-- For fans of Agatha Christie's Miss Marple series, Lilian Jackson Braun's The Cat Who series, Caroline Graham's Midsomer Murders, and the American TV series Murder She Wrote, starring Angela Lansbury.

-- Co-authors Neil Richards (based in the UK) and Matthew Costello (based in the US), are known for their script work on major computer games. The Cherringham crime series is their first fictional transatlantic collaboration.

Cherringham: A Cosy Crime Series Compilation Details

Date : Published November 3rd 2014 by Bastei Entertainment

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From Reader Review Cherringham: A Cosy Crime Series Compilation for online ebook

Sarah Booth says

Surprisingly fun and quick mysteries designed like a radio series in a sense. Getting to know the characters has been fun and now they are starting to show what they know and what they can do. Quite enjoyable

Kathie H says

What a refreshing change from the drivel that's foisted upon an unsuspecting reading public under the guise of the "cozy mystery" genre! I LOVED Cherringham episodes 1-3. It's obvious that an American and a Brit cowrote these stories because they actually get the details right on both sides of the pond. I listened to this on Audible and Neil Dudgeon (of Midsomer Murders fame) is the narrator. And he makes the stories even more absorbing and readable, and addictive! I'm so happy to have stumbled upon this series which I will now gobble up with relish.

Mburrows says

These first 3 abridged stories in the series were quite fun. It is a shame that you cannot get the unabridged books in audio. The reader reminds me of the reader of the Louise Penny Inspector Gamach series. The murders are much more wholesome, if that is a thing, in the Cherringham series.

Margot says

This week I started listening to a set of three books – episodes – novellas (not sure what to call them) that were one of Audible's "Daily Deals." Cherringham was written by the team of Matthew Costello and Neil Richards. They've collaborated quite a bit on books, TV series, video games and so forth. Cherringham was meant to be read as an episode-at-a-time series, much like Charles Dickens' work. They are a crime/mystery series. They are light, but not cute cozies – even though that's what they call them. It was easy to be caught up in them.

Cherringham is a quiet English village where Jack, a former New York detective has gone to retire and fish. It's also where Sarah, a divorced mom and web designer has retreated to. Its not that village life is dull, but they are both smart, logical, tenacious, and with good people skills. When unusual and mysterious things happen, they can't help but do a little sleuthing.

In the first three episodes I read we first meet Sarah who does not believe what the police say is the cause of death for her friend. She asks Jack to help her. The second episode was a great thought-bender. Why did an old man die up in the attic, how did he get there, who set the deadly fire, and which of the three evil siblings is the most evil? The third episode involves the death of a young woman due to her peanut allergy. Why didn't her epi-pen work? I thoroughly enjoyed these three episodes. Lucky for me there are nine more

compilations or 24 books-novellas-episodes.

Nina Silva says

The Mysteries: Each mystery story is well-plotted. They are short books, yet a sufficiently varied cast is presented. The suspects in each mystery are believable and possess compelling motives. The clues are cleverly scattered throughout the stories. The suspense was sufficient (without having to resort to the cliched throwing of the protagonists to the mercy of the culprits). The big reveals at the end were worth the wait.

The characters: Sarah Edwards and Jack Brennan are the two main protagonists in this series.

Sarah is a thirty-something web designer. She's just returned to the Cotswold village of Cherringham, where she grew up, with her teenage daughter and younger son. The story opens after she's divorced her cheating husband and moved out of London.

Jack is a fifty-something former NYPD homicide detective. The story opens with him living on an old canal boat moored at Cherringham. He lives with his darling dog, Riley and no one else as he was widowed a year ago. He is living the retirement plan he and his wife had created prior to her death.

To the reader, Sarah and Jack are both quite likeable. Even if Jack was a bit gruff and guarded with Sarah at the beginning. Cherringham is a small town where locals remain a bit weary of outsiders. Jack, as an American, bears the brunt of this. Even Sarah, as someone who has only just moved back to the village, is sometimes treated as an outsider. The softening of Jack's edges is realistically gradual and enjoyable to witness. The same can be said for the 'toughening up' of Sarah.

There is a strong friendship between these two that develops across these first three stories. Will it eventually head towards a romance? That's not a given. We'll have to read more to find out.

The setting: A beautiful, cosy, charming Cotswold village come alive on the pages of this book (or through your speakers). The scenes descriptions work with the story and never detract from the tale. "As if it were a prop, a lone swan, looking sooty and dishevelled, circled near them as they sat at a picnic table right on the edge of the water."

Overall, these stories are sweet and quick and easy to read. I enjoyed this compilation and look forward to trying some more. I think there about 21 episodes out by now.

Audiobook review:

Narration: Very good narration by Neil Dudgeon for this audiobook. I think I was falling in love with the sound of his voice. Probably because he was giving me visions of Mr. Darcy with that gorgeous English accent of his. On a more serious note, character distinction was pretty clear. There was sufficient distinction between the lead male and female characters. There was good distinction between older and younger characters. When Dudgeon slipped into his American accent for Jack's character, it was well done. There were no awkward stumbles or pauses in the narration. (5/5)

Production: Sound quality was good. The audio was clear and sound levels were consistent. Pauses between

chapters was sufficient. There was no disturbing background noise. However, quite frequently the audio and text fell out of sync. (3.5/5)

Overall Experience: Overall, this story translated to audio quite well. (4/5)

Sally says

These Cherringham stories are short cozy-type mysteries. I listened to them grouped as audiobooks into collections of three stories. The first three really set up the main characters and a few supporting characters, as well as the Cotswolds setting of the town of Cherringham. As in many of this style of mysteries (Miss Marple, Murder She Wrote, etc.) you might begin to wonder how so many murders can take place over such a short time period in one little town, and in that sense they are not realistic. However, views of daily life and activities and types of people do not stretch belief and make for an enjoyable series.

Amina says

An unusual team of detectives, Sarah, an english web designer and Jack, a retired NYC detective. Maybe Cherringham isn't that peaceful after all!

Linda says

Jack is a former cop from New York who has retired to Cherringham to fulfill the dream his wife had before she died of cancer. He lives on a boat and has enjoyed his time in his new community. Sarah is a web designer who finds herself back in her hometown with her two kids, trying to keep things together. There are three stories in the collection.

Murder on the Thames finds Sarah losing her long lost best friend to murder. When she meets Jack they decide to investigate the suspicious death together and find they make a great team.

Mystery at the Manor has an elderly man succumb to smoke in the attic of his mansion. A property each of his children think they will inherit. Again Jack and Sarah become involved and find that there are some hidden secrets in that old attic.

Murder by Moonlight is the story of a young woman that everyone knows has peanut allergies but somehow she is fed cookies with peanuts in them anyway and when she goes to use her epi pen she finds it does not work. Something makes both Jack and Sarah suspicious so the team works its magic again.

None of these stories was very long but they were all enjoyable. I like Jack and Sarah and hope to read more about them.

Kylie says

I'm so glad I stumbled upon this when browsing the rather large Audible collection a couple of months ago.

It's a light, and highly entertaining cosy mystery and the narrator is one of the best I've heard (and I've been fortunate to have listened to some extremely good narrators!).

The stories, while short, have enough in them to keep you interested. I already have the second in the compilation in my Audible library and I look forward to listening to the next instalment. :)

I have no hesitation in recommending this series to fans of the cosy mystery genre and for those people looking for a quick and easy read while travelling. :)

Pamela Lobaugh says

A cute little compilation, with an American expat now living in Cherringham England, where he teams up with a young mother, in solving crimes. Easy, pleasant read. One little thing that the writer has Jack the (American) doing, ending a sentence with YES is a bit of a distraction. "I'll meet you at the pub, yes?" that's not American vernacular. Nevertheless, a nice read.

Deanna says

3.5 stars. Rounding up for enjoying them more than the average cozy mystery and not hesitating to continue the series, though I have to say could stop at any point and be fine about it. I'm just going along because they're fine for what they are and they suit me for now.

These are like popcorn for dinner. Pleasant change of pace, light, low-commitment, not your core reading fare.

I had to think about whether these novellas are actually cozies (they are). I'm not a big reader of cozies, but I'm used to cozies generally being either quaint, frothy, relationship-y, or centered around some traditional female interest. This series is none of those things.

A retired NYPD cop relocates to a village in the Cotswolds (ok, cozy), and ends up doing sleuthing-for-fun with a younger woman who is a freelance web designer, single mother, and glad for a little excitement (at this point just the sleuthing, not the retired cop) in her life.

The cop lives on a river barge, and I enjoy the atmosphere of the river and the boat. It's a nice change of pace from yet another quaint village scene. That said, the village atmosphere doesn't emphasize quaint. It's just small-town contemporary England.

This is written by a pair of male writers, one a New Yorker and one a Brit. So the culture difference features in the stories works pretty well.

While I would prefer full-length novels and their potential for more character and plot development, and

some of these stories are more engaging than others (I'm actually almost finished with the 6th story in the series, and the stories range from 3.0-3.75 on my satisfaction scale), I'm enjoying the whole series as a palate cleanser. The writing is capable, the plots have interesting topics or angles, and the solutions aren't obvious.

Cathy Ryan says

4.5*

The main characters in the Cherringham mysteries are Sarah Edwards and Jack Brennan, both likeable and realistic. Sarah, a web designer, previously lived in London with her husband and two children. Now divorced after her husband left her for his boss, she and the children have returned to the Cotswold village of Cherringham, where Sarah was brought up. Jack is a former NYPD homicide detective, who was widowed a year ago. He and his wife had always planned to retire to the UK and, after deciding to go ahead with their plans, Jack lives on an old Dutch canal boat moored at Cherringham, with his dog, Riley.

Audible have these short mysteries as compilations, each audiobook comprising three episodes and narrated wonderfully (and appropriately) by Neil Dudgeon, currently DCI John Barnaby in Midsomer Murders. Each episode is a complete story, incorporating more of the villagers and village life and charting Jack's progression from weird American outsider to an accepted member of the community.

In the first story, Murder on Thames, Sammi, who used to be Sarah's best friend before they both left Cherringham, is found drowned. Without finding anything to the contrary, the police assume it's an accidental death but Sarah thinks otherwise. Enlisting the help of Jack, who Sarah met during her quest to find some answers, they set out to investigate the circumstances surrounding Sammi's death.

Mystery at the Manor sees Jack and Sarah on another sleuthing mission when Sarah's friend, Hope, has doubts about a fire which killed an elderly man she looks after. Each of Victor Hamlyn's three children think they're in line to inherit his estate and each had a motive. But Victor had a secret.

The third instalment is Murder by Moonlight. The Cherringham Rotary Club choir is well into rehearsals for the Christmas Charity Concert when one of the choir members is found dead. Kirsty Kimball had a severe allergic reaction to one of the home-made cakes brought for the after rehearsal refreshments. Jack's new friend, Beth, asks him to join the choir because she thinks Kirsty's death is suspicious. Word of Jack and Sarah's detecting skills are spreading.

The steadily growing friendship between Jack and Sarah, and their character development, is evident throughout each story and the interaction between them is natural and believable. They're a great team and work well together, with Sarah's internet skills and knowledge of the village dynamics and Jack's experience as a detective. I love that they are out of the ordinary protagonists and become good friends.

A descriptive narrative easily conjures up vivid images of the beautiful Cotswolds. There's a lot packed into each story without it feeling rushed, a mixture of murders and mysteries and no two the same. I'm well on the way to finishing the available compilations now and will continue for as long as it runs. Neil Dudgeon does a great job as narrator, really enjoyable and easy to listen to with very good characterisations. The accent and personality he gave Jack made him very engaging. It's a nice change of pace from the graphic violence in a lot of crime novels.

Ingela says

Review written June 14, 2017

3 1/2 Stars - Nicely told, great narrated, filled with easy to like characters and all in all a very good new serial-book experience

This Cherringham serial compilation contains episodes 1 - 3: Murder on Thames, Mystery at the Manor and Murder by Moonlight. I listened to this omnibus (audiobook) edition of the first three stories from the Cherringham series. — 7:48 hours narrated by Neil Dudgeon.

Each episode are novella length books with solved crime cases but with the same two "private investigators". — **Jack** is a retired ex-cop from New York, seeking the simple life in Cherringham. **Sarah** is a Web designer who's moved back to the village find herself. ... But their lives are anything but quiet as the two team up to solve Cherringham's criminal mysteries.

#1 Murder on Thames - 2:46 hours - ★★★?? - 061111

Quickly done with a quite simple to guess murder case to solve for these two new acquaintances Jack and Sarah. Nice, cozy and very well narrated by Neil Dudgeon. Looking forward for the second serial part.

#2 Mystery at the Manor - 2:30 hours - ★★★?? - 061112

In this second part we already knew the main characters and it was more straight on the crime case. Like a weekly TV show - easy to get, easy to understand and very easy to swallow without any exhausting biting or chewing, that is to say; very digestible. I enjoyed once again.

#3 Murder by Moonlight - 2:30 hours - ★★★?? - 061114

Most creepy of these three novella length stories. I truly like Jack and Sarah by now. — Looking forward to more.

I LIKE - Light-hearted sleuth / investigators storylines filled with genuinely nice everyday country people

Ruth says

This book is the omnibus edition of the first three stories from the Cherringham Cosy Crime series. The series is available in digital eBook format and each story is about half the length of a typical cozy mystery book. This makes each story a quick, light read, but as you read through the series you start to get a good feel for the setting of the village of Cherringham where all the mysteries are set.

Each story is self-contained and new characters and parts of the village are introduced in each one as a background to the mystery to be solved. You gradually get to know the layout of the village and can picture the settings and how the characters move around as you become more familiar with the streets and buildings. The series has been compared to Midsomer Murders or Murder She Wrote and I could easily see these stories as episodes in a TV series. The plots develop quickly and move on at a good pace, and the mysteries are interesting but not too complex.

The two main characters, Jack and Sarah, meet in the first story because Jack, an American ex-policeman, lives on a boat on the river where Sarah's friend's body has been discovered. They come from very different backgrounds and there is also quite a big age gap between them. Their unlikely friendship grows through the course of the stories and it will be interesting to find out more about them and see how their relationship develops as the series progresses.

I'd like to thank Bastei Entertainment and Netgalley for providing this book for review.

Kerrie says

This is not very demanding listening, really a cozy in the real sense of the word. The events are almost everyday occurrences, the sort of scenarios the listening audience might find themselves in. The detective duo are interesting enough: a retired NYP detective and a housewife who is also a single mum. Each episode is 2-3 hours, so achievable with a longish return journey. There is not to think about in each scenario, but not a lot of mystery either.

I think the character development of the detectives is quite well done, and Neil Dudgeon does a good job of the narration.
